

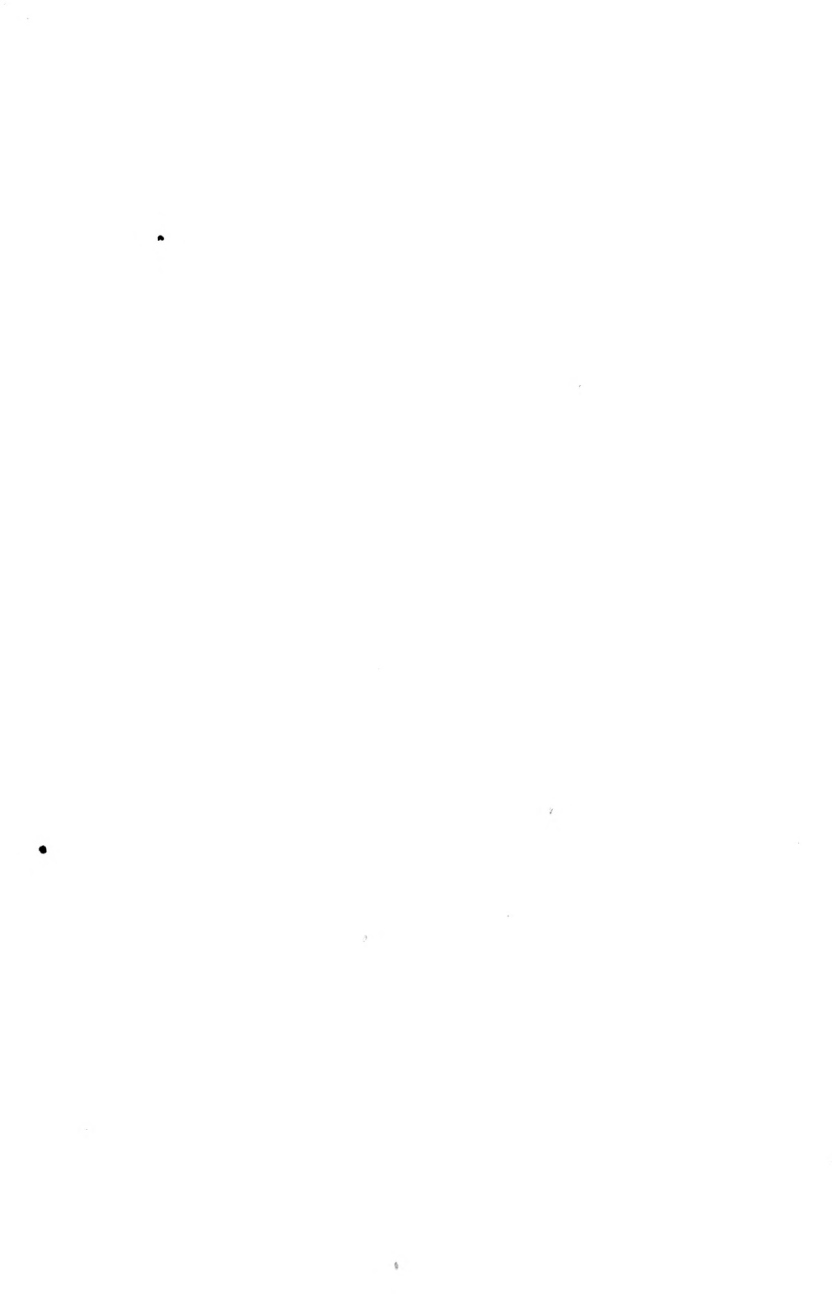
BIOGRAPHY

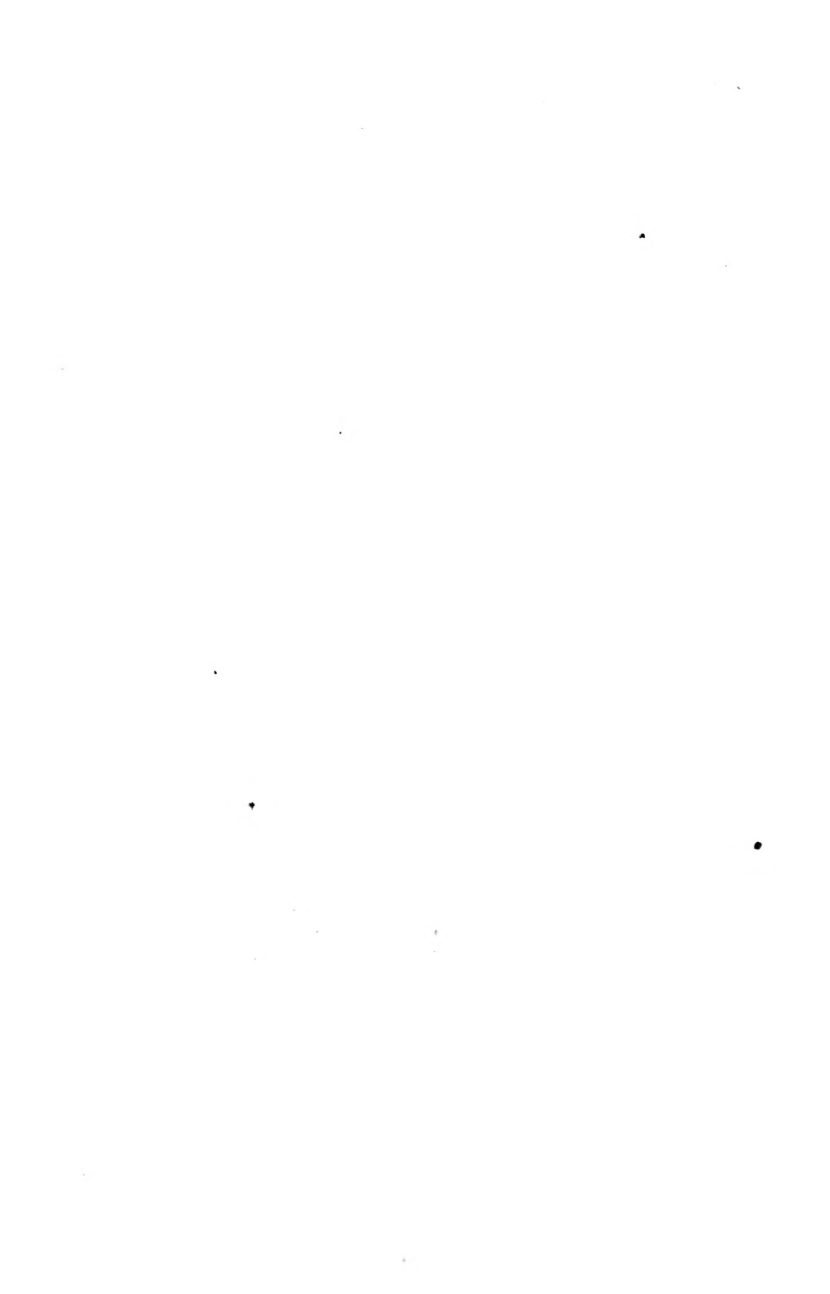
OF

REV. ALFRED J. FOX, M.D.

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Copied by W. H. TAYLOR,

Gottysburg, Pa.

ALFRED J. FOX,

Born September 6, 1817. Died June 10, 1884.

# BIOGRAPHY

OF

REV. ALFRED J. FOX, M. D.,

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN MINISTER OF THE TENNESSEE  
SYNOD, AND PHYSICIAN.

BY HIS SON,  
REV. JUNIUS B. FOX, A. M.,

WITH AN INTRODUCTION  
BY HIS SON,  
PROF. LUTHER A. FOX, D. D.

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PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR.

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BIOGRAPHY

OF

REV. ALFRED J. FOX, M. D.

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## PREFACE.

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THE purpose of this biography is to rescue and preserve from oblivion the life and character of one whose memory deserves to be guarded with affectionate interest. Its responsibility belongs to the author and the friends who desired its publication. No pains nor expense have been spared to make it worthy of the life it endeavors to picture with no touches of fancy, but with truthful expressions. Its typography, portrait, and general appearance speak for themselves. Every available source has been sought to gather any facts that might throw light upon the history of one whose noblest deeds, perhaps, have been forgotten. The unwritten history of this useful life would be transcendently more interesting than the present work, could it be presented in its stead.

The author gratefully acknowledges his indebtedness to kind friends who have aided him in collecting the necessary material, and presents this book to a generous public with the sincere hope that it may accomplish good, and that the blessing of the Lord God of our fathers may go with it.

J. B. F.

*Caney Branch, Tenn., Nov. 20, 1885.*





## INTRODUCTION.

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ONE cannot but wonder at the poverty of our church in America in biographical literature. A few of the lives of eminent ministers in Germany have been translated from the German. The ninth volume of Sprague's *Annals of the American pulpit* was devoted to Lutheran ministers, but while very important and interesting as sketches, it is not complete and is not suitable for general circulation. Prof. M. L. Stoever while editing the *Evangelical Review* also published a number of biographical sketches. Separate articles in that *Review* have been devoted to prominent men, such as Drs. S. S. Smucker, D. F. Bittle, and B. Kurtz. But neither the sketches by Prof. Stoever nor the articles proposed by others were intended to be full, and the *Review* is not often found outside the libraries of ministers. The life of Dr. H. M. Muhlenburg by Prof. M. L. Stoever, and the biography of Dr. Ezra Keller have been published in books. To these may be added the life of Rev. M. Officer who was for many years a minister of our church. If there are any others they are not now called to mind. A few are known to be in course of preparation.

This poverty of biographical literature is not due to a lack of deserving men. We have had many men more worthy than some in other communions who have been thus honored.

Able, devout and eminently useful men will be forgotten, not only in the church they served but in the communities where they wore out their lives, because so little has been done to keep alive the memory of their work.

Nor is this poverty due to a want of knowledge of the influence of such literature. We find biographies in the homes of the people of other churches. We have biographies of statesmen and soldiers and authors. Plutarch's Lives has long been a classic, and has been read by the young for many years. All of us have been deeply interested and influenced by this class of books.

Whatever the cause, whether from modesty or want of time, or want of encouragement, the fact remains. This volume will do something towards supplying that want. It may be a too great partiality of sons for a sainted father that prompts this volume, but, if a mistake, it will be excused, and they indulge the hope that it may excite to similar effort on the part of others and lead to a literature both in extent and character worthy of our great church.

The work of Dr. A. J. Fox consisted very largely of a personal influence upon the minds and hearts of those with whom he was brought into contact. He was not an author whose book might be read and mould opinion for years to come. He was too busy to write. He was not called to organize bodies with whose destiny his name and character would be identified, and whose existence would perpetuate his opinions. He moulded individuals, and his influence will be preserved in these living channels. Strong as was the impression, it must fade away from the memory of men un-

less gathered into some permanent centre. This biography will do something towards holding the stream to its source and become a new fountain from which may continue to flow the influence so powerful while its subject lived.

His life extended across a very important period in the history of the Lutheran Church in America. At the time of his birth the church was very small. The civil government, regarded by many as an experiment, had just passed through the trial of an important war. The country was still new and full of enterprise. While the State and business were experimenting with new measures the Church was also trying new methods. Just a few years before he was born the first revivals were held, and a few years later the General Synod was formed and the Tennessee Synod organized. In the General Synod there were different tendencies. One large district synod was impregnated with Unitarianism. There was some Rationalistic influences. The Confessional basis is proof that there was a large element of doubt in respect to the truth of the Augsburg Confession. It was adopted as only in a manner substantially correct. The new phase of Lutheranism which was developed in it, called itself American Lutheranism, and at length attempted to embody itself in the Definite Synodical Platform as a substitute for the Augsburg Confession. Amid the working of these tendencies he was born and his early life was passed. By decided principle, as well as by family relationship, he was connected with the Tennessee Synod which planted itself firmly upon the Augsburg Confession and Luther's Smaller Catechism. It was a very

small body. For twenty years it was composed of self-educated men, not one of whom had ever been graduated from either a college or theological seminary. The churches were scattered over four States, and were in the interior, not one being found in any city or large town. Yet this little body was called by Providence to be the custodian of the historic Lutheran faith in America. They were opposed and maligned by the denominations around them. They were misunderstood, misrepresented and denounced by Lutherans. They were stigmatized by opprobrious epithets. Lutheran synods in grave resolutions condemned them and warned the public against them. Good men like Dr. Bachman preached and published sermons in opposition to them. They were looked upon as a sort of religious nondescript. Dr. Fox lived through that period when it cost something to be a Lutheran, and survived it long enough to hear one of the prominent actors in the opposition say in a public address, "I am heartily ashamed of the part I took in those proceedings." This biography does not discuss the issues of that day, nor was its author called upon to delineate minutely the struggle, yet it will do something towards preserving historical facts that should not be forgotten.

The synod of which he was a life-long member was organized at a time and under circumstances that gave a narrowness to its operations. For this there was a reason or a purpose to be accomplished. The activities were circumscribed that they might be the more intense within the prescribed sphere. At length the time came to shake off

the bands and enter upon a broader field. He was one of the first to recognize the change, and became the leader in the progressive movement. No man did more than he to place the work of missions, education, etc., in the hands of the Synod, and to inaugurate the better methods. The new Constitution was largely his work. He advocated it, and after protracted efforts, saw it adopted. He preached the first regular missionary sermon ever preached before the North Carolina Conference of the Synod. He was very active in beneficiary education. He was one of the first to open Sunday-schools in his church. What the Synod is today is in no small measure due to him. These facts are recorded within these pages, and have here a suitable memorial.

A self-made man who rose to wide-extended usefulness, his life is an encouragement to young men who are struggling against adversity seeking a sphere where they can serve more successfully their fellowmen. They may come to these pages and drink in a new inspiration. Men who knew and loved him, who have been made wiser and better by him, will be pleased to review his life as here presented, and point their children and friends to the portraiture of one who was so helpful to them. The hope is indulged that strangers may draw from his character some profitable lessons, and catching something of his pure and earnest spirit, be lifted into a higher and better life. Those who have heard him from the pulpit will miss in his sermons the peculiar power that impressed them as his words came fresh and warm from his lips, yet it will be a pleasure and profit to

read the discourses embodied here. Those who did not hear him cannot know from these what he was as a preacher, still they may see something of the cast of his thought and find truth worthy a careful study.

Whatever may be the fate of this volume, the character it exhibits, imprinted upon thousands of imperishable hearts, will not die, and multitudes will rise up at the last day and call him blessed.

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BIOGRAPHY  
OF  
REV. ALFRED J. FOX, M. D.

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CHAPTER I.

CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH.

THE family of Alfred Fox cannot boast of a celebrated ancestry. No distinguished persons known to us come in his lineal descent. Beyond a partial obscure history of the German settlements in Pennsylvania, from which he sprang, his genealogy is unknown to those now living. Just when his forefathers crossed the Atlantic cannot be ascertained. The inference, however, is easily established, that, in the opening years of the present century, an event quietly transpired in the humble home of one of these Pennsylvania Germans, designed in the providence of God to mark an epoch in the family history. The mutual affection of David Fox and Elizabeth Moretz called together a small company, we imagine, to witness the consummation of their matrimonial alliance. The idea of consistency forbids the imagination that their marriage took place amid flourish of trumpets or glaring preparations, but with German simplicity. Mr. Fox was a farmer, a plain, substantial, industrious young man. His chosen companion came likewise from humble parentage, some of whose relations, however, were minis-

ters of the Lutheran church. Soon after the establishment of this relation, they settled in the State of North Carolina.

On September 6, 1817, in Chatham county, about one-half of a mile from Staley depot, on the Cape Fear and Yadkin Valley Railroad, ALFRED FOX, their oldest son, was born. In early infancy, his pious parents, by the holy sacrament of baptism, dedicated him to God. Rev. Daniel Graeber, of the Lutheran church, administered the ordinance. At the age of one and a half years his father moved to a farm which he had purchased on Sandey creek, in Randolph county. Here he received his youthful training and education. Here, in after years, his fondest memories found an asylum of rest from the buffetings and troubles of life. Here his heart held silent communions with childhood's home and mother. Here in the cemetery of the family church repose the ashes of those who had watched over his fragile infancy and guided safely his youthful steps. The home of his boyhood still stands unchanged, surrounded as then with quiet scenes and silent shades. From this house his mother passed into eternity in 1853, and his father in 1880, at the advanced age of eighty-nine.

The paternal impressions made upon his youthful mind were those of honesty, simplicity, and integrity of character. He was taught to spurn that which was low and degrading, and to cultivate a healthy and helpful manhood. He was made to see the dignity of labor—labor of the hands and of the head. Into his soul was instilled the principles of truthfulness and candor. His heart was filled with love for the good and true, and made uncompromising with evil. His plain German home did not afford the cultivation of the finer and higher ideas of social culture, but he did not fail to have inculcated deeply the stronger and hardier elements of vigorous manhood. These are after all the solid mater-

ials of enduring character, and last when the glare and deception of the world's refinement fade.

The impressions made upon him by his mother were particularly lasting and ennobling. From her came the tender and mellowing influences upon his life. She was a truly good woman, and did much to shape the moral and spiritual life of her son. The lessons she taught were the weapons with which he first met life's conflicts, and gave him victory. Her influence followed him consciously through the morning, noontide, and sunset of life. Even when he stood at the foot of the sunny slope of years, on the brink of the grave, he repeated with smiles the lessons taught him in childhood by his mother, her anecdotes, with their morals.

The only education he received was at the common schools of his neighborhood, and afterwards by his own acquisition. He attended school in the winter, and worked upon the farm in the summer. From the teacher he learned his first lessons in English, being able beforehand to speak easily only the German. Until then, as he often said, he disliked very much to hold conversation with an *Englisher*. His recitations at school were in both languages. In after life, he was only associated with those speaking English, and his memory of German largely faded. He never preached but one German discourse. His use of English in private conversation and in the pulpit was so fluent, easy and accurate, that one could not tell that his tongue was ever accustomed to anything else.

The names of his teachers are not at command, but from others we learn that he was an apt pupil, of quick perception, and made the most of his opportunities. Among his schoolmates were Israel Fox, his cousin, a young man of fine talent, who died about the time he was admitted to the bar, and Rev. Dr. S. Y. McMasters of the Episcopal church.

But the education which was of the highest utility to him was acquired by self-efforts. He gained as far as possible for him, the highest conception of English and German literature. And not satisfied with this, he secured without aid a knowledge of Latin and Greek. This knowledge was extensive and accurate enough to enable him not only to give proper pronunciation to the desired quotations, but to correctly translate the languages. He was consequently vastly assisted in his study of Exegesis. He frequently appealed from the pulpit before learned audiences to the original Greek of the Scriptures. His last sermon contained an accurate criticism of 1 John v. 7. In speaking of his education, we cannot forbear mentioning his remarkable vocabulary of English words. Synonyms with him were abundant. His idea of their different shades of signification was so accurate that he could successfully discuss them with those who had received collegiate training. So abundant was his fund of words, that when in animated discourse their superfluity troubled him. This use of his adopted tongue as well as all other knowledge came through extensive reading until late hours at night, and in leisure moments by day, when sitting alone or traveling. Sometimes when riding his interest in reading was so intense that he did not perceive the passing of persons until looking back he saw them going in an opposite direction.

In his seventeenth year he attended Richland's church near his father's home to receive catechetical instructions. Rev. Philip Henkel catechised the first day, but he became sick and died shortly afterwards. Rev. Henry Goodman finished the school, and confirmed him in the faith in which he lived consistently in after life, for which he so earnestly contended, and in which he died. The beginning of his Christian life, and preparation for eternity he ever dated

from his confirmation in the church of his fathers. The vows then plighted with his Creator were never forgotten. The confession of Christ then made with his mouth was the commencement and pledge of that same confession in his heart and life. His character as a youth was exceptionally good. He not only lived a pious life, but even in early boyhood rebuked immoral conduct in others. His presence was a safeguard and stay against immoderate levity and vulgarity. He had the moral courage not to allow profanity to go unrebuked. His rebukes of sinners were administered without a care of the possibility of subsequent offense. This however did not cause a want of friends. If it caused coldness, his enemies were soon regained by kind treatment. From this, the inference might be drawn that he was always serious, distant with associates, and possessed of a solemn bearing. He was on the contrary full of life and play, but altogether of an innocent character. He was a great tease to his friends and companions, and at work or play led the balance of the crowd. In his boyhood days, wild game in his section was plentiful. He loved the chase, and his stories of hunting with his father were full of interest. He was in youth, as well as in busy years, of a happy mind, and enjoyed life.

When he was seventeen years old he began teaching school. One who was once his pupil thus testifies, in a recent letter, of him in this capacity: "My first recollection of your father was while he was engaged in teaching his first school, which I attended. He taught two or three schools near my father's home, to which I went. He was a good teacher and highly respected as such by all his patrons." He taught many other schools in North Carolina, Tennessee and Alabama as financial auxiliaries to the meagre incomes from his ministry.

The traits specially manifest in his teaching were more than ordinary aptness to communicate, ability to secure the confidence and interest of those under his tutorship, and splendid executive endowments. In this, as well as in every other business, he exerted himself, not "for filthy lucre's sake," but for the consciousness of duty discharged, and the satisfaction of success. He had an abiding interest in all under his instructions, and labored for their mental and moral culture, to the gratification of parents and guardians. With special gifts for teaching and by their faithful exercise, he was eminently successful.

At this point, it will not be inappropriate to mention the members of Dr. Fox's family and his relatives with whom the public is acquainted. Rev. Christian Moretz was his mother's brother, and Rev. Daniel Moser married her sister. Rev. T. Moser and Rev. M. L. Fox, M. D., are cousins. Rev. P. C. Henkel, D. D., of Conover, N. C., married his oldest sister, and the late Rev. Thos. Crouse, his youngest sister. Revs. J. C. and J. F. Moser, are second cousins. Rev. D. E. Fox, deceased, a nephew. Rev. Luther A. Fox, D. D., of Roanoke College, Va., is his oldest son, and Rev. Junius B. Fox, of Tennessee, his fourth son. Albert C. Fox, M. D., a physician commanding a large practice, at Waynesboro', Va.; J. Frank Fox, M. D., near Lincolnton, N. C., and Claude P. Fox at the University of Va., in the Medical Department, are also his sons.

The casual statement may not be without interest, that, the letter J. in his name is an addition by himself. Soon after entering the ministry, the notice of a ministerial act in the public press contained the grammatical monstrosity that the ceremony was pronounced by "a fox." Seeing this, he ever afterwards, it is said, subscribed himself *A. J. Fox*.

## CHAPTER II.

### HIS MINISTRY.

TO preach the gospel was his life-purpose—his chief work. The other professions in which he engaged were subservient to his ministry. To this end he believed he was born, and to this mission in life he devoted his highest energies and native resources. If any business had to suffer from neglect it was never his ministry. If the summons to the Master's work in the synod or elsewhere required an absence of days or weeks from his practice of medicine in the busiest seasons, that summons was always obeyed.

The determination to offer himself to the work of the ministry was formed in early childhood. He did not remember when that purpose was awakened. In coming to this high work he was not pained by mental struggles against it. In his pillow was no thorn of indecision. When he reached the years of conscious thought and reflection, he gave himself up fully consecrated to the purpose that had filled his heart. God had impressed his youthful mind in some way, and led him to the highest service of life. The providential means through which this impression was made were perhaps the facts that two of his uncles were ministers, and the frequent presence of Rev. David Henkel at his father's house. He distinctly remembered the appearance and conversations of this leading spirit in the Tennessee synod, then newly organized. The tide of animosity between this new synod and the North Carolina synod was then at high water mark, and Rev. Henkel spent days at a time at this house discuss-

ing the doctrinal and personal difficulties that then existed. From these visits, perhaps more than from any other source, came the influences that shaped his resolution to labor in the Lord's vineyard. The manifestation of this purpose, however, met with opposition from his father. The objections were not to the work itself, nor his son's adaptation to it, provided the requisite education and training could be received. In this last idea his father conceived to lie the chief difficulty. Convinced that thorough literary and theological culture is necessary to the successful accomplishment of so high a calling, he felt financially incapable to thus prepare him for it. We do not know that he attempted to obstruct his son's aspiration with the common allegation that the ministry is an humble work, bearing on its very countenance the outlines of poverty. His opposition was not violent enough for such a plea. But whatever may have been its nature or extent, and whatever anxious inquiry it may have aroused, the determination of the young heart was too firm and resolute to be moved or resigned. Mountains of discouragements lay before him, but he bravely dared to overcome them. The high purpose was fixed; his heart ceased not to throb with the strong resolve to obey the call of his Master: "Son, go work to day in my vineyard."

Early in his nineteenth year, he went to the house of his uncle, Rev. D. Moser, and under his direction commenced the study of theology. He had here chiefly German works, studying Reinhardt, and the Book of Concord especially. His preceptor was thoroughly acquainted with Dogmatic Theology; and his wife was quite as thorough in this great science as himself. During his absence, when the young *theologues* became perplexed and entangled with the mysteries of divinity, they took their theological problems to their landlady, and always obtained satisfactory solutions. The



practical wisdom and fatherly counsel which the young candidate here received were salutary and helpful. Among much other advice, he never forgot this remark of his preceptor: "Let every man's bed fit your back, and every man's table your appetite."

In his twentieth year, on June 18, 1837, while pursuing this course of studies, he preached his first sermon from Romans 5th chapter and 18th verse, in Zion's church, Catawba county, North Carolina.

The Tennessee Synod met in 1837, (September 11-14) in Koiner's church, Augusta county, Virginia. He, with Rev. H. Goodman and several others, went out on horseback. At this convention he was ordained deacon. Until 1866, the ministers of this Synod were classified as pastors and deacons. In an early revision of its first constitution, the duties of each class are described: "The grades of the ministry are two: viz. pastor and deacon; or as St. Paul calls them, bishop and deacon. They must possess the qualifications as described, 1 Tim. iii. 2-14, Tit. i. 4-9. A pastor performs every ministerial act; but a deacon is only to baptize, catechise and to preach. A deacon must be called to this office by one or more congregations, and be under the care of a pastor, or of the Synod."\* This classification was set aside by the session in 1866. The constitution adopted then says: "This synod shall be composed of regularly ordained ministers of the Evangelical Lutheran church, and lay-delegates."† The grade of deacon is here omitted. The clerical register of the minutes of '66 is composed of ministers and "Licentiates."

In compliance with the first constitution, petitions were

\* Minutes Tenn. Synod, 1827, p. 22, Article VI. Constitution.

† Minutes 1866, p. 6, Article III. Constitution.

presented in 1837 by "Richland's, Coble's and School-house churches, in Randolph, Orange, and Guilford counties, N. C.," and one from St. Peter's church, Lincoln county N. C., praying for his ordination as deacon."\* With several other candidates for the offices of pastor and deacon he was examined; and "they were considered well qualified to discharge their duties." A unanimous resolution was passed for their ordination. His examination was very creditable, and gave promise of great usefulness. Rev. Ambrose Henkel, of New Market, Va., "delivered a very interesting and appropriate ordination sermon, in the English language, from 2 Cor. iii. 6, whereupon the candidates were ordained by the laying on of hands and prayer." † During this meeting he preached one evening. His text was Luke ii. 10-11. Young, diffident, and speaking in a poorly lighted room, he did not succeed well, and many persons thought he had mistaken his calling. His examination on the following day, however, gave promise of better things. Very soon after this he accepted a call to a widely scattered charge in North Carolina. He had churches in Stanley, Union, Cabarrus and Mecklenburg counties, and one across the State line in South Carolina. He labored here very energetically and successfully until the next session of synod at Salem church, Lincoln county, N. C., when he was ordained pastor. Its sessions were held from the 10th to the 14th of September, 1838. On page 8 of the minutes we find the following resolution:

"WHEREAS, Various petitions have been laid before this body, giving Messrs. Jacob Stirewalt and Alfred J. Fox a good recommendation as promising young men, being both morally and intellectually qualified to bear the office of the

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\* Minutes 1837, p. 7.

† Minutes 1837, p. 11.

ministry, and to perform every ministerial function; and praying that they may be promoted to the highest grade in the ministry, therefore,

*Resolved*, That they be examined on to-morrow morning, with regard to their qualifications to bear the office of the ministry, and if considered competent, they be ordained."

On Wednesday at 9 a. m., Sept. 12, 1838, the examination began, and occupied the morning session. "It was conducted by different members of the synod; every member being permitted to propose such questions as they thought proper. The candidates during their examination evinced, by their pertinent and judicious answers, that they had made considerable proficiency in the acquisition of theological knowledge; so much so, that they gave universal satisfaction, and were considered fully competent to perform every ministerial function. Therefore, on motion, it was unanimously *Resolved*, That they be ordained pastors, on to-morrow.\*

On Sept. 13th, Rev. George Easterly of Greene county, Tenn., preached the ordination discourse from Ephesians vi. 10-17 verses. "After which Messrs. Jacob Stirewalt and A. J. Fox, the candidates for ordination, were solemnly set apart to the work of the ministry by the imposition of hands and prayer."†

For the ordination and services of Mr. Fox, petitions from many churches were presented to this synod. They came not only from the people to whom he preached the previous year but from others. Perhaps no one ever came before the Tennessee Synod more highly recommended than he. Expressions of gratification for his labors came up from many hearts. In this fact, we have positive manifestation

\* Min. Tenn. Synod, 1838, p. 9.

† Same Min., p. 11.

of the call of the Master. The following resolution was adopted by the synod at which he was ordained: "*Resolved*, That, inasmuch as the Rev. A. J. Fox has expressed a willingness to serve the petitioners from Morning Star, Bethlehem, Union, St. Martin's and Flat Rock churches, he be recommended to take them under his pastoral supervision, and devote as much of his time to them as possible." These churches were in connection with a few others he had served the previous year, and he now accepts their call for an indefinite period.

## CHAPTER III.

### FIRST MINISTERIAL WORK.

THE first charge of Rev. Mr. Fox after his ordination as pastor consisted of five churches, scattered over an immense territory. His home was near Coburn's Store, Mecklenburg county, N. C. He entered upon the work full of zeal and holy consecration. He gave full proof of his ministry, and laid the foundation of future success. He labored here for four years with remarkable energy and the highest devotion to the work. During this time he preached 308 sermons, confirmed 153 persons, baptized 154 infants and adults, and rode thousands of miles. He preached the first year 117 sermons, an average of a little more than two a week. He travelled in all kinds of weather, crossed dangerous streams, riding a vicious horse, but meeting promptly all his appointments. He catechised much, conceiving this to be the true method of winning souls for Christ and bringing them into the church of the Reformation. He believed it to be essentially necessary that all applicants for church membership be instructed (catechised) in the doctrines of our holy religion. He was convinced that this was the truly Lutheran custom of adding to our numbers, and that wherever it fell into disuse, the church languished. He offered the standing resolutions in the Tennessee Synod, making it obligatory upon her pastors to catechise the young people of their churches previous to their confirmation. True to his convictions of duty in this matter, he spent much time in carefully training children

and adults in the faith of the church. And the seeds of truth which he implanted in tender hearts and consciences yielded a vast harvest of good. The last work he ever rendered the Master was catechising a class of adults in one of his churches.

On October 6, 1838, he confirmed his first class of catechumen, consisting of 19 persons, in Savage's church, Rowan county, N. C.

In the work of his first charge he was eminently successful. Many souls were added to the church, some of whom were heads of families, and some old persons. As an instructor of the young he was peculiarly gifted, illustrating the truths he set forth by appropriate anecdotes and interesting narratives. As a preacher he was earnest, eloquent and pathetic. As a pastor he was congenial and beloved. At the same time he was a diligent student, reading as he rode on horseback and wherever he stopped.

The devotion of his people was gratifying, and may be seen in one instance. About twenty families from one of his congregations in Stanley county went in a colony to Arkansas. They offered to bear all his expenses, give him a home, and guarantee him a comfortable living if he went with them. Petitions and letters were sent to Synod for his services and expressing gratitude for his ministerial labors. His popularity extended in all directions. He received calls from many places, one of which was from the charge made vacant by the death of his preceptor in theology, Rev. Daniel Moser, in 1839.

The great work of several years began to wear upon his health, and at the close of 1841 he was under the necessity of resigning. He retired to a farm given by his father near Asheboro, in Randolph county. During this year he preached occasionally to vacant congregations, or as often

as his health permitted, and visited the churches in Greene county, Tennessee. He was married April 5th, 1842, to Miss Lydia Bost, of Cabarrus county. Leaving his farm in the charge of his brother he again visited with his bride the congregations in Greene county, Tennessee. He spent several weeks preaching and catechising for them. In these few weeks he performed some of the most successful church work of his life. At two churches, within five miles of each other, he confirmed 74 persons after catechising for several days previous. Large numbers were confirmed at other places that he visited. Many of the most substantial members of those churches to-day were brought into them during this visit. The confirmation of those classes is spoken of to this day.

He visited these churches again in 1843. He remained, however, on his farm in North Carolina until 1844, when, his health having been fully restored, he accepted the oft-repeated call to Tennessee. He preached his introductory sermon in his new charge at Blue Spring church, March 24th, 1844. He preached at first to three churches—Blue Spring, Sinking Spring, Cove Creek, and at the house of Mr. Michael Ottinger, near which the present large church of the Salem congregation was erected. He located in Greene county about one mile northeast of the present village of Midway. To his nearest church was three miles, and his farthest eighteen. He went earnestly to work. He preached often, and added large numbers to the church. He confirmed at Blue Spring alone in the few years of his ministry one hundred and twenty-five members. Many of the sermons he preached then are remembered and spoken of as remarkably thoughtful and powerful. His influence extended far and wide. The indifferent were aroused, the hostile made friends to the faith, and the whole church,

which had been languishing for years, awoke from her slumbers and put on her robes of light. He was loved and revered by these people as long as he lived. People of other creeds went far and near to hear him preach. His congregations were always large and attentive. Forty years after he left Tennessee the churches pressed upon him a call, and waited almost a year until he could decide one of the most perplexing problems of his life.

During his ministry in Greene county an event took place to which attaches no little interest and importance. Methodism in this section was then in its highest glory. Several large churches were here, where none are now. The great spirit of those churches was Dr. Wyatt, a minister and a physician. In preaching a reply to a sermon by Rev. Adam Miller, jr., who had returned from a visit here to his home in North Carolina, he gave utterance to grave calumnies against the Lutheran church.

In criticising Luther's Commentary on the text: "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree," in which Luther asserts that Christ died the greatest sinner of mankind because of the assumption of human sin, Dr. Wyatt said: "Shame on you Lutherans that teach such damnable heresies!" Similar charges were made in the same discourse. The members of the Lutheran church, and the friends of Rev. Miller advised him of these facts. Rev. Miller did not come to Tennessee, but suggested to them that they get Rev. Mr. Fox to defend the Lutheran faith against such serious aspersions.

Being then only a young man, naturally averse to controversy, Mr. Fox entered upon the debate for no self-aggrandizement, but from convictions of duty to the church. Coming from such source, he knew that if the charges were not answered that Lutheranism in this locality would suffer.



An appointment was made for him to make his reply. It is thought that a thousand or more people were present. After finishing his discourse, in which he had completely refuted the position of the Methodistic aggressor, and firmly established the Lutheran faith, he asked whether Dr. Wyatt was present. He had not yet made his acquaintance. A gentleman in the audience arose and replied affirmatively. Dr. Wyatt came forward to meet him on the stand erected in the grove. So confused and nervous was the Doctor that when attempting to lift a glass of water to his lips it spattered over the floor. Dr. Wyatt asserted that he had not made the charges against the Lutheran church to which Rev. Mr. Fox had that day replied. Mr. Fox immediately agreed that another day be appointed when they would meet and determine that matter. Caney Branch was appointed as the place. Mr. Fox again preached; and at the conclusion of his remarks exhibited to Dr. Wyatt an affidavit signed by thirty men, some of whom were members of the Methodist church, certifying that he had made the charge at the time and place at first alleged. When he asked Dr. Wyatt whether he could now deny that he had made the charge, he replied: "No, I cannot; those are the names of my fellow-citizens." The Doctor became so mortified over his defeat and the serious dilemma into which he had placed himself that he soon afterwards disposed of his property and left for a distant region.

After two years the time for another removal came. He had consummated the purpose of God, and providence was pointing elsewhere. The relation between himself and his flock had been pleasant and profitable, and many were the mutual regrets over his departure. The immediate causes of his resignation were failures of efforts to invest his means, some of them just as they were about to be consummated.

No less than three such futile efforts were made. When the contracts were agreed to, and he was about to furnish the money the parties declined. In one instance, the man with whom he attempted to trade was an elder of the Lutheran church. Another cause of his removal is a common one. The people failed to comply with their promises of salary. They offered \$200; and paid \$180 the first year, and \$140 the second. Such retrogression is not a rare occurrence in many places to-day. It is a fruitful cause of vacancies.

The call came from the church at Jacksonville, Alabama; and coming when it did, he regarded it as an indication from the Head of the Church that he should accept. An opportunity was here offered for investing some money which he had inherited, as well as serving a promising congregation.

Rev. J. K. Hancher, who had been his student in theology, became his successor in Tennessee.

A number of Lutheran families from Lincoln county, N. C., had located in Jacksonville, Ala., the county seat of Benton (now Calhoun) county, in the northeastern portion of the State. It was a growing town in a fertile country. He located on a farm and preached to the congregation in town. As there was no Lutheran church, he preached in the Presbyterian church, which was generously loaned him. His work in the ministry at this place was brief. At the end of one year he resigned, because he believed that one of his prominent members attempted to take advantage of his supposed ignorance of business and defraud him of several hundred dollars. There was also a division in the congregation as to the place to erect the new church. The members in the country wished it built in the country, and those in Jacksonville in town. Immediately after his resignation he made efforts to secure a pastorate elsewhere. He

rode on horseback through parts of Kentucky, Missouri and Illinois in search of work. In the record of his sermons we learn that he preached in several different States within a few days of each other. But failing to secure a suitable location, and having his money invested so that he could not arrange to leave it, he was compelled to remain in Alabama for a time at least. As a mere matter of useful information he began the study of medicine. We may easily imagine how, when suffering from an attack of dyspepsia brought on by anxious thought over his unnatural position, he may have been listlessly looking over his library, when his eye perchance fell upon some medical work, which he hauls from the shelf, and begins to peruse. An unsuspected interest and fascination seizes him. The next day the process is repeated; the same book is read. Finally the whole volume is finished. The conclusion is formed that perhaps if he were denied the pleasure of administering to the wants of men's souls, he could relieve the pains of their bodies. There may have been even an innate consciousness of an adaptation to the medical profession, and of success in it. A year passed. Finding that he was compelled to remain, and having become deeply interested in his new studies, he placed himself under the instruction of Drs. Francis and Clark at Jacksonville. Dr. Clark had been for a quarter of a century or more one of the most distinguished physicians of his State. Still another year passed, and he determined to attend medical lectures at the college in Augusta, Ga., in which Dr. Paul Eve and other distinguished men were Professors. He took rank at once as among the best "posted" men of the institution. After leaving college, he secured license, and offered his professional services to the public. He moved to White Plains and formed a partnership with Dr. Porter, for whom he cherished ever after the

highest regard as a man and as a physician. While he was living here a Methodist minister assailed the Lutheran Church in a sermon he happened to hear. He made an announcement for a vindication of his Church at a campground. Several thousand people came on the appointed Sunday, and so fully did he prove the allegations false, and show the thoroughly Protestant character of the Lutheran Church, that the Methodist ministers present neither then nor afterwards attempted to reply.

He remained at White Plains one year, when he moved to Mount Polk. Here he remained two years. At this place he did a very large practice. In the summer of 1854 a malignant form of dysentery appeared in his practice. It was an epidemic resisting all treatment, and many persons died. At one church thirty persons were buried in thirty days. They were, however, not all his patients. He worked so indefatigably, and under such intense mental tension, that he himself became extremely ill. Dr. Porter was his physician. While lying one morning at the point of death from internal congestion, the doctor entered his room, looked at him intently for a few moments without speaking, and then asked him whether he thought he would recover. He replied, "Yes, I believe the Lord has yet a work for me to do." His work was not yet done and God raised him up from the very brink of the grave.

During these seven years, from 1847 to 1854, he was able to do very little in the ministry. He seldom preached. In 1853 he preached only once. In one of those years, however, he preached twenty-one sermons. The places of his preaching were sometimes at churches, but generally at private residences. He was far from being satisfied. He longed to get back into the pastoral work. Like Eli, the judge of Israel, he "sat by the wayside watching, for his

heart trembled for the ark of God." He often said that while in Alabama he felt like Nebuchadnezzar—"turned out seven years to graze like an ox." The Lord was, however, accomplishing with him a high and important purpose. The medical profession not only was important useful information to him subsequently in the ministry, but enabled him to regain the fortune he lost by the war, and to educate his sons for the ministry and medical profession.

The years in Alabama may be denominated the gloomy epoch in his life. He was far removed from his chosen work, and even from the services of the Church which he dearly loved. Into those days most of his misfortunes crowded. "Troubles never come singly." He met with many sore disappointments. He learned more of the dark side of human nature during those years than ever afterward. He bought a farm, and discovered that the man from whom he purchased it had sown a luxuriant weed upon it in order to give it the appearance of fertility. When attempting to move into another house which he bought, the family living in it refused to give entrance for several months, and in the meantime he was compelled to live in a miserable little hovel scarcely proof against the wind, rain or cold. From the wakeful pillow the stars could be seen through the porous roof. During the showers the tableware was brought into requisition to keep the beds dry, and the only shelter for the wife and little ones was the chimney corner. After awhile the family, through sheer shame, or when their convenience suited, vacated the better house, of which he was the rightful possessor, and he afterwards had a more pleasant domicile.

An attempt was made by one of the Lutheran members at Jacksonville who had manifested much personal esteem, to injure him in the Tennessee Synod. A secret letter was

forwarded to one of the sessions of this Synod, stating that he was neglecting his duties as a minister when he had opportunity for performing ministerial services. The charge was this: A certain lady had travelled thirty miles mainly for the purpose of having him baptize her children. When informed of this fact by the Secretary of the Tennessee Synod, he wrote a letter to the following convention of Synod in which he completely overthrows the charge. The letter was full of cogent reasoning, cutting sarcasm, and interesting remarks.

In order to cast clearer light on his relation to the ministry while in Alabama, we give the following letter to the Tennessee Synod written in 1849.

*To the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, to Convene in Beck's Church, Davidson County, N. C., on Monday after the third Sunday in October, 1849.*

*Rev'd Brethren:* The time has again arrived when, by a resolution of the Synod, it is made the duty of every member who does not attend to write a communication containing his reasons of non-attendance. Notwithstanding the pleasure it would afford me to be with you, circumstances are such that I cannot enjoy that pleasure without greatly discommoding and depriving myself of much time to devote to a course of studies in which I have for some time been ardently engaged. Nevertheless, did the Synod convene within a distance of one or two hundred miles from here, and the health of myself and family permitted, I can assure you, brethren, that there is no privilege I would more gladly embrace, nor one that would afford me more real pleasure, especially under existing circumstances, than meeting with you in Synodical Convention. Since the impression is gotten up among the brethren that I am wilfully, from a selfish and carnal nature, silent and pursuing the course I am, I would take pleasure in convincing you that my zeal in the noble cause of truth is not in the least abated. But circumstances seem to forbid that I should be with you. If in considering my case you think that the distance from here

to Synod, being near 500 miles, the time and expense to accomplish such a journey, are sufficient grounds for excuse, I shall kindly thank you. But if you think not, I must, as I did last year, submit to whatever in your better judgment you see proper to inflict upon me. I desire to say a few more words in reference to the course I am pursuing, as I have no doubt that my brethren are desirous to know something concerning it. Could I be agreeably and profitably situated in the ministry, notwithstanding all the difficulties, the many and great privations to which a clergyman is subject, I can safely and unhesitatingly assure you that there is no calling whose duties I would more cheerfully discharge than those of the ministry. But unfortunately for me, it is my lot to be situated in a country where there are few things to encourage and many to discourage me in persisting in the duties of the sacred office. I reside in a place where there are few members of our church, and most of them are very careless, and appear totally indifferent to the duties of members of the church and her ultimate prosperity.

Previous to resigning my official charge here some differences of opinion arose as to the project of erecting a house of worship; some wishing it in the village, and others in the country. I saw plainly that did either party build, the other would not assist, and a division of the small body of Lutherans would be the result. Being also unwilling to preach in town in a church where three other denominations held services—two regularly and the other occasionally—I advised them to make an effort to procure another minister, which they refused to do. I at once resigned my charge. \* \* \* I have, as some of my brethren know, made repeated efforts to obtain a charge that would justify me in moving my family to, however great might be the distance to any place where a vacancy is, or has been since my resignation. But having failed in every attempt to make satisfactory arrangements, I determined to turn my attention to the study of medicine; so that after I shall have completed my course of studies, which I hope to be able to do in several months more, I may settle in the bounds of a small and weak charge that could justify no man in attend-

ing to them for the remuneration they would be able to give for his services. In such a situation, I could procure my livelihood by the practice of the profession I am in the process of assuming, and thus perhaps be a means of benefiting my fellow mortals both spiritually and physically. Having written a long and tedious letter, I close by saying that I have the most implicit confidence in the judgment, zeal and Christian fidelity of my brethren who compose the present session of Synod. May the divine blessing of Almighty God rest on you and your mutual transactions, is the sincere prayer of your humble brother in the Lord Jesus Christ.

ALFRED J. FOX.

He took his family by private conveyance to North Carolina, in 1852, to attend the meeting of the Tennessee Synod. Again in 1853, he went on horseback to visit churches, which led subsequently to his removal.



## CHAPTER IV.

### RETURN TO NORTH CAROLINA.

WITH the call from four churches in North Carolina in the autumn of 1854, came the dawn of a happier day. The ardent desire of his heart, long smouldering in the ashes of despondency, was now gratified. The prospect of work in the vineyard of the Lord broke upon the long night of disappointment like a ray of sunlight from a leaden sky. He left a very lucrative practice, that was continually enlarging, to take charge of the congregations which had extended the call. In North Carolina he reached the highest sphere of his usefulness. Here he labored for thirty years with untiring energy and fidelity. He entered upon this work when at the meridian of his manhood, at the age of 36, and died at the post of duty. Here the largest influence for good was exerted in the wide fields of medicine and the ministry. By the service of these years the world was made better. From it waves of influence touched the eternal shore. Upon it rests the fragrance of the divine benediction.

The call from North Carolina came from Grace church in Catawba county, Daniel's and Trinity in Lincoln, and Christ's, in Gaston county. He located for a few months in Catawba, near Grace church, but early in 1855 he moved to a farm in Lincoln, five miles northwest of Lincolnton, where he lived, with the exception of six years, the remainder of his life. At the end of a year he resigned Christ's church and accepted a call from Salem, where he was ordained and in whose cemetery he is buried. He preached his introduc-

tory sermon at Grace church, January 7, 1855. He was pastor of Grace and Salem until he died. With the exception of these two churches, several changes in his pastoral relations were made. He always preached to four or five congregations, but sometimes had charge of more. In the parochial report of the minutes of 1868, of the Tennessee Synod, we learn that he had nine churches with 960 communicants; and in the minutes of 1874, that he had charge of eleven churches with a membership of 1800. Among the congregations in this State to which he ministered in holy things are the following: In Catawba, Grace, St. Peter's, Holy Trinity, at Hickory, Newton, Sardis; in Iredell, Sharon, St. Martin; in Lincoln, Salem, Daniel's, Trinity, Bethpage; in Gaston, St. Mark's, Christ's; in Cleveland, St. Matthew's, and a mission point. His charge at the close of his life consisted of Grace, Salem, Holy Trinity at Hickory, and St. Matthew's at King's Mountain. All the churches to which he preached flourished. Into all new life was infused. He aroused even those whose condition and prospects seemed hopeless. For example, when he took charge of Hickory there seemed little hope. Other ministers who had been pastors had despaired. By the urgency of the North Carolina Conference he entered, much against his own wishes and solely for the good of the church, upon the work of a missionary. Even the members of the church at Hickory gave him little encouragement. But with sublime tenacity he held on to the cause, until within three years new life manifested itself, his congregations increased, useful members were added, improvements were made in the church edifice, and now it is one of the most hopeful churches of the synod. As an organizer and builder, few equalled him. In church-work he had only one aim—growth. He did not believe in stagnation nor lukewarmness.

When among his flock one interest manifested itself in all his conduct and words, the interest of the church. This was ever on his heart and lips. His conversations embodied, it is true, other matters of interest. Full of general and practical information, he interested old and young in a vast range of subjects, but the opportunity of speaking of the progress or condition of the church was never neglected. In his visits to every home he never tired of talking even into the late hours of night. Propositions to retire seldom came from him. He seemed not to expect that before midnight, though he knew the hour for rising came early in the morning. It is remarkable that he cared so little for sleep. The medical practice induced perhaps the habit of sleeping little.

The growth of his churches may be seen in one instance. Grace, in Catawba county, had, at the beginning of his ministry to it, only 38 members. The members of the Lutheran and German Reformed churches worshiped in the same house—an old log building. The German Reformed congregation was composed of 200 members, being among the most substantial citizens of that country. At the close of his ministry of a little less than thirty years, the Lutheran congregation had something over 200 members, and the Reformed about 40. They worship in a neat, substantial brick church, of which the Lutherans were the principal builders. He confirmed at this church in the whole time 209 members. The confirmations at some of his other churches are as follows: Salem, 178; Daniel's, 167; Trinity, 229; Bethpage, 154; Sardis, 60, and many at other places.

When his pastorate became too large, some time after the war, he resigned four of his churches, which extended a call to Rev. M. L. Little. This change gave rise afterwards to some of the sorest troubles of his life. For awhile they

gave him bitter grief, but towards the close of his life its burden was lightened. He moved to Newton, the county-seat of Catawba county, in March, 1873. His chief purpose in going there was to educate his children. Soon after his removal he resigned Daniel's church, one of his favorites, under circumstances that never ceased to annoy and distress him. He always referred to his going to Newton as the second great mistake of his life, his removal to Alabama being the first. He censured himself frequently for leaving his home in Lincoln county. While in Newton he was seized with chronic diarrhoea, and he despaired of his life. He did a large practice when well, first in connection with Dr. Huit, his student in medicine who died, and afterwards with his son, Dr. A. C. Fox. He preached to four churches far distant from the town, and for awhile to the church in town. He remained in Newton three years, then located near Salem church in Lincoln county, where he lived three more years, and then returned to his old homestead, where he remained until his death.

His ministry altogether was very successful. Thousands of souls owe their deepest moral and religious impressions to his preaching and example. By his death the church and the world suffered irreparable loss.

From those who lived under the holy influences of his work for thirty years voices came up, "None can fill his place." When he fell, the whole community put on sackcloth and ashes. Strong men, with little children, wept. The Church said: "I have lost a faithful, earnest, successful workman." Society said: "We have lost a friend, upon whose character does not rest even the breath of an evil suspicion." The world said: "Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?"

He fell with his armor on. On the day, two weeks after

his return from assisting his son in Tennessee with his spring communions, he passed into eternity. His last sermons were among the best and happiest efforts of his life. His very last sermon was preached in Solomon's (Cove Creek) church, Greene county, Tenn., on May 25, 1884, from 1 John v. 6-8. His closing sentences, though calm and deliberate, were touching, and brought tears from many eyes.

The following is a curtailed summary of his work. He baptised 2,346 infants and adults; confirmed 1,558 souls; married 190 couples; and preached 3,419 sermons.

The first charge of which he was pastor after coming to North Carolina failed to support him, and he began the practice of medicine to supplement his meagre salary from the churches. By hard work in the medical profession he made the major part, nearly all, of his fortune. He always made this subordinate, however, to his ministry. It is a wonder that he had a practice at all on account of his engagement in church work, which he never neglected, and which often required much time from his practice. But he never failed to do a large medical business when at home. He seemed to engage in it not so much for self-support, but to accommodate the public. He never received a living church salary in his life. He never complained of this, however, either publicly or privately to his members. He seemed content, if the people were, to provide for all his wants, by labor in another profession. Possibly we find in this one of his greatest mistakes. He should have preached for the benefit of the people themselves: "The Lord hath ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." The ministry have a right to ask: "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" Failure to support the

ministry, when capable, is the sin of the people, that needs rebuking even from the sacred desk.

Having lain aside what he conceived to be competence for temporal use, he abandoned the practice in 1860, leaving it in the hands of Dr. Eli Crowell, whose preceptor and partner he had been, and devoted himself exclusively to the work of the ministry. But in 1862 Dr. Crowell went into the Confederate army, and he was forced by the wants of his community to resume it. At the close of the war he was compelled to continue it to regain his great financial losses.

He was opposed to secession, not because he denied the the rights of States to secede, and was not therefore strictly a Union man, but because he did not believe the circumstances demanded a revolution, and because he foresaw defeat. He made some political speeches against secession, the only ones of that character in his life, and one in the court-house at Lincolnton. His fellow-citizens urged him to become a candidate for the State Convention, and many precincts instructed their delegations to vote for him, but he refused to become a candidate, going into the Convention and positively declining to allow his name to be put in nomination. When the State passed the secession ordinance, holding that a citizen's first duty is to the State rather than the nation, he acquiesced. When political feelings ran high, and the tide of war presented sober thoughts, his views of the situation were misunderstood, and strong passions were aroused against him, but a public statement from him allayed the animosity, and the end showed that he was right. He lost \$13,000 by the war, more than half of his possessions. His wife inherited several slaves. He never bought one, and sold only one, because he preferred to remain in Alabama. At the close of the war he had nine slaves, who

were of course emancipated. Several of them remained with him for some years after the war. But he had the principal part of his property in private bonds, in order to be spared the trouble of managing it, and these were paid off in the third and fourth years of the war, a dollar in Confederate money, worth a cent or less, paying for a dollar loaned in gold. He dared not refuse to take it, else a terrible cry of treason to the Southern government would be raised. Out of eight or ten thousand dollars in money he saved perhaps one thousand.

## CHAPTER V.

### MINISTERIAL CHARACTER.

DR. FOX was a *theologian* of considerable attainments. The extent and thoroughness of his acquaintance with dogmatic theology especially was remarkable in view of his great medical study and the constancy of his engagements in that profession. While he was not permitted by pressing duties in other spheres to become conversant with the "church fathers," he was nevertheless enabled through quotations, especially in the translation of Schmid's *Dogmatics*, to learn their opinions on the great cardinal doctrines of the Lutheran church. His preparation for the ministry came in a day when the fathers and dogmaticians held an unimportant position in a course of study, and were in very few theological libraries; and when they came into more prominence, his busy life prevented their close examination.

But he was all that the Tennessee Synod demanded—a *Lutheran* theologian. He was profoundly learned on the chief fundamental doctrines of the Church of the Reformation. Concerning these he well knew the teachings and position of the church. And he, not only with his intellect understood, but with his will and affections accepted them. His head and heart were not pulling against each other on the glorious principles and dogmas of the Lutheran faith. Convinced of their scriptural foundation, that, they were the "truth as it is in Jesus," "the faith once delivered to the saints," he consecrated his energies of body and soul to their defense. He built his own life upon them. He an-



chored his immortal hopes in them. And his death gave evidence of the eternal victory they secured him. He delighted in conversing about Lutheran doctrines, in discussing their deep mysteries, and in unravelling the web in which others became entangled. His associations with ministers and intelligent laymen were often attended with these conversations and discussions. Very few men waged with him theological warfare without the discovery and assurance that they were dealing with a master of the great "Science of God." The character of his theological system was eminently biblical. For every doctrine he had scriptural proof always at command. He supported his propositions often profusely with direct quotations from the Scriptures. His pulpit scriptural references were exquisite in their adaptation to the truths asserted. He had little patience with speculative theology, and grew restless under sermons that introduced mere personal opinions. He could not tolerate human thought where one should expound God's word. He would press candidates under examination for scriptural authority. The biblical character of his theological thinking may be illustrated by an incident in his last illness. In his delirium he alluded to a sect who deny the divinity of Christ, and said "they have no scriptural support for their opinion, for the Bible says," and then went on quoting passage after passage, proving that Christ is God.

The person of Christ was an important and conspicuous doctrine in his system. Concerning it he had an intelligent faith. He had a deep penetration of its mysteries. The candidates for the ministry upon examination before him were always tested as to their knowledge and faith in respect to the "*communicatio idiomatum*." Among other doctrines he was learned especially on the nature and attributes of God, Providence, Angels, Original Sin, Regenera-

tion, Justification, Sanctification, Repentance and Conversion, Means of Grace, Baptism and the Eucharist. The doctrine of *special providence* especially exerted a high and governing influence over his life. His convictions were firm that God concurred in all the acts of his life; chose his changes, planned his course, and attended his actions. "The indications of providence" was an expression frequently upon his lips; and he saw those indications in events that seemed trivial to those of weaker faith. He believed that God exercised not only a general providence over the world, but that there was divine concurrence in the laws that govern the universe, as well as in all the events of individual life.

He viewed Jehovah not only as the Creator of all things, as peopling immensity with suns and stars, as the Moral Governor of the Universe, but also as "numbering the hairs of our heads," and marking "the sparrow's fall."

His ability as a theologian was known and recognized by all his acquaintances. Rarely ever was he present at a convention of synod and not made a member of the examining committee, very often its chairman. The ordination sermon was generally preached by him. He was the theological preceptor of Revs. J. K. Haucher, A. R. Bennick, E. E. Smyre, D. E. Fox, A. L. Crouse, and his own sons, Luther A. and Junius B. Fox.

As a *preacher*, he was a man of superior talents. In many respects he was a natural orator. His manner was full of earnestness and warmth, without rant; his gestures few and appropriate; his bearing dignified and serious, his voice clear, finely compassed, and exhibiting in its deeper intonations the sweetest rhythm and melody. His characteristics were clearness, fluency, argumentativeness, combined with no small power of persuasiveness. He was clear both in his conceptions and presentations of truth.

He made himself understood by the plainest people. He could not endure leaving a truth beyond the conception of the most illiterate hearer. It was sometimes objected to his sermons before large congregations that he kept constantly before him the most ignorant, stopping to illustrate any point he thought might appear obscure to any, or to explain any unusual word. He felt that it was injustice to his audience, which was generally in the country, to lift his thought or expression above the capability of their appreciation. One would think that long indulged habit in the adaptation of his preaching to plainer people would prevent the elevation of his ideas and style before more cultivated audiences. But in preaching to select audiences, as he frequently did, his language was so chaste, his thoughts so profound, that one could scarcely recognize his ability to preach otherwise. He had the happy faculty in an unusual degree of interesting and carrying along with him all the grades of hearers. In his country preaching he could have been more brilliant, had he been less thoughtful of the common people, but far less useful. This clearness of his own thoughts and lucid exposition of them is one of the reasons of his success. A marked feature of his preaching was fluency. In the beginning of his discourse he was deliberate and sometimes slow, but when he fully entered upon the discussion he had a ready command of language without being verbose. He rarely ever failed to get the precise word he wanted, and in setting out a truth in its various lights he never lacked appropriate expression. He possessed a remarkable vocabulary upon which he could draw *ad libitum*. Another feature was force of argument. When he failed to convince he made us respect his position. His method of discussion was peculiar. He easily and unobtrusively dislodged men's prejudices against his proposi-

tions. There were almost no traces of fancy, yet it did not seem like dry logic. Somehow he carried his hearers along in long arguments without any of the ordinary means employed by speakers. By his cogent reasoning he had the faculty of moving men. They were, however, not driven but persuaded by his argument. He made them feel the force of that argument, and impelled by their emotions and sense of duty they came under its influence and to its obedience.

In this way he persuaded men. He made few direct appeals. Those he made were without excitement and fanaticism, but in quiet and more winsome methods. Men went out from under his preaching, not wild, but thoughtful.

Prof. J. C. Barb, of Whitestown, Indiana, gives us an instance of the effect of his preaching in *Our Church Paper* of June 26, 1884: "The writer remembers hearing him preach on one occasion from these words: 'What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people.' Ps. cxvi. 12-14. After the delivery of the sermon I met one, not of Lutheran faith, who said, with tears in his eyes, 'I feel like taking the cup of salvation.'"

The style of his sermons was expository. He threw open all the bearings of his text. He made clear the propositions which it involved. One could easily see that the chief burden of his discourse was to expound the Scriptures. He disliked simple declamation. A sermon in his judgment must descend to the very roots of the subject. It must bear the spirit of the passage from which it is taken. It must grasp the great and leading thought, and cling to it without unnecessary aberrations and with unbroken unity. Even in early manhood the method of exposition was the leading trait of his sermonizing.

We find in his preaching sometimes traces of refined humor. Witticisms that never breathed the air of vulgarity frequently found their way into his pulpit efforts. They amused without being ridiculous. He placed himself under self-restraint, however, in this particular. Conscious of his humorous faculty, he brought it into subjection, for fear of stripping his sermon of its seriousness and dignity, and robbing the pulpit of its sacredness. But when he wished to enforce a truth, or regain flagging interest, he sometimes indulged in wit of the most innocent character.

His manner of preaching was chiefly conversational. During the greater part of the discussion it was animated conversation that grew into pathos, until he often became truly eloquent. He preached without manuscript, and for many years without even notes. He had before his mind his plan clearly marked out and he needed no reminders. In his preparation for the pulpit, he rarely ever wrote a line. He would select his text early in the week, and when not otherwise engaged, he would consider it in all its bearings. When going from house to house visiting his patients he was studying his sermon. On Sunday morning before he rose from bed he would fix definitely his plan, think out the order of the more important arguments in their relation to each other, and if he had his usual clearness he was ready. With this preparation he could draw out at will from his various stores of knowledge. As the occasion suggested he took his illustrations from the different fields of nature, or from society, or from recent events, or from his fund of anecdotes. When the Synod met in South Carolina, in 1861, it was announced on the ground just before the opening session that a battle had been fought at Charleston, in which many soldiers of that community had been engaged. It was also reported that the enemy had commenced an in-

vasion upon the interior. The hour for preaching arrived, and, as president, he was to deliver the synodical sermon. Rarely ever does a minister have a more difficult task than lay before him that morning. His text was Hebrews ii. 3: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" By reference to the rumor he arrested the attention of the entire congregation, and by means of anecdotes, some serious and some amusing, but each one illustrating a truth he was setting forth, he held it completely for an hour and a quarter. He seemed to know his audiences and his circumstances and rarely ever failed to enlist their attention and impress upon them his leading thoughts. Of him as a preacher *Our Church Paper* of June 19, 1884, in an editorial thus speaks: "By his death, the family, the Church, and the State incur irreparable loss. He was one of the ablest and most efficient ministers of the South—profound, eloquent, and impressive, with indomitable energy and perseverance, defensive and aggressive. Few men wielded greater influence. Faithful and true, his stewardship never suffered. He has now gone to give an account of it; and all the indications are that he heard, as his soul entered, the welcome, the enchanting plaudit, 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter into the joys of eternal rest, in the midst of angels and just men made perfect.'"

In the issue of August 7, 1884, of the same paper, an elder of Grace church speaks of "our pastor" in the following tender words: "There can never be replaced a pastor of this congregation, that can gain the affection and admiration of people generally in all respects, as he did. He was loved and esteemed by all. He became so intimately connected with his people that he was almost a brother by the ties of consanguinity."

Dr. Fox was during the whole of his life a very decided

*Lutheran.* His early childhood fell in that period when the division of the church brought new and general attention to the doctrines of the Lutheran church. The conflict led even the laity to a most earnest study, and resulted in very positive conviction. His family was deeply interested and espoused very heartily the cause of the new synod. The discussion of these doctrines formed some of his earliest impressions. His early ministry was in the life-time of the fathers of the movement, his preceptor being one of the ablest supporters. He entered the church in an epoch that required firm and settled convictions; and enlisted in the Master's service in the Tennessee Synod, "a sect universally spoken against," at a time when her very name was held in derision. Such antagonism made deeper his convictions of truth; and rendered stronger his adherence to the faith of his fathers. He believed the doctrines of the Lutheran church, because they appeared to him to be clearly taught in the Bible. He made them prominent in his creed and in his ministry, because they are so fundamentally connected with the plan of salvation. Not party spirit but personal study was the prime cause of his faith. So plainly did those doctrines seem to him to be written in the Scriptures, that it was difficult for him to understand how any conscientious, honest reader of the Bible could fail to accept them. He preached the distinctive doctrines of his church whenever and wherever opportunity was afforded or occasion required. Under no circumstances would he have hesitated to maintain or defend them. There was not one point in the whole sum of confessional Lutheranism that he did not heartily receive and endorse. How therefore any one, especially those of the same synodical relations, could consistently and truthfully question his Lutheranism is difficult to understand unless their doubt is exposed to the light of

ultra-Lutheranism. It would be false to his memory to say that he was exclusive. He did not believe that the famous "Four Points" are essential to Lutheran practice. He believed and preached that Lutheran altars are the only altars for Lutherans. Never in his life, not even in Alabama where he was so long denied the privileges of his church, did he receive the communion from the hands of any but Lutheran ministers, or anywhere except in a Lutheran congregation. He often preached, thereby subjecting himself to misrepresentation and reproach, that only those who believe the Lutheran doctrine of the Holy Supper, ought to commune at Lutheran altars. In later years especially he invited only such persons. As the true body and blood of Christ are *really present* with the earthly elements, and as St. Paul says: "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body," he believed, that, if any persons received the Supper "not discerning the Lord's body," or simply as a feast of bread and wine, as a *memorial* of Christ's passion, or as a *symbol* of Christ's absent flesh and blood, without any premonition, that he himself was responsible for their unworthy communion. Though often misunderstood even by his friends, such was really his position.

But when not tested by the "Four Points," if indeed they are a test at all, he was ever found a Lutheran of the highest type and most unshaken convictions. One could not be associated with him, or hear him preach, without observing that he was thoroughly, conscientiously and immutably grounded in the faith of the Lutheran church. Rarely ever did he preach without some reference to her distinctive doctrines. He was one of the ablest defenders of the true and historic Lutheran faith in the Tennessee Synod or in the South.



## CHAPTER VI.

### HISTORY IN THE TENNESSEE SYNOD.

WHEN Dr. Fox entered the ministry the Tennessee Synod had been seventeen years in existence. It was organized in Cove Creek (Solomon's church), Greene county, Tenn., on the 17th of July, 1820, by Revs. Jacob Zink, Paul Henkel, Adam Miller, sr., Philip Henkel, and Geo. Easterly. Rev. David Henkel was not present, but assisted largely by communication in the organization. At her seventeenth convention, when Dr. Fox was admitted to the grade of deacon, she had ten ministers, four deacons, and four applicants. Her territory extended over portions of Virginia, Tennessee, North and South Carolina. After 1860, when the ministers in Tennessee withdrew on account of the great distances to the places of meeting, but from no dissatisfaction, either as to doctrine or persons, to organize the *Evangelical Lutheran Holston Synod*, the Tennessee Synod has not had a congregation in Tennessee. She still retains the name, Tennessee Synod, because organized in the State of Tennessee, and by right of long possession, although her geographical position for the last twenty-five years embraces only Virginia, North and South Carolina.

It is evident, therefore, from the statement of these facts, that in the early history of the Tennessee Synod, it was no easy accomplishment to meet in Synodical convention. With the sessions alternating between four States, Virginia, Tennessee, and the two Carolinas, the distance to Synod for the majority of the ministers must necessarily have been enor-

mously great. Suppose the session to be in Virginia. The brethren in North Carolina must travel a journey of 300 or 500 miles, and those in South Carolina of 400 or 600 miles, in order to enjoy the luxury of a few days of fraternal association, and to perform the important service of devising the best things for Zion. Those were indeed laborious, tedious, wearisome trips on horseback, the only possible mode of travel in those days, over dangerous streams, and lofty mountains. They necessitated an absence from home and church work for at least a period of thirty days, and an expenditure of about thirty dollars. Surely we have in this history the noble examples of unselfish consecration to duty, the evidence of the deepest fraternal love, and the highest churchly devotion.

Notwithstanding these evidences of internal agreement and personal consecration to the work of the ministry and of the Synod, the period when Dr. Fox became a member of the Synod was perhaps the darkest and most hopeless in her history. There was little prospect indeed for her continued existence. Some of her leading spirits had departed to the enjoyment of eternal rest, among whom were Revs. David, Paul, and Philip Henkel. Her ministers were aged fathers, and most of them illiterate. The churches were consequently languishing and hopeless. Her cords were shortened, and her stakes weakened. Many of the laymen could preach as well, perhaps, as some of the ministers who delivered at best mere exhortations, and devoted most of their time to secular engagements. Many members separated themselves therefore from the church of their fathers, and attached themselves to the denominations around, whose educated ministry and cultured laity afforded them a more congenial spiritual home. One of our leading divines, who entered the Tennessee Synod in that unfavorable epoch, and

who afterwards became the Leonidas that led the little Spartan band through the Thermopylæ of Lutheranism, lately remarked, that, "it required obedience to faith and principle to be a Lutheran in those days, if a Lutheran at all."

But the Tennessee Synod suffered not only from want of sufficient and proper ministerial force, but from opposition without. Though but a small body she professed to be, and was, the most distinctively Lutheran body on the American continent. The symbol of her faith, at least, according to her first constitution, was the unaltered Augsburg Confession. To this chief testimony of the Lutheran faith she alone tenaciously and immovably held, when from it and all *true* Lutheranism every American Synod had departed. Her distinctively Lutheran character, therefore, arrayed against her the antagonism of all other Lutheran bodies. Those with larger numbers of ministers, members, and influence denounced her, not only privately and from the pulpit, but in solemn resolutions. Such were the proceedings against her by the North Carolina Synod soon after her withdrawal in 1820, also those of the Virginia Synod in 1838, those of the General Synod in 1840, and the sermon of Dr. John Bachman, of Charleston.

Such was the geographical, personal and doctrinal position of the Tennessee Synod when Dr. Fox entered the ministry in 1837, and for several years afterward. It is enough to say that with the addition of several talented and promising young men about that time to her ministerial ranks, whom God raised up for the great work they were to perform, came a brighter day for the oppressed and declining Synod. A revival of the churches and Synod began. New interest was everywhere awakened. The people were filled with hope over the preaching and work of the new

young men. Hundreds were added to the church. In all places Zion awoke, and Jerusalem put on her beautiful garments. The young men, by their education and talent, brought strength to the Synod against external opposition. They exhibited the ability to defend the Synod against all aggression, and to ward off violent assault. They lived to see the triumph of the principles for which they contended, the withdrawal of opposition, the rescission of denouncing resolutions, and to enjoy expressions of fraternal regard and agreement from those who were once their foes. Dr. Fox was with these young men in all the trials through which they passed, and in every struggle, showed that he was equal to the emergency.

His entire ministry, embracing a period of 47 years, was in connection with the Tennessee Synod. He never asked for honorable dismissal from the Synod until the last session he attended in 1883, and this was done in view of prospective work in the Holston Synod. The honorable dismissal was granted, if he desired it, but he died before it was necessary to be formally given by the president. During the whole time of his connection with the Tennessee Synod, he occupied a high and important position in it. He contributed more than any other man to both her conservatism and progress. *Our Church Paper* of June 19, 1884, says of him: "While his work was confined within the limits of the Tennessee Synod, his influence was felt in the whole Lutheran Church in this country, as he was frequently corresponding delegate to other Lutheran bodies. He always held positions of honor and trust in his Synod, and was for many years her leading spirit. He gave direction and counsel in all her interests, and was an able advocate and defender of the pure doctrines of the Church of the Reformation."

While his position was always one of prominence and service, for the thirty years previous to his death especially, the Synod did not engage in any important work in which he was not one of the principal actors. He was chosen president five times after 1858; previous to which time we do not know how often he was presiding officer as the name of the president was never recorded in the minutes before 1851. In the early history of the Synod there seems to have been some little misunderstanding about the propriety of recording the president's name.\*

Dr. Fox. wrote the first *President's Report* of the Tennessee Synod, as is self-evident from the abstract below taken from the minutes of 1861.

#### PRESIDENT'S REPORT.

*Dear Brethren:*—Heretofore it has not been the custom of the presiding officer in the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod to make out and read an official report at the opening of our annual sessions, and I am aware that under a strict interpretation of our constitution no such officer exists after the close of the session, and, therefore, during the year no official acts can properly be performed by the President. But inasmuch as by common consent, the office

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\* In the minutes of 1839, p. 5, we find the following foot-note by the Secretary: "We have often been asked who was president of our Synod? Why was not his name recorded in your minutes? To these interrogatories we would reply, that a respectable number of the members of Synod were in favor of having the name of the president inserted in our minutes, and indeed we could see no impropriety in it, and conceive that according to the 'local and temporary regulations' appended to the constitution, it should be left a matter discretionary with the secretary; but a vote was taken on it, and a majority were opposed to it on the ground, (as is expressed in the 'local and temporary regulations' above adverted to), that it was unnecessary, inasmuch as another president may be elected every day, and the constitutional term of his office expires with the adjournment of Synod."

of President is allowed to continue from one session to another, and inasmuch as during the past year several official acts have been requested of me as President, and as I felt it my duty to comply with some of these requests, I deem it nothing but right that I should render an account of my stewardship to those whom I have represented, and therefore beg leave to read before you and submit to your Christian consideration the following:

REPORT.—We, by the grace of God, are assembled together in the forty-first annual convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, and it becomes us as a body of Christian ministers and lay delegates to make suitable returns of thankfulness and praise to our kind Heavenly Father and the great Head of the church for the many great and distinguished blessings we have enjoyed from the very origin of our organization, and especially during the past year.

Our Synod, it is true, has had many severe trials, some of them seeming to threaten her very existence, yet, in the hand of God, she has survived them all, and to-day stands the first Synod on the continent of America who took her position in defense of the pure and wholesome doctrines of the venerable confession of Augsburg, and still maintains them. I congratulate you upon this fact, which I believe to be the ground of the disposition manifested in several other Synods in this country, to return to the ancient land-marks and standards of doctrine established by our fathers of the Reformation.

Then follows a reference to the war then commencing, a statement of official acts, and the Report concludes with a recommendation that the Synod encourage *The Southern Lutheran*, that she send a delegate to the general convention of the Lutheran church in the Southern States in Salisbury, N. C., and that she bestow especial attention upon the subject of catechising the young people, and instructing them in the Sunday-schools.

It will not be improper to mention some of the most important synodical movements which he inaugurated, and

in which he participated. He was a member of the committee to plan the establishment of a Literary Institution under the control of the Synod in 1852. He was the most active leader in the missionary cause, and exerted himself more than any other to break the fetters by which the Synod was bound by her first constitution from engaging in mission work and beneficiary education. In 1857 he was active in organizing a Missionary Society in North Carolina, and preached the first sermon before it, which was published by request, and is given in the appendix to this Biography. He advocated a revision of the Constitution with great earnestness, was a member of the committee, and contributed in no small degree to its final adoption in 1866. He first awoke the Tennessee Synod from her lethargy in the cause of missions, and taught her the necessity of an educated ministry. In a "Report on the State of the Church," in 1869, he speaks the following arousing words: "It seems to your Committee, that the time has come for our Synod to awake to a deeper sense of the very important duty of engaging in the several enterprises in which every other Synod in this country is at work, and by which the Lutheran Church was founded, and for a long time maintained in America. Every other Synod is more or less engaged in the work of Missions and Beneficiary Education, and are accomplishing an immense amount of good. As a Synod, we stand alone inactive in these things, and it seems to your committee that if we continue thus to stand, many of our congregations will soon cease to flourish, and die out, and the fearful responsibility will rest on us. It is our duty to supply our vacant congregations with a well-educated, faithful ministry, and also to extend our borders as rapidly as possible." He was appointed at this convention to write a "Pastoral Letter" to the churches on the subjects of Missions and an Educated Ministry. In

1878, he drafted and read the "Regulations for the Government of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod in the Work of Beneficiary Education."

He was a member of the committee to write By-laws and Rules of Order in 1861. He was chairman of the committee in 1863 to propose a plan of operations for Army Missions, and in accordance with that plan visited a few times the Lutheran soldiers in 1863 and 1864. He prepared a "Form of Licensure of Candidates for the Ministry," which was adopted by the Synod in 1865. And in 1877, he was chairman of the committee on the "Probation of Candidates for the Ministry" which recommended the abrogation of the "Form of Licensure," which then appeared inexpedient, and the adoption of the "Probation" system which is in operation in the Tennessee Synod to-day.

He introduced the resolution to district the Synod into Conferences, and the result was the formation of the Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina Conferences of the Tennessee Synod. He was one of the originators, if not the prime mover, of the confessional spirit in the Synod. As early as 1855, he wrote a letter to the Synod, whose convention that year he could not attend, in which "he gave it as his opinion, that Synod should clearly define her position in reference to the Symbolical Books of the Church." At that time the Doctrinal Basis of the Synod included only the Augsburg Confession and Luther's Smaller Catechism. It was not, however, until 1859, that the Synod embraced in her Doctrinal Basis the entire collection of Symbols in the Book of Concord.

He was chairman of the committee to submit a form of *Church Discipline* in 1868. In 1873 he introduced the standing resolutions on catechisation. He was among the active workers for the establishment of *Our Church Paper*



in 1872 and 1873. He represented the Tennessee Synod in visits to Mount Pleasant, N. C., to confer with committees of the North Carolina Synod in the election of a board of editors and in the selection of a place of publication.

The subject of union among Lutherans, not only of the South, but throughout the United States, was one that lay very near his heart, and for which he always exerted his utmost ability. He hailed with joy the return of all the synods to the standard of true Lutheranism, as he knew that this was the only possible basis of external unity. We find union recommended and sought for in almost all his presidential reports. He was prominent on all the committees for this laudable object. It was the burden of the message that he carried often as delegate to other bodies. It was a consummation he devoutly sought by private correspondence and communications to the church journals. And even when all his efforts seemed to meet with defeat "he hoped against hope." He anticipated the day when in God's own good time all who professed to be Lutherans would be one in the unity of faith. He endeavored greatly to cultivate a friendly spirit and establish a congenial relation between the North Carolina, Tennessee and Holston Synods, not only by propositions of union as president of the Tennessee Synod, but as delegate to the other two, and by extensive correspondence with the leading ministers. He labored for the union of the whole Southern Lutheran church. He was chairman of the committee to meet the convention called at Salisbury in 1862 for the organization of the Southern General Synod. He was the commissioner who met that body in Staunton, Va., in 1867. And had the entire Southern General Synod stood to the doctrinal platform and agreement of their committee, Rev. Drs. A. R. Rude, D. F. Bittle and T. W. Dosh, who held a colloquium

with him, the union of that Synod with the Tennessee Synod would have been the satisfactory result.

He was not only chairman of the committee of the Tennessee Synod that met the Committee of the North Carolina Synod at Mount Pleasant, N. C., on the 27th day of April, 1871, to agree upon a basis of union between the two synods, but was chairman of both committees at this meeting.

But he was not permitted to see the day of the happy prospective union for which he so ardently wished. His eyes were closed upon the results of the struggles for this grand accomplishment for which he had so long contended. From the prospect of unity in the church militant he was removed to the enjoyment of the perfect union of the church triumphant.

He finished his work in the brightest epoch of the Tennessee Synod. While there was in the last few years the introduction of policies and phases of Lutheran practice which he did not believe to be best for the church, he nevertheless had the satisfactory anticipation that the good work in which for nearly half a century he had engaged would go forward under the blessing of God. At his death the synod had 28 ministers, 3 candidates and 8 beneficiaries, an increase of a hundred per cent. in the number and character of her ministerial force, with a corresponding percentage in increased usefulness from the time of his entering the ministry.

## CHAPTER VII.

### CHARACTER AS A PHYSICIAN.

DR. FOX began the study of medicine in Alabama in 1848. He was then thirty-one years old, and had been an ordained minister ten years. The causes that led him to the medical profession, as already indicated, were principally because he was not, and apparently could not be, engaged in the work of the ministry. He gave three years to the preparatory study of the profession, under the tuition of Drs. Francis and Clark, who were among the most eminent physicians of that day in the State. After attending lectures at the medical college of Augusta, Ga., he applied to the medical board of the State of Alabama for license. His preceptors, Drs. Francis and Clark, who were members of the board, turned him over at once to the other members as perfectly satisfied with his knowledge of medicine, and no one asked him more than a few questions. He came to the practice thoroughly read. After obtaining license he practiced in the State about three years, when he removed to North Carolina in 1855.

He was a regular practitioner for thirty-three years, and with the exception of two interims of a couple of years in which he devoted himself exclusively to the pastoral work.

The type of his medical character was allopathy. He, however, occasionally adopted a homœopathic remedy, when he thought it possessed of sufficient and suitable remedial virtue. He belonged to the school of regular practitioners. Like them, he exercised independence of investi-

gation and thought in reference not only to the theory of disease but the proper therapeutics. He never attempted, however, to go beyond the justifiable limits of the standard authors. He was not too radical, in so far that he would cling to the old simply because it was old. He was not too progressive—abandoning an old remedy for one whose virtues were unknown, or simply because it was new. He was wisely conservative—progressing with the science of medicine, yet sure to retain tried theories and remedies until he was convinced of the superiority of those lately discovered. He possessed a large and well-selected medical library. He was subscriber to the best medical journals of the age. He was a diligent student of all the medical thought with which he came in contact. His excellent memory enabled him to digest and retain the substance of his reading. This superior recollection of facts gave him power to cope with men who devoted themselves exclusively to medicine, quite as well as though he was engaged in only one profession. The mystery is that he could elevate himself to any distinction in medicine, when he had consecrated himself so fully to the ministry, and his heart and highest aspiration lay in that work. We can attribute whatever measure of success with which he was favored only to his superior talent, his indomitable energy, and high, fixed purpose of soul.

His success was proof of his skill. He never failed to have a large practice either in Alabama or North Carolina, when the sickness of his community demanded it. In North Carolina physicians were numerous, and competition was great, but he maintained his usual extent of practice to the last. Few physicians traveled over larger territory. Frequently he had patients twenty-five and thirty miles from his home, under the very shadow of other doctors' residences. The maintainance of his large professional duties

wherever he located, at Newton, and in Lincoln county, N. C., in the face of opposition, is positive testimony that he was a physician of no mean reputation. Especially is this apparent when we consider the fact that he always neglected his practice for the duties of the church. It required no little confidence of patrons to wait for his services while he was absent, or to be content with simply his medicines until he returned. In those years when he preached to eight and nine congregations, he was most extensively engaged in the medical work.

Medical men valued his opinion. He was often called in consultation. A physician in North Carolina, who possesses a State reputation, who was called to see a patient in his absence remarked, "I can do no more than Dr. Fox has done." He had a considerable reputation as a surgeon. He did the largest surgical practice in the whole of his section. Very few operations were performed for many miles around his residence unless by himself and his brother-in-law, Dr. M. L. Brown, of Lincolnton.

His specialty, if he had any, was diseases peculiar to females, but he took more delight and was more successful in the treatment of chronic diseases, especially those that had baffled the skill of other physicians.

He could not tolerate "humbuggery." He loathed quackery. He never prescribed "patent medicines," unless he was certain of the formula of their composition. He was always honest in what he said about a case. He scorned the idea of riding into the confidence of his friends and others by trying to make them believe he had done great things when there was no danger.

In the examination of his patient he was thorough and careful. He did not administer medicines before he knew the nature and seat of the disease. Sometimes, when others

thought the examination sufficient, he persisted until he became thoroughly satisfied. He did not believe in "drugging." He thought it better to take no medicine unless it was really necessary. He did not humor the hysterical and hypochondriac with the large infusions of medicine which they sometimes expected, if any at all. We are not absolutely certain that he gave "bread pills," but, judging from the usual medical character, suppose that he did.

He was always cheerful and composed when in the presence of his patients, inspiring them with confidence, and encouraging them to keep up a strong moral courage. He was under the conviction that medical skill with its remedies could at best only assist nature in her efforts to cure, and that when nature was impeded by despair the case was more hopeless.

He often prayed with his patients when he saw there was danger, if he thought they could bear it, or were in a condition to appreciate it.

He did a large charity practice. Something of the benevolence of this part of his work may be seen from his books. Thousands of dollars were given away to the afflicted, not only in labor, but in medicines. Some of his services were not charged on his ledger, and much more money was given in this direction, because he preferred to allow the bills to pass out of date rather than ask for their payment when that would embarrass. "They need it more than we," was a frequent expression to his own family.

He did something in the way of giving medical instruction. In Alabama he had a student whose name is not now at command; in North Carolina he had, as students, Drs. Eli Crowell, who for twenty-five years has been doing a large practice, A. M. Huitt, who died just as he was commencing business, and his own sons, Albert C. and J. Francke Fox. He has three sons in the medical profession.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### HIS GENERAL CHARACTER.

**D**R. FOX was endowed with a strong native intellect. He was capable of deep and thorough analysis. He aimed at the depths of wisdom. He was not content with merely superficial and mechanical knowledge. He possessed a mind capable of grappling with the very foundations of a subject, and to those foundations he generally went. He was a profound and sprightly thinker. His judgment was calm, far-seeing and most always correct in its suppositions. His mind was sensitive, taking cognizance of all objects with which it came in contact, and forming correct conceptions of them almost by intuition. His intuitive perception was remarkable. If he did not comprehend a thought at once it was difficult for him to comprehend it at all. The most striking of his mental powers was his memory of facts. None who knew him could fail to observe the readiness with which he remembered places, names and faces. He never forgot a face he ever knew, and with the recognition of the face came the name. After twenty years of absence he would address his former acquaintances as readily as if he had seen them a few months before. A short while before his death he rehearsed incidents of forty years previous with as much vividness as if they had transpired a few days before. Going into any country where he had lived or traveled through, he could relate occurrences which most of the citizens who had never changed their residences had forgotten. Thus he remembered all

facts. He also had a sober judgment that could utilize these facts.

He was a safe counsellor. He was very cautious, often too much so, but he was on the side of safety. He had a peculiar power of reading character. He was sometimes mistaken in his first impressions of men, but not often. It was time to "beware of men" when he warned you.

He was generally very cool and self-possessed. He was never impulsive, except in giving expression to his indignation at that which he regarded as mean and evil. When he was pressed by parties for reasons for his course in any given respect, if that course was determined by their actions which he disapproved, he would speak the whole matter out. If he had been more reserved in such things his life would have been smoother in some respects. He despised dissimulation. He detested falsehood and chicanery to gain any end. A positive man, he attracted strongly, but he also repelled. When there was antagonism with him it was usually sharp.

The knowledge of his business, reaching into several spheres of activity, was remarkably accurate. He had the various ends of it always at command. He could inform you almost at any time, without reference to written records, concerning the various positions of his property and his financial status. He was prudently economical. He gave his means for all the necessaries and many of the luxuries of life, but he disdained extravagance.

In stature he was of medium height and well proportioned. He was not particularly muscular, but had great powers of endurance. His temperament was sanguine, with a mixture of the bilious, his countenance manly and engaging, indicative of principle and firm convictions. His face was intelligent and earnest. It was not so handsome as strong.



His bearing was always dignified. He never assumed an awkward position, even when it might have been unnoticed. His posture and carriage were erect. His personal appearance and manner were altogether such as to produce the conviction that he realized the responsibility of the high office with which he was invested, and the important duties with which he was charged. His demeanor on all occasions was natural, and not intended for personal attraction or effect.

For many years he was a dyspeptic, and rarely ever felt well, but this did not affect his social nature. In social intercourse he was very genial. He loved conversation. He would talk to any one, a child or a negro, who happened to be thrown with him. He could make himself interesting to persons of all ages. There never came a protracted lull in the conversation in which he participated. From his happy social nature came much of the good he accomplished in the world. He was always communicative. He gave the people the benefit of his best thoughts. In every association and relation he educated them. And the wisdom which he imparted was the wisdom of culture, of elevated and ennobling thought, of pure and upright life. He read and treasured up facts of pure and useful information, and he was constantly drawing out and distributing from those treasures "things new and old." In estimating the good effected by his preaching, and by all his public ministrations in the house of God, we must not forget the holy influence he shed upon all those with whom he was associated in the private circles of life. It might be that we would find in his quiet and unostentatious life, in the thousands of daily acts and efforts for the good and happiness of others—acts removed from the gaze and applause of men—a power and influence for the welfare and salvation of his fellow-men,

almost as great as that which he exercised in his public career. It is not easy to estimate the power for good wrought by the gentle word spoken in kindness, the act of benevolence and charity which no one knows except those upon whom it is bestowed, the prayer with a sinner alone which no one hears but God, or even the good impression that flows out like sunshine from the example of holy character and life. It is in the social circle, as well as in the pulpit, that Dr. Fox will be missed. Society is deprived of a leader, as the pulpit is of an able, eloquent and efficient minister. Long years will be passed before the name of Dr. Fox will cease to be spoken by the firesides once lighted up with his genial presence, and even after that name is forgotten his influence will live in the hearts that had not known him to love him.

He was a man of the strictest integrity. He was sometimes mistaken, but he was always conscientious. In whatever he did, he believed that he was right. In his business transactions he was perfectly honest. His character in all respects was pure. No man ever dared assail it in any of its moral bearings, or charge him with intentional wrong. There was not the breath of an evil suspicion resting on the whole of his life.

The secret of his success was his ardent piety. He was thoroughly and conscientiously a Christian. He had experienced in his own soul the regenerating and sanctifying operations of the Holy Spirit. His heart had been trained in the school of afflictions, and it never forgot the holy influences wrought upon it by divine grace. He was an intelligent believer. He could say, "I know whom I have believed." He was unshaken in his religious convictions. They could not for any consideration be bribed. They were as immovable as granite. They gave steadiness to his life,

and inspired the utmost confidence of all who knew him. The spirit of Christ was in him. His life was a beautiful exemplification of the truth of his principles and the power of the Gospel. His actions always corresponded with the lessons he inculcated from the pulpit—the duties he enforced in his pastoral relations. His claims to discipleship none questioned. His qualifications for the joys of the eternal world all admitted.

He was a man of great energy, indefatigable in all his labors, “instant in season and out of season.” Whatever his hands found to do he did with all his might. He did not yield to feelings of indisposition, and grant himself surcease from toil. Often he was sick, and several times he was very ill, yet he did an astonishing amount of work. For thirty years his engagements were such as ordinarily employ two or three men. But he did his work well, and did it with satisfactory ease.

Neither in medicine nor theology did he write much. His life was too busy. He had no time for elaborate treatises. He had very little taste for that kind of work, because he never had the opportunity of cultivating the skill. The effusions from his pen, though few, evinced, however, a style clear and terse, a reasoning cogent and convincing, and thoughts profound and lucidly expressed. Some of his written productions are beautiful and meritorious. His written sermons, however, were never equal to his extempore efforts; and reading them always placed him at decided disadvantage.

He would often enjoy pure anecdotes, and had a considerable fund which he told with effect. But he had no patience with them when impure or profane, or when serious matters were before him if told simply for amusement. He did not object sometimes when they were told at his expense.

While with a company of friends on a certain occasion he was reminded of an occurrence at synod. Several of "the brethren" were attempting "to raise the hymn." Their efforts failed. When asked whether he remembered that he said, "You just quit, brethren, let me try it?" he answered "Yes, and didn't I make it go?" He was playfully reminded then that this anecdote would find a place in his biography, but he little dreamed of that reality.

He related an interesting anecdote about himself. While traveling at a certain time he passed a house from which issued the shrieks of a woman as if about to be murdered. He dismounted, and soon learned that it was a man beating his wife. He gave himself to the woman's rescue. He caught hold of the scoundrel, threw him down, and asked for a rope to tie him. When the wife was released, she became indignant at what she considered as the unnecessary interposition of the stranger, and seizing a chair began to attack him who wished to befriend her, and told her husband that if he did not kill him she would never have anything more to do with him. Rewarded with such base ingratitude he abandoned the contest, and hastily returning to his horse, seeing in his escape the man's gun over the door, began to beat a fast retreat, settling down with the conviction that forever afterward he would permit man and wife "to fight it out" by themselves. These anecdotes might be indefinitely multiplied.

We give below a few of the published estimates of his general character. Others may be seen in the issues of *Our Church Paper*, New Market, Va., from June 19 to August 15, 1884; *Lincoln Press*, Lincolnton, N. C., June 13; *Newton Enterprise*, June 14; *Charlotte Observer*, June 15; *Piedmont Press* and *Western Carolinian*, Hickory, N. C.; *Home-Democrat*, Charlotte, N. C., June 20; *Gastonia Gazette*, and *Lutheran Observer*, Philadelphia, Pa.

Rev. A. J. Brown, D. D., Blountsville, Tennessee, a life-long companion and friend, thus testifies in *Our Church Paper* of July 17, 1884: "There was in Dr. Fox a personal magnetism that strongly attracted others to him, and greatly endeared him to all with whom he came in social contact, especially such as sympathized with him in his views, feelings and purposes, and at the same time a frankness that inspired all with the utmost confidence in his moral integrity, however greatly they might differ with him in some respects. He possessed also in a high degree the social qualities and colloquial powers which, refined and elevated and restrained and directed by divine grace, made him a pleasant and an entertaining Christian companion. He was, in a word, a Christian gentleman of high type.

"Dr. Fox was no mere ordinary man. Nature had done much for him, and her gifts were not neglected. He was endowed with fine native intellect, and while not thoroughly educated in the common acceptance of the term, his mental powers were nevertheless well developed and disciplined by an extensive course of reading and study in the two learned professions of his choice. His conceptions of the truth on all subjects with which he grappled were quick and clear, and generally correct. His convictions of truth and its importance were deep and firm; and his defence of the right, as well as his opposition to the wrong, was always prompt and manly. He was a man of fixedness of principle, and was always willing and ready to defend principle when the interests of truth demanded his services.

"Dr. Fox was a strong man. His power was felt and acknowledged wherever he labored. He never failed to make his mark. He was a fluent speaker, a clear reasoner, and shrewd debater; and better than all, he was a faithful, evangelical, and successful preacher."

One not of Lutheran faith speaks of him as follows, in the *Newton (N. C.) Enterprise*, of June 14, 1884: "He was a man of great industry. When he was not administering to the souls of men he was actively engaged in relieving their bodily infirmities. He was a man of no ordinary mind. As a minister of the gospel, he was liberal, evangelical and learned. While he was a firm believer in the doctrines of the Christian religion as expounded by the great Reformer, Martin Luther, yet he never railed against those who differed with him in minor points of religion. His usefulness was not confined to neighborhoods and counties; but his reputation as a minister of the gospel and a physician extended beyond the limits of this state. He acquired by his practice a considerable amount of property; but he never oppressed the poor. He raised and educated his children well. Two of his sons are ministers, and three are physicians."

But his varied work is done. The eloquent tongue is still. The strong arm is laid low. His labors have ceased. Yet his influence lives and will continue to bless the world even till the latest generation.

## CHAPTER IX.

### CLOSE OF LIFE.

HIS closing years were not marked by any special decline in physical vigor. He did not seek particularly any cessation from the arduous labors that had constituted the whole of his life. Yet there were some evidences that the exertion of years was telling upon his person and energies. A robust constitution, never abused by injurious habits, would doubtless have prolonged his life beyond the allotted threescore years and ten; but there had been many causes to sap and undermine it. The long exposures to every change of temperature, and every condition of weather, and the constant strain on nerves and heart and brain which his vast responsibilities and trials had entailed, had been silently and gradually doing their work; and now his step had lost something of its elasticity, the ruddy glow of health upon his countenance had partially faded, and there was a disposition, if it was not gratified, to seek repose from the cares and turmoils of life.

The silvery locks, whitened with the frost of more than three-score winters, the eye once brilliant, which now and then had a far-away, abstracted gaze, and the face over whose lineaments sometimes stole a shade of sadness, silently whispered his descent upon the sunny slope of years, and his ripening for the grave.

He fell with his armor on. In the midst of the most active ministerial and medical duties he was summoned to give an account of his stewardship. He died in the midst

of the conflict, in the foremost ranks. His last prayers were to be spared for the warfare against evil in which he had been so long engaged, "for the good of the Church" which he so dearly loved; yet willing to "depart and be with Christ, which is far better." The day two weeks previous to his death he had returned home from a month's visit to Tennessee, where he had been actively engaged in assisting his son with his communions. The sermons he preached were among the best and ablest of his life. He preached, during that visit, fifteen sermons in twenty-four days. There were a few things in his conduct and words that seemed as if he had premonitions of his approaching end. In the closing remarks of his last sermon at Solomon's church, Greene county, Tenn., he told the people that he did not expect to preach for them again, although he was the Pastor-elect of the congregation.

Returning home, he spent several days in rehearsing the occurrences of the visit, which he seemed to have greatly enjoyed. His heart and lips were full of Tennessee in his last sickness. His last ministerial act was catechising a class of young persons at Grace church, N. C. His last medical act was setting the broken arm of a little boy, on the evening of his return from catechising.

On Sunday morning he was preparing to go to church. He had two appointments for that day six miles apart. He was feeling very unwell, yet had his horse ready and overcoat on, although in mid-summer, and was in the act of starting, when he was seized with a severe chill. The idea of preaching was abandoned. He did not rise again from the bed to which he that morning retired.

His disease was dysentery, coupled with a bilious attack, and provoked by physical and nervous prostration. He was sick ten days, as he himself predicted. In two days after



the commencement of his illness, the physicians despaired of his life. A few days he was delirious from the medicines; but for several days previous to his death he was perfectly calm and sensible. During the moments of delirium he talked of his "good and obedient children," gave profuse quotations of Scripture, and spoke frequently of affairs pertaining to the Church.

He seemed entirely satisfied with his spiritual preparation. When asked by tenderest affection, "Do you feel ready to die?" he answered: "O yes! I have been ready for fifty years." He always seemed ready so far as his own soul's interests were concerned. He relied fully upon the promises of God's Word, and met death without a fear of his terrors, and without a doubt as to the blissful realities of the eternal world. "I know that my Redeemer liveth," was only one of the many passages he recited as positive evidence of the reality of his objects of faith.

Alienated friends had been reconciled, and one of his last utterances was, "I die in peace with all mankind." During his illness, when asked of his condition, he expressed the belief that he would get well. He knew that he was very ill, and made requests in case he died.

On Monday evening indications of speedy dissolution began to appear to all. The physicians said he would die before midnight. The pulse at his wrists were no longer distinguishable from the pulse of the finger tips. He was perfectly quiet. In the early morning his son, one of the physicians, who was sitting near his side, perceived a difference in his respirations. He knew the end had come. He summoned the family quickly to his side. They had scarcely surrounded the bed, until his last breath had gone. On the morning of June 10th, at fifteen minutes past five o'clock, he calmly passed into eternity. He died

as one passing into a deep sleep, without a moan, a tremor or a sigh.

On the following day he was buried at Salem church, Lincoln county, N. C., where he was ordained to the office of pastor in 1838, and of which he had been pastor without interval for twenty-eight years. The funeral discourse, from Numbers xxiii. 10, was preached by Rev. R. A. Yoder, who spoke most affectionately of the dead, of his character and the good he had done. He was assisted by Rev. J. M. Smith, who made some appropriate remarks. Although "the weather was inclement and in the midst of harvest, there was a very large congregation present, to pay a last tribute of respect to an aged and venerable minister of the gospel." The entire community, including those of other faiths, mourned the loss of one of its best members. For thirty years he had lived and labored among them, serving them in various capacities. His influence reached into every department, and his ministrations had been carried into every home. Suddenly he is stricken down, and all stand stunned by the blow. It was a touching scene at his funeral, where persons gathered from various sections, some more than twenty miles in private conveyances, and stood as common mourners around his bier. They lingered gazing at his pale face as if he were a father or a brother, and mothers lifted up their little children to see once more one who had been such a faithful minister and friend. "His place cannot be filled" is yet the sincere tribute of all who knew him. The announcement of his death carried sadness over the large section in which he lived, and to friendly hearts in many States. Many months passed before his friends at Salem church ceased to linger around his grave Sabbath after Sabbath, as if drawn to its sacred dust by the tenderest attraction.

Rev. Prof. J. C. Barb, of Whitestown, Indiana, thus writes: "The announcement of the death of Rev. A. J. Fox, M. D., carries sadness to the hearts of all who knew him. A great and good man has fallen."

Rev. A. J. Brown, D. D., of Tennessee, says: "The death of this venerable servant of God has thrown a deep gloom over his numerous friends. My associations with him were long, intimate and pleasant. I respected, admired and loved him while living, and now that he is gone, I should do violence to my feelings, were I not to pay a feeble tribute of respect to his memory."

In the obituary notice, Rev. R. A. Yoder says: "An eminently successful career has closed with his life, and at his death the State and community have lost a valuable citizen, the church and synod an able, active and energetic minister, and the family a kind father and dear husband.

"By his 'works of faith and labors of love,' he 'being dead yet speaketh.' The souls whom he has been instrumental in saving, the churches which he has helped to build, the brethren whom he has counseled, the voice of pen and pulpit, all speak. 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.' 'Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.' 'Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace.'

"He has been called to his reward, and is now in the fellowship of angels and saints, around the throne of God. He 'fought a good fight,' he 'kept the faith,' and now he wears the victor's crown."

Testimonials of respect were written and published by his congregations at Hickory and Salem, N. C., and by the

Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, in its sixty-fourth annual convention.

A neat monument of Rutland (Vt.) marble stands at the head of his grave. The lower base is beautiful granite, and the upper is marble. From the summit of this rises a round shaft of five feet, of exquisite beauty and polish. The whole monument is ten feet and three inches high. Upon two sides is the following inscription:

REV. A. J. FOX, M. D.,

Born Sept. 6, 1817; Died June 10, 1884.

Aged 66 yrs., 9 mos., 4 days.

He was an earnest and faithful Lutheran minister for forty-seven years, and for thirty-three a successful physician. His labors were richly blessed, and he now rests. He loved the truth, and his faith never wavered.

“I know that my Redeemer liveth.”

Such was the life and character of this venerated servant of God, whose memory we love to revere, whose virtues may be the common heritage of all. His name is written in heaven—his worth is cherished on the earth! Let us be grateful to the Great Head of the Church for the services he rendered—for the example he has left us. His memory cannot die. The influence of his character survives the dissolution of his body, and will continue unfading and immortal. God grant that his mantle may fall upon us.

“Rest, therefore, thou  
Whose early guidance trained my infant steps—  
Rest, in the bosom of God, till the brief sleep  
Of death is over, and a happier life  
Shall dawn to waken thine insensible dust.”

## APPENDIX A.

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### THE CHRISTIAN'S CONFLICT, VICTORY AND REWARD.

*Memorial Sermon on the death of Rev. Alfred J. Fox, M. D., delivered in Salem Church, Cocke county, Tenn., June 7th, 1885, by Rev. Abel J. Brown, D. D.*

TEXT: I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give unto me in that day; and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing.—2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

ST. PAUL was the author of our text. The circumstances under which he penned it were peculiar and solemn. He was at that time a prisoner, for “the testimony of Jesus and his word,” in the city of Rome, closely confined and chained down in a gloomy and loathsome dungeon, with the almost certain prospect of speedy martyrdom. To this fact he very feelingly alludes in the verse preceding the text. “I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.” His mental exercises—his feelings and prospects under these trying circumstances, find vent in the language of the text.

Paul was a representative Christian, as well as a model minister of the gospel; and the facts in his Christian life and experience, and his feelings and prospects in view of the near approach of death and the world to come, are not peculiar to him, or any favored class of God's people, but

are substantially repeated in the life and experience of every child of God. As the Christian nears the Jordan of death, and scans, as he must at such a time as this, his past life, and peers into the future, he adopts as his own the language of our text. Such, are we assured, was the case with our departed brother in the ministry, to whose memory we this day pay a feeble tribute of respect, as he passed "through the dark valley and shadow of death;" and it is for this, amongst other reasons, that we have chosen the words of our text as the guide to our thoughts on this mournful occasion.

We have in our text:

I. A DELINEATION OF THE CHRISTIAN'S CONDITION AND COURSE THROUGH LIFE; and

II. AN EXPRESSION OF HIS FEELINGS AND PROSPECTS IN VIEW OF DEATH AND THE WORLD TO COME.

To the discussion of these particulars, as set forth in the words of the text, shall we mainly direct your attention, and close

III. WITH SUCH REFERENCE TO THE LIFE, CHARACTER AND PASTORAL WORK OF THE DECEASED AS WE MAY DEEM PROPER.

I. WE HAVE IN THE TEXT A DELINEATION OF THE CHRISTIAN'S CONDITION AND COURSE THROUGH LIFE.

This is expressed in the words: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." It matters not in what particular enterprise we may engage, it is always important, if we would prosecute it successfully and pleasantly, that we should, in the very outset, make ourselves as fully as possible acquainted with its nature and the difficulties ordinarily connected with its prosecution, as well as anticipate others which may from time to time arise. Without such precaution we are liable to disappointment, and may be driven in despair to abandon the pursuit in

which we have embarked, in the very midst of our operations.

The course indicated is not only proper in pursuits merely secular and temporal, but is preëminently important in the outset of the Christian life. Before we undertake it, we should fully understand its nature and requirements, as well as all the difficulties involved in its successful prosecution. Such is the course recommended by the Saviour to all such as would become His followers. He advises them to sit down, before they take this important step, and deliberately count the cost of discipleship, and then in view of all the difficulties involved, determine their course.

The grand leading idea contained in that part of the text, now under discussion, is, that *heaven, with its ineffable and inconceivable glories and bliss, cannot be gained without a powerful and persistent effort on the part of the Christian.* His life is not a life of inertion, but of ceaseless activity; not of ease, but of hardship; not of indolence, but of toil; not of sensual indulgence, but of self-denial; nor is it in its internal or external relations, a life of peace, but of continual and mighty conflict. The words of command and exhortation from the Saviour to every follower of his, are: *Work, labor, strive, run, fight.* “Son, go work in my vineyard to-day.” “*Labor* not for the meat that perisheth, but for the meat that endureth unto everlasting life.” “*Strive* to enter in at the strait gate.” “*Run* with patience the race set before you.” “*Fight* the good fight of faith.” Such are the conditions and requirements of Christian life, as delineated by the pen of inspiration, and actualized, according to the text, in the experience of St. Paul, and we may safely add, of every saint.

In our text Christian life is represented under the figures of a race and a conflict—both expressive of the same gen-

eral idea. Let us contemplate it for a few moments in these aspects.

It is a *race*. So Paul says to the Hebrew Christians: "Let us run with patience *the race* set before us;" to the Corinthians: "We *run* not uncertainly;" and in our text: "I have finished my *course*." The Christian cannot safely pass along through life listlessly, leisurely and in inglorious ease. His condition and his work, his duties and his interests, all alike demand eternal vigilance, ceaseless activity, and untiring effort, and call into requisition all his moral powers, until the goal shall have been reached and the crown won. All this is clearly implied in the very word *race*, which both designates and characterizes his course through life. It expresses the highest effort and the speediest movement in locomotion of which we are capable. Its import is beautifully illustrated in the Olympic races from which the figure in the text is borrowed. In preparing for these the contestant had to endure the most rigid discipline; and in running the race he was not only required to disencumber himself of every weight which could possibly impede his progress, or endanger his success, but to exert his mightiest energies. He was required to make a powerful, a well-directed and persistent effort.

The same general idea is no less clearly and fully implied in the representation of Christian life as a *warfare*. It is a conflict. It is not simply an effort, however vigorous and persistent, without opposition and in concert with friendly and kindred powers; but it is an effort in conflict with opposing hostile powers, arrayed against us, determined, if possible, to defeat us in the accomplishment of our high and holy purpose, and ruin us forever. The very word *fight*, by which Paul's Christian career is designated and characterized, like that other word used for the same pur-



pose, clearly and fully implies all this; and this view of the subject is confirmed by the uniform testimony of God's Word and the universal experience of His people. We are exhorted to "*fight* the good fight of faith"—to "*war* a good warfare;" and Paul assures us in our text that he had "*fought* a good fight."

A state of warfare implies enemies, and these the Christian has. If he would meet them successfully on the field of conflict, he must know them, their number, their mode of warfare, their munitions and their resources. His enemies are not few, but numerous; not artless, but wily; not feeble, but powerful. The author of our text, an inspired Apostle, himself a veteran of the cross, who has successfully fought life's great battle, thus enumerates the Christian's enemies: "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Our enemies are the world, the flesh and the devil.

The *devil* is an enemy to God's people, and he is no mere imaginary creature, or evil propensity of our fallen humanity personified, as some would have us believe, but a real personage. "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." He tried Job severely and painfully; he desired to have Peter that he "might sift him as wheat;" and he even assailed God's own immaculate Son, in the days of His humiliation upon earth, with the most powerful and alluring of all temptations.

The *world* is an enemy to the Christian. It hates and opposes God and His cause and His people. "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you." It hates and persecutes the Saviour and His followers. "If the world hate you," says Jesus, "ye know that it hated Me." "If they

have persecuted Me, they will persecute you also." Not only the men of the world, but the world itself—the things of the world, its riches, its honors, and its pleasures—are insidious and dangerous foes to the Christian, and the more so because of our intimate and inseparable connection with the world, in all our material and temporal relations and interests. For this reason are we so frequently and earnestly warned against the love and pursuit of the world, and its seductive influences. "Love not the world, neither the things of the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven." It is perhaps one of the most delicate and difficult of all Christian duties, to strike the proper medium between this world and the world to come.

The *flesh*, too, is an enemy to the Christian. There is an eternal war between the flesh—the remains of the innate depravity of the human soul—and the new principle of holiness, begotten in it by the operations of the Holy Spirit. "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members." It is an enemy in some respects unlike all others. It is inseparably connected with us. We carry it within us. It accompanies us at all times and wherever we go, by day and by night, at home and abroad, in private and in public, when engaged in devotion as well as when employed in our secular pursuits. It almost constantly assails and annoys us. It is a most formidable and danger-

ous foe. Well might Paul exclaim: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Such is Christian life. It is not only a condition of ceaseless activity, and toil, and self-denial; but it is also a state of continual warfare against enemies numerous, powerful and wily.

But a state of war not only implies enemies, as we have seen, actively engaged in acts of hostility, but it implies also the need of suitable arms and munitions of war. If the parties engaged are anything like equally matched, arms both offensive and defensive are imperatively demanded. Certain and speedy defeat and utter ruin await the party having the temerity to join in conflict without them. Such a course is worse than folly—it is madness. The soldier of the Cross does not thus act. He is not left in a defenceless and hopeless condition. He is not required by the authorities under which and in whose interests he fights, to wage war with an enemy so numerous and formidable as that against which he fights, without suitable armor. He has been amply provided for in this as well as all other respects. He is completely equipped, and is ready for any service that may be demanded of him, or for any emergency that may arise. His armor is very fully and minutely described by St. Paul, Eph. vi. 13–18. "Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand in the evil day, and having done all to stand. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."

It will be seen from this description of the Christian armor, and should be carefully observed, that it is not of human, or even angelic device and fabrication, and therefore possibly imperfect and unreliable. It is the armor of God. "Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God." It is of His contrivance and construction. It is therefore perfectly adapted, in unerring wisdom and goodness, to the purposes for which it was designed; and when used as God Himself directs, it may be implicitly relied upon. Like all the means of its divine author, when rightly used, it never fails, it cannot fail to accomplish its end. The Christian soldier is strong and invincible, but not in his own power and resources. Of himself he is utterly helpless and can do nothing. But he is strong in the Lord, and, the power of His might, clad in the panoply of heaven. Thus clad and aided he can do all things which God requires of him, and his interests demand. But we repeat, the panoply of heaven to answer its end, must be rightly used. It must be used in humble dependence upon Almighty God, and in earnest prayer and supplication to Him—"praying always with all prayer and supplication to Him." Thus equipped and thus acting, the soldier of the cross bids proud defiance to the most powerful assaults of his enemies. He is invincible and invulnerable. His success and victory are insured.

The fight of Paul was a *good fight*. "I have fought a good fight." He may refer either to the *moral character* of the fight itself, or to the *manner* in which he fought it. In either sense his statement is true.

The fight of every Christian is *morally a good fight*. So Paul elsewhere characterizes it. "Fight the *good fight* of faith" It is good in every aspect in which it can be viewed. The cause in which it is fought, its whole tendency, as well as the character of all engaged in it, are all good.

The cause is the cause of God against the devil ; of holiness against sin ; of good against evil ; of light against darkness ; of heaven against hell. Its whole tendency is good and only good. It ameliorates man's condition both here and hereafter. It elevates him in the scale of intellectual and moral excellence. It saves him from sin and all its terrible consequences. It makes him happier in this life and fits him for that heaven in the life to come, in which the human soul, entirely freed from sin, shall realize that perfect bliss for which it was designed, of which it is capable, and for which it pants. It is the cause which enlists the sympathies and the energies of all holy intelligences. God the Father, who devised the wondrous plan for the recovery of man from the ruins of the apostacy ; God the Son, who veiled the glories of His divinity in garments of our inferior clay, and redeemed us with His own precious blood, shed upon Calvary ; God the Spirit, who renews and sanctifies the soul and makes it meet for heaven ; holy angels, who dwell in the immediate presence of God and rejoice over one sinner that repents, and minister unto them who shall be heirs of salvation ; and all good men upon earth—all, all heartily co-operate in the promotion of this great cause. Surely it must be a good fight.

When Paul claims that he fought a good fight, he may, and doubtless does refer to *the manner* in which he fought it. It was in this sense a good fight. He acquitted himself manfully on all occasions and under all circumstances, as a soldier of the cross. He was at all times loyal to his commander, and true to his cause. He was ready for any service however difficult and dangerous, that might be required of him. The will of his commander was the rule of his duty. From the moment of his conversion to the hour of his death, the only question with him was, " Lord, what

wilt thou have me to do?" and having ascertained his duty, he cheerfully and promptly, faithfully and fearlessly performed it, utterly regardless of consequences. He met every difficulty, faced every foe, braved every danger, and endured every hardship without a murmur. When bonds and imprisonment, scourging, and death in its worst and most appalling forms awaited him, he could bravely say: "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God." No enemy ever saw his back in battle; in the face of no foe did he ever quail. He knew no fear, he shirked no duty, he shunned no danger; he was always in the midst of the hottest of the fight, and when he fell, he fell in full panoply, at the post of duty, in the front ranks, with his face to the enemy; he fell all covered with glory, and with the notes of victory still lingering on his lips. Surely, surely did Paul fight a good fight!

Paul not only fought a good fight and finished his course, but he also *kept the faith*. "I have kept the faith." This was the great secret of his success as a soldier of the cross. These words suggest to our minds two important inquiries: What is the faith? and what is it to keep it?

What is the faith? In the word of God this term has a technical and well-defined meaning. It means, not the peculiar state of the mind, called faith, in reference to God, or the Saviour, or any particular doctrine or doctrines of divine revelation, or any mental state or exercise whatever, but it means *the doctrines themselves* of the Christian system. These are *the faith*. So we read of "the faith of the Gospel," "the mystery of the faith," "the faith once delivered to the saints," and "the unity of the faith." "There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism," and we are

exhorted to “contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.”

Let it be distinctly observed, that this faith is not any one, or several particular doctrines of the Christian system, however important they may be in our judgment, and clearly revealed, or however universally received by christendom, and much less is it any mental exercise; but the faith embraces the doctrines of the Christian system in its entireness, considered as one grand whole. Nothing different from this—nothing either more or less than this, is the faith. It is a grand system of doctrines in which there is no deficiency, no redundancy, no defect. It is not the discovery, invention or contrivance of men, or any creature like ourselves fallible, but it is the work of God, and like all His works, it bears the impress of infinite wisdom and goodness, and is absolutely perfect. It is perfectly adapted to the accomplishment of the grand end for which it was designed. “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.” So Paul believed, and taught, and acted at all times strictly in accordance with his convictions and teachings.” “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is *profitable* for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” “The holy scriptures are able to make thee wise unto salvation.” Paul was fully assured that the word of God is the very embodiment of all religious truth—that it is our privilege as well as our duty to know this truth, and that when known and cordially embraced, it liberates us from the thralldom of sin, and fits us for heaven. He was fully persuaded that there is a wide difference between truth and error—that the one is always safe and beneficial, and that the other is always dangerous and deleterious. He earn-

estly exhorts Timothy: "Take heed unto thyself and the doctrine: continue in them;" and assigns as a reason for this course, that by so doing he should "both save himself and them that heard him." He solemnly assures us in view of his final account, that one ground of his hope of heaven was because he had "kept the faith." He not only embraced in his heart the doctrines of the Christian system in its entirety, but he confessed them with his mouth, and proclaimed and maintained and defended them in his ministry against all opposition, and that too to the end of his life. We have in the teaching and life of Paul, in these respects, a clear and emphatic disavowal, and most withering rebuke of that spirit of latitudinarianism so eminently characteristic of the present age, that would have us believe that it matters but little, if at all, what one believes, provided only he is honest in his belief, or that he can be just as good a Christian, and as certain of heaven, with its highest happiness, in one reputedly orthodox church as another.

We have, then, in St. Paul, as his character is delineated in the text, a representative Christian and Christian minister of the purest and highest type. His Christian and ministerial character was symmetrical and beautifully rounded in all its parts. It is no mere ideal character, but a real one, and such as all may attain, and for which they should faithfully and earnestly strive. He was sound in the faith and pure in life. He consecrated himself to the service of God and the good of his fellow-men. He battled faithfully and manfully, perseveringly and successfully against all his enemies, and all the enemies of the cross. In his own language, and laconic and terse style, *he fought a good fight, he finished his course, he kept the faith.*

We have in our text,

II. THE FEELINGS AND PROSPECTS OF THE CHRISTIAN IN VIEW OF DEATH.



We have briefly traced the Christian's condition and course through life, as delineated by the pen of inspiration, and practically illustrated in the case of Paul. We will now contemplate him in the close of life. Paul had, as he thought at the time he wrote our text, run his race and finished his work. He now stands on the verge of the spirit world. It is a solemn time. He scans, as every one must at such a time as this, his past life, and peers into the future. Eternity, with all its untried and dread realities, rises vividly to his view. His past life, in its connection with the life to come, passes rapidly in solemn review before him. But his mind is not in the least disconcerted. No feelings of unavailing regret for a life misspent, nor gloomy forebodings of the future, disturb his soul. With calmness and complacence he contemplates the past; with joy unspeakable and full of glory, he anticipates the future. His feelings and prospects, under the trying circumstances of the case, find utterance in the language of the text: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; *henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give unto me in that day; and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing.*"

These words are replete with encouragement and comfort to every child of God. Indulge us for a few moments whilst we shall attempt to unfold some of their beauties. They assure us of the certainty, and the greatness, and the glory of the Christian's reward. He does not serve God for naught. God does not require this of him. Jesus promised His disciples, who had forsaken all to follow Him, manifold more in this world, and in the world to come, everlasting life. Moses, the illustrious leader of Israel's embattled hosts, who, in the maturity of manhood, in view

of all the consequences involved, “refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter,” “had respect unto the reward.” The reward which awaits the Christian is perfect bliss, arising from the absence of everything which can mar and the presence of every thing which can contribute to the happiness of the human soul. As set forth in the text—

The reward of the Christian soldier will consist partly in the reception of *the highest honors* from the Lord, the righteous judge. This will be a chief ingredient in the cup of his joy and bliss. “There is laid up for me *a crown*” which shall be conferred upon me at that day. In the olympic games a crown was a badge of victory, as well as of the honors and emoluments which inure to the victor. So it is to the victor in life’s great battle. But a crown as promised in the text, denotes more than simple victory and its accustomed honors. It is a badge of *royal honor*, authority and emolument. It is an ornament worn by kings and other mighty sovereigns as a badge of dignity and authority. Royal dignity and authority await the Christian. To his apostles Jesus said, “Verily I say unto you, ye that have followed me, in the regeneration when the son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also *shall sit upon twelve thrones*, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” “He hath made *us kings* and priests unto God.”

The Christian’s crown is a crown of *righteousness*. It is so styled in our text. “He hath laid up for me a crown of *righteousness*.” Earthly kings often win their crowns by deeds of fraud and injustice, of oppression and cruelty. They wade through seas of human blood to gain their honors and powers. Their thrones are built of the bones and cemented with the blood of slaughtered millions, sacrificed on the unhallowed altars of misguided human ambition

and folly ; and their crowns are crowns of iniquity dyed in human gore. It is altogether different with the Christian. His honors, and powers, and emoluments have been honorably and righteously attained. His crown has been won in the holiest and best of all causes—the cause of God, of holiness, of degraded and suffering humanity. It is a crown of righteousness, all radiant with celestial glory. It is a crown which bespeaks both the nature of the work in which it was won, and the character of him by whom it is to be worn.

The Christian's crown is an *enduring* and an *unfading* crown. Earthly crowns soon fade and fall from the heads of kings and victors. They hold them by a slender and uncertain tenure, which may at any moment be broken. They soon fade, and may at any moment fall from the head and crumble into ruins. They are corruptible. The Christian's crown is incorruptible. It shall never be taken from him or perish, nor shall its lustre be dimmed by long usage and the lapse of years. But it shall grow brighter and still more glorious through the mighty sweep of everlasting ages.

“That crown with peerles glories bright,  
Which shall new lustre boast,  
When victor's wreaths and monarch's gems  
Shall blend in common dust.”

The Christian's reward is ever-enduring, and perhaps ever-increasing. It is everlasting life—a house eternal in the heavens, an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away. The city in which he shall dwell is a city which “hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God.” It is wholly composed from the foundation stone to the apex of indestructible material. Upon all is written in living, burning characters of light, *eternal*, ETERNAL. The river of life, which proceeds from the throne of God and of the Lamb, and flows through the midst of the city, of whose waters the inhabitants shall drink and never thirst, shall

never cease to flow, or fail in the least. The tree of life, which grows in the midst of the city and on either side of the river of life, of whose life-perpetuating fruit the denizens shall eat and never hunger, shall never die, nor wilt, nor in the least decline nor fail to yield it fruits. The sun, which illumines the city, and renders useless all natural and artificial lights, shall never be blotted out, nor set, nor be eclipsed, nor in the least obscured.

The Christian's crown, unlike all earthly crowns, is not restricted to any particular individual or class of men save the righteous. The mighty chieftains of earth engage in war. They strive in mighty, bloody conflict. The wager is a throne and a crown; but all lose save one. In the Grecian games as many as chose might contend. But they contended uncertainly. But one could win. There was only one prize. Defeat, disappointment, and perhaps even shame, awaited all others. It is not so in the Christian contest. None need be disappointed, or fail, or be humiliated. Every one may contend, and every one that contends manfully, rightly and to the end, shall assuredly succeed. "We run not uncertainly." We "fight not as one that beateth the air." This crown, says Paul, "was laid up not for him only, but *for all them that love His appearing.*"

The crown of glory has been prepared in advance, and is carefully and safely stored away. *There is laid up* for me a crown of righteousness. It is laid up for all who shall be entitled to it. Jesus shall say to the finally faithful, at the last judgment, "Come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom *prepared* for you from the foundation of the world."

We may not be able to determine precisely *when* the crown of righteousness shall be bestowed. Paul simply says that it shall be given at *that day*. Whether this refers

to the day of his death, the time of his departure referred to in the context, or to the day of final accounts, is not material, nor shall we now stop to inquire. It is enough for us to know that it shall be bestowed at the proper time, and on the proper occasion. It will be, as the language of Paul authorizes us to infer, a remarkable and a grand occasion—such an occasion as shall make the recipient of the crown conspicuous, and bring to Him distinguished honor. Jesus promised his chosen twelve, who had forsaken all for His sake, that, having followed Him, in the regeneration, when He should “sit in the throne of His glory, they also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

One thing, however, is certain. The Christian enters heaven immediately after death. Lazarus was carried by angels into Abraham’s bosom as soon as his immortal spirit “had shuffled off this mortal coil,” where he was comforted and received his good things. Jesus assured the penitent thief upon the cross, that he should that day be with Him in paradise. Paul had a desire to be absent from the body that he might be present with the Lord; and in our text says, in the prospect of speedy death, “*henceforth*, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.” To the beloved disciple in the lonely isle of Patmos, the voice celestial said, “Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from *henceforth*; yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labors.”

“The eye that shuts in the dying hour  
 Will open the next in bliss;  
 The welcome will sound in the heavenly world  
 Ere the farewell is hushed in this.  
 We pass from the clasp of loving friends  
 To the arms of the loved and lost,  
 And the smiling faces will greet us there,  
 Which on earth we valued most.”

And now, as promised in the outset, I will close,

III. WITH SUCH REMARKS IN REFERENCE TO THE LIFE, CHARACTER AND PASTORAL WORK OF THE LATE REV. ALFRED J. FOX, M. D., AS I MAY DEEM APPROPRIATE TO THIS OCCASION.

This memorial service is held in this church, at the suggestion and in compliance with the request of its members, with the concurrence of its worthy pastor, a son of our sainted brother, because Salem church was organized and long served by him in his early ministry, and because he was at the time of his death its pastor-elect. It is intended as an expression of their affectionate personal regard for their lamented pastor, of their high and grateful appreciation of his labors amongst them, and as a feeble tribute of respect to the memory of departed worth.

I have been chosen as the spokesman of this church on this interesting occasion, because I was not only a warm personal friend of Dr. Fox, but especially because I was his cotemporary, and was intimately acquainted and associated with him, both professionally and socially, for nearly half a century. I was his senior in years only six months, and but one year in the ministry. For more than two decades we belonged to the same Synod, and besides meeting generally at its annual conventions during this period, we often met and preached together on other occasions, and mingled in the social circle. I refer to but one instance with which some of you are familiar. In the spring of 1842 we traveled together from North Carolina to Greene county, Tenn. Forty-three long years, with all their vicissitudes, have since elapsed, but doubtless some of the original and older members of this congregation will readily recall to mind the facts that we at that time jointly shared the hospitalities of their houses, as well as some pleasant and humorous incidents

that occurred ; that we preached together under a beautiful, wide-spreading, umbrageous oak, long since felled by the woodman's axe, almost on the very spot where this house now stands, as well as at other points in the surrounding country.

After the formation of the Holston Synod in 1861, Dr. Fox and I often met in Synods and elsewhere, and we maintained an epistolary correspondence, at irregular intervals, as our feelings prompted or some important movement in the Church in which we were mutually interested, suggested. The friendship formed between us in the outset of our professional life was cemented and strengthened with passing years, and continued without interruption or abatement till the close of his useful life, embracing the long period of nearly half a century.

Most of what I shall say of Dr. Fox will be from my own personal knowledge and convictions, and the rest will be gleaned from ecclesiastical records and contemporaneous religious periodicals of the Church. My task is a very pleasant one. I am truly glad to be able to say much to his praise without flattery to his surviving relatives and friends, or injury to the cause of truth.

I will not claim for our departed brother that he was faultless. This we dare affirm of no mere man, living or dead. It would be to say of him that he was not a mortal. Solomon was not mistaken when he said : "There is not a just man upon the earth that doeth good and sinneth not." But I can, with sincerity and truth, say of Dr. Fox, that there was much in his character to approve, admire and commend, and but little to censure and condemn. When he passed away a good man and a prince in Israel fell ; a bright light in the religious firmament was extinguished ; a brilliant star in the pulpit galaxy set ; a vacancy was made in

the Church which it will be difficult to fill, and in his family which never can be supplied.

Dr. Fox, like most men of distinction, was a self-made man. For the want of the necessary educational facilities—the scarcity of literary institutions in his native state, and the expensiveness of the few which did exist, together with the fact that an educated ministry was not then as highly appreciated and as much in demand in the Tennessee Synod as it now is, and the pressing demand for ministers—for these reasons he received but little more than a common English education before he entered the ministry. But still, although not thoroughly educated, in the common acceptation of the term, his mental powers were well developed and disciplined by an extensive course of reading and study in the two learned professions of his choice. By the native vigor of his intellect, his indomitable energy and unwearied perseverance, he gradually worked his way up, till he attained not only a respectable, but a prominent position in both of his professions. With adequate educational advantages in early life, and devotion to only one of his professions, he might have attained distinction in either.

Dr. Fox was a man of fine natural endowments. Sprightliness and quickness, clearness and brilliancy were his mental characteristics. His conceptions of the truth on most subjects with which he grappled, were quick and clear, and generally correct. Truths which profound reasoners of different mental type reach by a tedious and patient process of reasoning, he seemed to grasp almost intuitively. He was always ready for almost any emergency that might occur in the line of his calling; and the enemy that thought to take him by surprise, and thus confound and defeat him, found to his own sorrow, that he had mistaken his man.

Dr. Fox was a strong man. His power was acknowledged



and felt wherever he was, in the providence of God, thrown and called to act, not only in his own, but also in other Synods and churches. He never failed to command respect and make his mark where he labored. He was a fluent speaker, a clear reasoner and a strong debater.

Dr. Fox was a man of principle and decision of character. His convictions of truth and its importance were deep and uncompromising. He was unreserved and fearless in the declaration of his principles, and manly in their defence. His opposition to the wrong was no less open and manly. He was always willing and ready to avow and defend the right, and to disown and oppose the wrong, whenever the interests of truth demanded his services. But still he was courteous to those with whom he differed; and in opposing the wrong, he was respectful to the opinions and feelings of others whom he believed to be honestly mistaken in their views.

Dr. Fox was a man of rare social qualities, finely developed and highly refined. There was in him a personal magnetism that strongly attracted others to him, and greatly endeared him to all with whom he came in social contact, especially such as sympathized with him in his views, feelings and purposes; and at the same time a frankness, that inspired all with the utmost confidence in his moral integrity, however greatly they might differ with him in his principles and opinions. His colloquial powers too, were of a high order, and lent a charm to his conversation. In his social intercourse he was familiar, but dignified; he was cheerful, but not frivolous; he was at times even jocular, but he never indulged in vulgar jests or obscene anecdotes. He was, in a word, a refined Christian gentleman of a high type. His fine social qualities, refined and elevated, restrained and directed as they were by divine grace, made him a pleasant

and an interesting as well as a safe companion, and guaranteed to him a hearty welcome to all refined Christian homes and circles.

The history of Dr. Fox as a minister of the Gospel is identified with the history of the Tennessee Synod for forty-seven years, extending over a period of nearly three-fourths of the entire history of that body. He entered the ministry in connection with it at a critical and eventful period in its history, as well as in the history of the entire Lutheran church, not only in this country, but throughout her whole extent. In the Lutheran church in the new world at that time a spirit of indifference, and even open opposition to divine truth as distinctively set forth in her accredited symbols, was extensively prevalent; while in the old world, Rationalism was well nigh universally predominant. It was a dark time in the history of the church. It tried men's souls. It tested the sincerity of their professions and the firmness of their principles. It required deep and firm convictions of divine truth in its purity and integrity, as taught in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church, to make one a Lutheran at all, and moral courage in a high degree to make him avow and defend the distinctive doctrines of the Lutheran Church, as was the case in the Tennessee Synod. From its very origin down to a comparatively recent period in its history, has this Synod had determined, powerful and uncompromising opposition from without; and soon it had its troubles, difficulties and conflicts within. Under all these trying circumstances Dr. Fox proved himself fully equal to the situation.

The history of the Tennessee Synod is properly divided into three grand eras to some extent overlapping each other. The first extends from the time of its organization, in 1820, embracing the antecedent causes which culminated in

this event, down to 1836 ; the second extends from 1836 to the time of the adoption of its revised Constitution ; and the third from this time onward to a time not yet determined, but it is to be hoped to the organic union of the entire Southern Lutheran Church in one general body.

Dr. Fox entered the Tennessee Synod soon after the commencement of the second era, and lived entirely through it. He contributed largely to the history of this period. He was a prominent actor in its doings ; indeed but little of importance was done by the Synod during this period, after he entered it, in which he did not take an active part. Soon after the opening of this era, a great revival began in the Tennessee Synod, and during its progress important changes were made in the polity of the Synod. Shortly before that time the honored founder, leader and champion of the Synod, and many of his noble compeers had passed away. The Church was in a state of transition from the German to the English language. Her ministers were few and generally illiterate and unable to preach acceptably and successfully in the English language. The prospect was gloomy. The people were greatly disheartened. "They were as sheep scattered abroad without a shepherd." But soon a brighter day dawned upon the Synod. In a short time, quite a number of young men of good natural endowments and respectable literary attainments, most of them fluent speakers in the English language, entered the ministry. It was the beginning of a great revival in the Tennessee Synod, and of genuine Lutheranism in this country, which has continued with but little interruption, or abatement down to the present time, and has gradually widened until it has embraced almost the entire Lutheran Church in this country.

The polity of the Synod was found to be no longer ade-

quate to the wants, the purposes and the demands of the Church. It was for this reason unsatisfactory to many intelligent and progressive men, both ministers and laymen, in the Synod. A change of polity was warmly advocated and demanded by some, and opposed with equal warmth by others. Time will not permit me to give a history of the controversy which ensued, nor does this occasion demand it. Suffice it to say that it was conducted in a fraternal, Christian spirit; that every inch of the ground in dispute was manfully contested, and that it resulted in a radical change in the original polity of the Synod, in which all the members of Synod now most heartily concur.

I have referred to these facts mainly to say that Dr. Fox identified himself with the party for reform, and worked energetically and patiently for it, for more than twenty years, and most nobly did he acquit himself. As he had faithfully and heroically stood shoulder to shoulder with the little Spartan band which so bravely guarded the Thermopylæ of Lutheranism from all attacks from without, so did he coöperate with the friends of reform within. He lived to see the triumph in this country of the grand principles for which his Synod had always contended, and of the almost complete overthrow of Rationalism in the old world. He lived to see, too, some of the happy results of the change in the polity of his Synod in the establishment of literary institutions, beneficiary education, an educated ministry and successful missionary operations.

As a preacher, Dr. Fox was not what the world commonly styles a great preacher. If even his natural endowments, with proper culture, had fitted him for such a distinction, and he had aspired to it, the circumstances under which he began his ministry and prosecuted it through life, were, to say the least, all unfavorable to this, if they did

not utterly preclude its possibility. But he had no such aspirations. His views of the nature of the ministry—its objects, its duties and its responsibilities, were too high and correct for any such selfish and sordid end as this. His object was not self-aggrandizement, but the glory of God and the good of men. He preached not himself, but Christ Jesus, the Lord. In his manner he was unostentatious. He made no effort at display. In this respect he was like Paul, the great exemplar of all ministers, who says of himself: “And I brethren, when I came unto you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.” “And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

Dr. Fox was a fluent, earnest, forcible and impressive speaker. He never failed to command and rivet the attention of his hearers. He was particularly apt and happy in his illustrations and enforcement of religious truth by comparisons drawn from nature, science and art; and he knew how to take advantage of the common incidents of every-day life, and remarkable occurrences in the country with which his hearers were familiar, and in which they were interested. In these traits in his official character, together with the plainness of his style, his free use of the word of God in his pulpit ministrations, and his unaffected and deep sympathy with “the common people,” lay the great secret of his strength, his popularity and his success in the work of the ministry.

In the matter of his preaching, Dr. Fox was strictly orthodox, eminently evangelical, and distinctively Lutheran. He fully endorsed and preached all the great cardinal doctrines of the Christian system as held by the Holy Catholic Church. He knew no salvation out of Christ. He “deter-

mined to know nothing" in his preaching "but Jesus Christ and Him crucified." He not only cordially embraced the distinctive doctrines of the Lutheran church, as set forth in her accredited symbols, but he boldly proclaimed and manfully defended them at all times and on all occasions, when in his judgment the interests of truth demanded it. He was as true to the Confessional standards of the church as the needle is to the poles. He was this because he believed that our distinctive doctrines, as well as all other truth revealed in God's word, are important, not only to the integrity of the grand system of revealed truth, but also to the full attainment of the highest happiness of which the human soul is capable. Like Paul, he "kept the faith" in its entirety; like him, he "declared the whole counsel of God;" and, in obedience to the Apostolic injunction, he "contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints."

The regular pastoral work of Dr. Fox was divided between Tennessee, Alabama and North Carolina. Besides this he did much occasional preaching in these and other places. North Carolina, however, was the principal field of his labors. It was here he longest held regular pastoral charge, achieved his greatest success and won his highest honors. He labored in the ministry about forty-seven years, and did a great amount of work in this calling, besides an extensive practice as a physician during much of that time. He was a man of great activity, indomitable energy and untiring perseverance, as well as of great zeal in the Master's work. His activity never ceased, his energies never flagged, and his zeal never abated, but all rather increased as the infirmities of declining years pressed heavily upon him. He had well nigh filled the measure of man's "three score years and ten," and when he fell, he fell at the post

of duty, with the gospel armor on. He had just returned to his home from Tennessee, where he had been assisting his son, but recently ordained to the ministry, in a series of sacramental meetings, in which he is said, by those who heard him, to have preached with even greater power and deeper pathos than he had done in his palmiest days.

Dr. Fox was eminently successful in the work of the ministry. The work of the Lord greatly prospered in his hands. God set to his labors the seal of His approval. He organized many new churches, revived old ones, and added hundreds to the Church of "such as shall be saved," and form stars in his crown of rejoicing when the Master shall come to "make up His jewels." He was also instrumental in bringing into the ministry and training for the work several young men who have made their mark in the world. Amongst these I may mention particularly the lamented Prof. Smyer, who was cut down in the dawning of a brilliant and useful career; Revs. J. K. Hancher, D. E. Fox, A. L. Crouse, and his own two sons, Rev. Prof. L. A. Fox, D. D., and Rev. J. B. Fox, of whom, as still living, I forbear to say more than that they are all respectable and efficient laborers in the vineyard of the Lord. The extent of his influence for good will never be fully known until it shall be seen in the light of the world to come. The man of God strikes a chord whose vibrations, it may be, shall never die away.

I might pursue this line of thought to a much greater length, but I must desist. With a few words in regard to the social and religious character of our lamented brother, I shall have done.

In all the domestic and social relations of life—as a son and brother, as a husband and father, as a neighbor and friend, he was a model man. In all these relations he had

but few equals, and still fewer superiors. His moral character was above reproach. So far as I know, not a solitary stain ever rested upon it. Not even a suspicion was ever breathed against it. He came up fully to the Apostolic requisition in the moral character of a bishop. He was "blameless," and had "a good report of them that are without." He "fought a good fight" against the three great enemies of the Christian—the world, the flesh, and the devil. But he was more than simply strictly moral. He was a devout Christian. He had experienced in his own heart the transforming, the renewing and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. He "walked with God."

His end was such as his life authorized us to expect. It was tranquil, triumphant, happy. He met death without a doubt as to the realities of the spirit world, or a fear as to his acceptance with God, and in the hope of a glorious and blissful immortality. As he stood on the verge of the eternal world, he could, calmly and complacently reviewing his past life, say; "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith;" and looking into the future, he could with rapture exclaim; "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give unto me in that day."

"Servant of God, well done!  
 Rest from thy loved employ:  
 The battle fought, the victory won,  
 Enter thy Master's joy.

"The voice at midnight came:  
 He started up to hear:  
 A mortal arrow pierced his frame:  
 He fell but felt no fear.

"At midnight came the cry,  
 "To meet thy God prepare!"  
 He woke and caught his Captain's eye;  
 Then strong in faith and prayer,



- “His spirit with a bound  
Left its encumbering clay :  
His tent at sunrise on the ground  
A darkened ruin lay.
- “The pains of death are past ;  
Labor and sorrow cease ;  
And life’s long warfare closed at last,  
His soul is found in peace.
- “Soldier of Christ, well done !  
Praise be thy new employ ;  
And while eternal ages run,  
Rest in thy Saviour’s joy.”

## APPENDIX B.

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### A SERMON,

*Preached by the Rev. A. J. Fox, on the 6th day of November, 1858, before the Missionary Conference of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod.*

*Published by request of the Conference. [From The Lutheran Standard Jan. 7th and 21st, 1859.]*

TEXT: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark xvi. 15.

MY CHRISTIAN FRIENDS AND FELLOW LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD OF OUR LORD: According to previous appointment we are now assembled on this interesting occasion, with a view to place upon a permanent basis the Missionary Conference commenced by us last May. I am fully aware that there are amongst the brethren several apparently conflicting views concerning this most important enterprise. Yet I trust and pray Almighty God that by a mutual interchange of ideas, we may all ultimately be made to see eye to eye. Let us cherish feelings of Christian forbearance prompted by the true spirit of philanthropy, and that truly fraternal affection which should so fully characterize the members of any ecclesiastical body. Let us lay aside all stickling for favorite measures and unite upon some plan that promises, to some extent at least, to accomplish the great end we contemplate, which I am fully persuaded invites the sympathies of every member of the widely extended family of our

common Lord and Master. Such plan, it is true, may at first be very imperfect. But let us, nevertheless, make the beginning; and as our acquaintance with this great cause increases, and the necessities of this heaven-honored enterprise may demand, we can make the necessary improvements. If we adopt these sentiments and feelings and earnestly put our hands to the work, I am confident from what I see in my present official charge, that in a few short years much, very much, will have been done to accomplish that great end of the Christian ministry, the wider dissemination of the Gospel of our Holy Redeemer;—that end for which especially every Lutheran should so earnestly and devoutly pray, the extension of Lutheran territory and the supply of our scattered brethren in the faith with the preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments by ministers of their own Church, and thus save them and their children from the painful necessity of either entirely neglecting their Christian duties or associating themselves with *sects* whose doctrines they cannot conscientiously believe or fully subscribe to. To effect something in this direction and how to accomplish it, has long been the study of our most energetic and enterprising ministers and laymen. And I am truly happy to say that from the earliest history of our Synod our ministers have in a certain way, exerted themselves, as far as possible, to supply our destitute people. Many of them have made much sacrifice of time and money and neglected their own parishioners to meet the many pressing calls from abroad. But from, as we think, the mistaken, yet well meant fears of the framers of our Synod and our Synodical policy, we have been and still are so much environed by our organic law as a Synod and the prejudices of the people, that as yet no systematic efforts have been made to do anything in the great

work of missions. In this we are entirely behind our brethren of sister denominations, and stand singular among the thirty-five Lutheran Synods in these United States. That the time has come for us to wake up in regard to this matter I feel confident must be apparent to every one of the brethren present, yea, of our entire Synod, to relieve ourselves from these embarrassments and to enable us more fully to discharge our duty as ministers and a branch of the great Lutheran family. The incipient steps were taken last spring, and for the purpose of bringing the plan into successful operation as has been stated, we are now assembled. And that its claims may be more fully understood and appreciated, your humble servant was appointed to preach a sermon on the occasion, and now appears before you for that purpose. I am free to say that I could wish that this duty had been assigned to some brother more fully competent to the task. Nevertheless, I will, by the help of God, try to do this important subject as much justice as my feeble abilities and the nature of the circumstances will permit. And as the pioneer preacher of missionary sermons in the Tennessee Synod, I choose the acknowledged basis of all missionary enterprises as the foundation for my present discourse, viz: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

Such are the words of the adorable Son of God uttered when upon the point of taking his final visible leave of his eleven devoted followers, whom he had selected mainly from the lower walks of society, and who had accompanied him in his travels over the sunny land of Palestine, and had heard all his masterly discourses, witnessed the performance of his many miracles, and, but a few weeks previous, had seen him betrayed by one of the original twelve into the hands of his mortal enemies, at whose instance he had been sen-

tenced to the dreadful death of the cross, and upon Calvary had been subjected to that most painful and disgraceful of all deaths. But, in spite of all the powers of darkness and all his earthly enemies, he, forty days previous to uttering the most solemn injunction, had arisen triumphantly from the dead. Having repeatedly appeared unto them and made full demonstration of his identity, having fully finished the great work assigned him by his Father, he now presents his Apostles with the credentials he before had promised them, in the language of our text, which must have been words of the most thrilling importance to them, as their Master was now to leave them, and commit into their hands and the hands of their successors the completion of the great work he had commenced upon earth, in which he had been constantly engaged for three years, viz: the preaching of the Gospel to evangelize the world.

When Christ opened his mission, he informed the Jews "that the scriptures enjoining it upon him to preach the Gospel was then fulfilled in their ears." See Luke iv. 18. And again he said, "Repent and believe the Gospel." Mark i. 15. And now in these words: "Go preach the Gospel to every creature;" and St. Matthew adds, for their encouragement, "And lo! I am with you alway, unto the end of the world." The Apostles must have felt that this commission was of the utmost importance to them as well as the whole human family. But the memory of the manner in which their Master had so lately been treated, and the stern opposition that his doctrines had met, notwithstanding his display of Omnipotence and the invincible skill he manifested so as to compel the wisest and shrewdest to acknowledge that "God must be with him," and his enemies to exclaim, "Never man spake as this man;" and their own personal knowledge of their almost total lack of literary at-

tainments, added to their very limited knowledge of things in general, consequent upon their former very humble state, must have filled them with fearful apprehensions as to their capability to succeed in this all-important work. As men they must have felt themselves unequal to the task; but such are the wonderful ways of God, that "He chooses the weak things of the world to confound the mighty," 1 Cor. i. 27. St. Paul says, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." 2 Cor. iv. 7. Christian ministers are ambassadors for Christ." 2 Cor. v. 20. And we remark here that God designs to effect the conversion of the world through the church; for our Saviour's command is, "Go ye into all nations, and make disciples of them." See Matth. xxviii. 19. As this is unquestionably the duty of the whole church as a body and not the ministry only, or some certain divisions of the church, we maintain that knowing as we do, that we are part and parcel of the great Christian family, and believing as we most confidently do, that the doctrines of our church are most compatible with the word of God, and as such are most purely evangelical, it is our bounden duty to do all we can for their extensive dissemination; and I firmly believe that this can only be properly done by engaging in suitable missionary enterprises. That this is so is evident from the positive injunction contained in our text, and that it was always so understood we now propose to show upon the following grounds—

1st. Our Saviour himself was a missionary.

I am truly sorry to say that the term missionary, as it relates to our enterprises, with many seems to be either a new word or intimately associated with some species of fanaticism. To such it will no doubt seem, when I assert that Christ was a missionary, that I attribute an official character

to him that by no means belongs to him. But when we remember that the word missionary itself signifies, "One sent to propagate religion," and at the same time remember that St. Paul says, "In the fullness of the time God sent forth his Son," Gal. iv. 4, we cannot fail to be convinced that I am correct. This sentiment is more fully supported by John the Baptist, when he declares "he whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God." See John iii. 34. And our Lord himself avers "God sent forth his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." See John iii. 17. Again Isaiah, speaking of man's redemption by Christ, says in his 61 ch. 1 v., "He anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives." In view of all these things, the conclusion forces itself upon us that Christ was to all intents a Missionary, officially appointed to preach the Gospel to those who neither had the means for procuring it nor a desire for its benefits. He was, therefore, emphatically more completely a missionary than any we now propose to employ; for we only propose to send missionaries to those who desire the Gospel; besides, he made much greater personal sacrifices to accomplish this great end than any human being can now make; and did all this that he might save the souls of men. Ought not we, then, who are included in his blessings, amongst his redeemed and highly favored, to follow his example, and make some small sacrifices of time and earthly honors and comforts, as well as contribute a small portion of our earthly goods to effect the salvation of our fellow men, and especially our brethren in the faith with their families?

2d, Christ himself was not only a Missionary, but he appointed others to succeed him. Previous to his crucifixion, he sent first his twelve Apostles, and afterwards seventy

others, to preach the Gospel; but he restricted them to the *land* of Judea. He afterwards told them, that as he had been sent by His Father, so he would send them; and this he did, when he gave them their final commission, as in our text: "Go ye therefore, and preach the Gospel to every creature." And only ten days after, on the day of Pentecost, after having received the promised authority from on high, they boldly commenced the work to which they were appointed, which received the impressive seal of the Almighty, for there were more than three thousand converted and added to the church in one day under the influence of their preaching—an incontrovertible evidence of the power of the Gospel of Christ when preached to a sinful world, and a demonstration of the fact asserted by the Apostle Paul, "The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Rom. i. 16. If we can do anything, then, to spread the Gospel of Christ, which is the only power that God now employs to effect the salvation of our race, should we not most willingly do it? Yea, may we not ask with the Apostle Paul to the Hebrews, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" How shall we escape? we repeat, if we enjoy its incalculable blessings ourselves, and have the means and ability to afford it to others and do not do it. Our responsibilities are increased if this is made our duty as a church, and there is no truth more clearly set forth in the Word of God than this: "When I say to the wicked, thou shalt surely die; and thou give him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thy hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, he shall die in his iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy soul." See Ezekiel 3d ch. 18th v.



The duty to warn the wicked at the instance of the Almighty falls alike on the ministers and the whole Church. That this is so is evident from the words of St. Paul in his second letter to the Corinthians, "God hath given unto us the ministry of reconciliation," 5th ch. 18th v. This ministry is committed unto the whole Church; but it is not convenient for every individual member to preach in person. Nay, this would be an impossibility, for all men have not the time nor talents to do this. Therefore God has authorized the Church to select suitable persons from her own ranks and invest them with authority, and send them forth to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. Hence we take the ground in the

3d place, that Christ requires every minister to be a missionary. This he does by his own example. He was a missionary himself during a most perilous, self-sacrificing, and arduous term of three years, which for the time deprived him of his native glory and honor, his happiness and comfort, and at last cost him even his own heart's blood.

By sending them he made his Apostles missionaries, who during their missionary tour were sharers with their *Divine Master* in personal sacrifices, in wants and sufferings. Most of them, too, came to a violent death at a premature age.

All the ministers of Christ must now be sent and, therefore, are missionaries; for St. Paul inquires, "How shall they preach except they be sent?" Rom. x. 15. Besides the Saviour exhorts us "to pray the Lord of the harvest to send more laborers into the harvest, for the harvest is great and the laborers are few." Matt. ix. 37, 38.

The silly dreams of such as suppose that ministers are now sent or called directly from heaven are altogether unfounded, for the Church, as before shown, is the only agency

that God now employs for the conversion of the *world*. He now calls his ministers by the Gospel, and sends them by the Church. This the Church does when she calls all to repentance by her ministers; and when she finds amongst her members a man of suitable talents, becoming morals, undoubted piety, and zeal in the *cause of truth*, she respectfully solicits him to abandon the idea of pursuits less self-sacrificing and that promises more honor, as the world calls it, and vastly more of earthly treasures, and devote his time, energies and talents for the promotion of her good and the general good of blood-bought souls—to wield the broad-sword of the Spirit. In return, she promises virtually to encourage and, as far as possible, aid him in his arduous duties as well as afford him the necessary means of bodily subsistence. This last is indeed nothing more than her duty, as well as the others, for St. Paul says, “Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel,” 1 Cor. ix. 14. In view of all these things, it is quite an easy matter to know what the duty of the Church is. Her business is, in the general acceptance of the term, to procure and fit out as many missionaries of the proper stamp as she can possibly get into the field; and I am quite sure she can sustain them, if she is but willing.

Oh! that she could but view these things in their true colors. It would most certainly require but a few short years for her to shine as bright as the sun, fair as the moon, and be terrible as an army with banners. And, having lengthened her cords and strengthened her stakes, she would cover the earth as the waters do the bosom of the great deep. Christian brethren, let us arouse from our lethargy at once, and commence this work which has hitherto been performed among us under so many disad-

vantages, and the Lord of the harvest will most assuredly crown our efforts, however feeble, with success.

Having established the fact that every effort made to spread the everlasting Gospel either by the ministry or by the Church as a body or in any of her divisions, is, and ever must be, decidedly missionary in its character, we are naturally led to inquire, Have we any incentives to action beyond the bare command of our text? Is there anything in the past history of the missionary enterprise, or is there any divine promise of success which should stimulate its friends to action?

1. In answer to the inquiry, Have we any incentives to action beyond the bare command? I remark that the deplorable state of ignorance and wickedness existing in those countries and amongst those people who are without the Gospel—to say nothing of their everlasting salvation—is certainly a very considerable inducement to all genuine Christians to exert themselves to spread the Word of Divine Truth. Especially is this the case when we take into consideration that those people who are under the influence of the Gospel to even a limited extent, are vastly more happy in every sense, than the citizens of the most enlightened and civilized country in the world where Paganism prevails. Compare any portion of Christendom—even those countries where the Gospel is preached in its most adulterated and corrupted form, as in Roman Catholic countries—with even the most enlightened Pagan lands, and the superior advantages of a preached Gospel cannot fail to appear even to the most superficial and careless observer. Where are human sacrifices offered? Where are widows either consumed upon the funeral pile, or buried alive with their deceased husbands? Where are tender females, as early as their eighth or tenth year, compelled,

contrary to their feelings and affections, to marry men who are not unfrequently thirty or forty years old? Where is the sin of polygamy tolerated by civil authority? Where is revenge for injury received by any of a given tribe or nation authorized to be practiced upon the person of any one, even a tender and wholly inoffensive infant, of an opposite party? Where is the largest amount of tyranny exercised by princes over their subjects? And where are a thousand other atrocities practiced that time will not allow us to mention? And even had we time, common decency would forbid us to mention them. The answer must be—In those countries and amongst those people where the influence of the Gospel is unknown.

On the contrary, where is civilization cultivated most? Where is the largest amount of humanity exercised? Where are laws and other civil institutions the most liberal and wholesome? Where do the people enjoy the greatest amount of civil and religious liberty? And besides all, where do men pay most attention to both mental and moral culture? The truth of the matter forces the answer upon us. It is, then, where the Gospel is preached in its greatest purity. These considerations alongside the great truth that our salvation and the salvation of the human family is due to the spread of the Gospel, are powerful, very powerful incentives to action in this direction. Besides, when we consider that no one can have a reasonable ground to hope for salvation without hearing the Gospel; and this is so, for St. Paul says—Heb. xi. 6—“Without faith it is impossible to please God;” and Rom. x. 17—“Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God;”—ought not every feeling of Christian philanthropy to prompt us not only to exert ourselves as much as is convenient, but to the utmost of our ability, both by our prayers and pecuniary

aid, to furnish every one of our fellow beings with means to alleviate their unhappy condition in this lower world ; and, what is much more, afford to them the means to make them everlastingly happy in the world to come. Is there any one who now hears me, who can be so selfish and so narrow-minded as to feel careless upon this all-important subject ? Nay, I trust not. Methinks I see depicted on every intelligent countenance an anxiety, yea, deep anxiety, to do something for the destitute of the means of grace.

2. The success of the Apostles may be considered a powerful incentive to action on our part.

To twelve weak and illiterate men was given the all-important command to convert a sinful and opposing world. They possessed no natural or physical abilities to command the respect and admiration of the intelligent and influential of mankind. Nor was the burthen of their mission—the simple story of the Cross—of such a character as forcibly to affect the senses of faithless men and women ; for who does not know that after all that they could say of the boasted power and wisdom of their Redeemer, they were compelled to own that He was condemned to a malefactor's death, and actually died the most disgraceful of all deaths, the death of crucifixion. They must preach Him who “ to the Jews was stumbling stone, and to the Greeks the utmost folly ;” yet, braced by the authority they had received, and encouraged by the promise of Divine assistance, they soon fearlessly commenced the mighty work assigned them. And after meeting with unparalleled success in their first effort, by a single discourse upon a single day converting three thousand souls to the truth, changing them from violent opposition to the warmest friends and brethren in the same faith, they traveled in every direction and in the face of the most terrible opposition at home and

abroad. They were frowned upon by the princes and emperors of nations; they, nevertheless, went on and preached repentance towards God and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ. They traveled through Asia Minor, crossed over into Greece, and penetrated as far as Italy, preaching everywhere a crucified Saviour as the only hope of the world. Nor did they promulgate the unpopular doctrines of the Gospel merely among the lower orders of the people. They taught openly in the synagogues; they went to the most populous cities, the centres of learning and idolatry; they assailed wickedness in high places, and denounced superstition in its strongest holds. The very points where Pagan idolatry could rally its strongest forces and oppose Christianity to the best advantage, were chosen by the Apostles as their most favorite fields of labor. "There, while philosophers sat around them and caviled, and mobs gathered to do them violence, and craftsmen, self-interested, sung the praises of Diana,"—they spake of Jesus—they preached the Gospel—told the simple story of the Cross; and what was their success? Brethren, have you not read the record? Do you not know the answer? Wherever they went, was not the God of missions with them? Wherever they preached, did not the Word take effect? Yea, "amid the profligacy of Corinth, a flourishing church was established. Rome, too,—the Queen City of the world—saw the Gospel triumph within her walls, and rear its standard at the very threshold of the Imperial palace, and cull trophies from the very household of the Cæsars."

But time will not permit us to enumerate particular victories. Suffice it to say, that in less than a century from the crucifixion of Christ, His religion had spread itself over the greatest part of the Roman Empire, and gained such an

ascendancy over idolatry, that Pliny the younger, in writing to Trajan, speaks of the heathen temples as having become almost desolate, their sacred solemnities intermitting, and their sacrificial victims finding only here and there a purchaser. And for more than two centuries from this time Christianity continued to spread its light and victories, until, in the language of the two fathers, Origen and Tertullian, "It filled the cities, islands, towns, boroughs, the camp, the Senate, and the forum;" and, in the stronger language of Jerome, "The passion and resurrection of Christ were celebrated in the discourses of all nations." The natural fierceness and bloodthirstiness of savage nations, were supplanted by the purer principles of philanthropy and Christian affection, and everywhere Christ was all in all. Surely this unbounded success was the work of God. His servants planted and watered, but He gave the increase. Surely, such success, in the hands of such feeble instruments, should encourage us to put our hands to the work in earnest. We cannot meet with more numerous and powerful enemies than they did. Surely, as men, we are not more feeble than they were. God helped them as He had promised; He has promised us the very same aid, and dare we distrust His words? Nay, let us go to the work in good earnest, and we will, we must succeed!

3. I remark, that the success of modern missionary efforts affords us an incentive to action.

Nearly all the various demominations of Christians have been, and still are, engaged in the work of missions upon one or other of the various modern plans. The first successful attempts were made in the sixteenth century. By examination, we find that success has always been in exact proportion to the extent of effort. Those who have been most successful of all, in the work of foreign missions, are

our Moravian brethren; and it is of peculiar interest to us that, whilst these brethren differ with us in their discipline and usages, their doctrines are identical with our own. Every Moravian is personally pledged to the great Confession of Augsburg. They now have many missions; and we have it from reliable authority, that more than forty thousand of the most destitute of our race, have through their efforts alone been brought to a knowledge of the truth. When we consider, that the Moravian brethren are comparatively not numerous, we can not but admire their zeal and liberality, and further, bid them God speed.

The Church of England is also extensively engaged in the work of foreign missions. And our own beloved Lutheran Church has not been idle in this work. Several worthy men have, within the last few years, been sent to India, by our Church in Germany, and even by certain portions of our Church in this country. These men have labored, some of them are still laboring, with considerable success. I am truly sorry to give the truth publicity, but such is the stubborn fact, that whilst all other Synods are engaged in this good work, our Synod has, thus far, done nothing. The true missionary spirit has long prevailed in the Lutheran Church; and the success of portions of our own brethren in other divisions of our Church should serve as a very strong incentive to action. But the object we contemplate at present is of narrow limit. Being, as we are, unfortunately hemmed in, we must first learn to do something for *home missions*, and this certainly is forced upon us by the necessity of the case.

4. I would remark, that the bleeding state of our beloved Zion, is a very strong incentive to immediate action.

(a) The comparative purity and soundness of the doctrines of the Lutheran Church has already been hinted; besides,



it has been stated that in exact proportion to the purity of the Christian doctrine preached at any given locality, is the amount of good effected thereby, either in a civil, moral, or religious sense. Upon this ground, believing as we most confidently do that our doctrines are decidedly the most scriptural of any, we are induced to insist upon the necessity of exerting ourselves to disseminate them as widely as possible.

(b) Christian affection ought to prompt us to do all we can for the supply of those who, with us, love our Church and doctrines; those whom circumstance, or necessity, has placed beyond their reach—especially when many, very many, of them are bound to us by more ties than one; many who are our neighbors, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters.

The great Mississippi valley, for the last 75 years, has been the great receptacle of the sons and daughters of the Atlantic States. With the general fertility of its soil is combined the cheapness of its lands, owing partly to the extent, and partly to the vast amount, of its public domain. These things, combined with the salubrity of its climate, have induced thousands and tens of thousands of the sons of this and sister States, where we have Lutheran congregations, to emigrate. This has been, and still is, a constant drain upon our Church here. In many instances our decrease has excelled our increase—so much so that some of our once flourishing congregations have become extinct, and others so much enfeebled as scarcely to be able to maintain an existence. Others still are less numerous now than formerly: some are not as prosperous as it is desirable they should be. Nearly all this is so, because our people remove from us either into the far West, or into some neighboring State or locality; nearly all of these emigrants are

lost to our Church. They are lost, because there are no Lutheran ministers and churches within a reasonable distance from their adopted residences. Whilst on the one hand, they have no inclination to abandon the faith of their fathers; on the other hand, they are equally unwilling to abandon the early impressions received around the paternal hearth, and in the Church of their fathers; believing that it is the duty of every one to stand in connection with some congregation of believers. They are placed under the painful necessity of foregoing their feelings of repugnance to the doctrines and usages of other denominations, and unite with them—a thing they never could have done, had they been within reach of the Church of their choice. How often have such persons sent over the Macedonian cry to us in our Synodical meetings for help! Within the last 20 years petition after petition has been sent to us from different States—from Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, Alabama, and Arkansas. And what, my dear brethren, oh, what! has been done for these petitioners? Shall I say nothing? Alas! I am forced to say *nothing! nothing!!* And why have we done *nothing*? I am constrained to say what you know to be the truth—because, we have been fettered by a policy unsuited to the age and country in which we live. This unsuitable policy has been sealed upon us by the foul invectives of an individual who once had much more influence than was at all deserved, but is now upon the shore of the dead sea of oblivion. Besides, this mistaken policy has fettered the conscience of our people generally with fears, and furnished the penurious with grounds for opposition: until, in urging the claims of missions, we have many, *very many* serious difficulties to encounter. So much is this the case, that the issue is still doubtful. Nevertheless, I trust and pray that, under the guidance of an overruling Providence,

we may be able to adopt a plan whereby to consummate the great object contemplated in our present meeting. And now the inquiry forces itself upon us: What must we do? What can we do? Shall we continue to suffer our members to remove from us, as heretofore, and to be lost to us, if not to Heaven in many instances, and not attempt to follow them with our ministers and churches? Nay, we will not! Methinks I can see developed in the countenance of every intelligent member of our Church present a willingness, yea, an ardent desire, to make the utmost exertion to inaugurate and execute a successful plan for Synodical missionary operations, to cast off the fetters of our binding policy, and to glorify God by consecrating our energies and resources towards the fulfillment of His divine command—to “preach the gospel to every creature.”

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THE TENNESSEE SYNOD BUILT UPON THE ONLY TRUE  
FOUNDATION.

*A Sermon Preached by the Rev. A. J. Fox, at the Dedication of St. Mark's E. L. Church, Rowan county, N. C., October 3d, 1880.*

TEXT: “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye are also builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”—Eph. ii. 20-22.

To enforce the truth of the Gospel upon the minds of the disciples and followers of our Lord Jesus Christ, as well as upon the minds of the members of the Christian Church in all coming time, our blessed Redeemer and his Apostles were very much accustomed to employ figures, drawn from the things surrounding them. A most beautiful

and impressive one we find in the text now before us for consideration. This figure is drawn from the art of architecture. The letter containing our text was addressed by St. Paul to the church in Ephesus, the city in which that most magnificent superstructure, the temple of the goddess Diana, was located, which Pliny said "was 220 years in being constructed, was 425 feet in length and 220 in breath. On account of the immensity of its size, structure and beauty of embellishments, it was considered one of the seven wonders of the world." The Apostle in our text evidently had reference to that grand specimen of human architecture, and intended thereby to illustrate some of the true characteristics of the Church of Christ; and as far as possible, to impress the minds of all Christians with the importance of regarding the Church of Christ as vastly superior to this, the grandest of all heathen temples; and thus to establish, in their minds, a profound veneration and esteem for the glorious edifice which the blessed Saviour of our race has so emphatically promised to build and defend, even against the gates of hell, and to show the inestimable value of being an integral portion of a building so glorious and divine. We therefore regard the theme of our text to be the work of building the house of God, which St. Paul says elsewhere "is the Church of the living God, the ground and pillar of the truth."

The great Apostle in our text, as well as in many other portions of his epistles, very forcibly insists upon the importance and necessity of a good foundation in all things spiritual and eternal. Indeed such precaution, all experience proves, is essentially necessary even in all national and temporal things. Without this (using the term foundation either literally or figuratively) there can be no well grounded hope of success in anything. Without this no

architect could construct even the smallest building with any reasonable hope that it could survive the storms of wind and the pelting of the rains that must fall upon his work. Without such attention to fundamentals none could even attain to eminence in literature, science, eloquence, architecture, agriculture, or indeed in anything human. It is not wonderful, therefore, that so much emphasis is placed upon the necessity of being particularly attentive to this matter, in commencing, fitting up, and completing a superstructure which is spiritual, and of such goodly proportions as the temple of the only true and living God.

Very early in the history of the world, God had a people upon the earth—in other words, the work of building the Church upon earth was commenced. The work was undertaken by the Lord Himself. The foundation was laid and the building was commenced by His own hands. The work was carried so far forward by Himself that it could safely be left for completion to such agents as He from time to time might select, appoint, equip and send forth to the work He specially appointed to each one of them. First were the prophets. Prominent among them was Noah, who for one hundred and twenty years was engaged in predicting the deluge, and in constructing an ark in which he and his family alone escaped the destruction which fell upon the antediluvian world; Jonah, who was sent to predict destruction to Nineveh; and Moses, who was specially commissioned to deliver the children of Israel from their bondage in Egypt and conduct them to the land of promise. This is the prophet who predicted the raising up of a prophet at some future time from among the brethren like unto him, whom they should hear in all his teachings. In this prophecy he very evidently had reference to the chief corner-stone mentioned in our text—“the head of the corner in the temple.”

This, most assuredly, was the foundation upon which all the Old Testament worthies based all their hopes of redemption and salvation. This is He concerning whom Isaiah prophesied in his 38th chapter and 16th verse: "Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation." This is He of whom David, too, sang: "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner." Ps. cxviii. 22. Of Him, indeed, did all the prophets prophesy. These were the holy men of whom St. Peter writes when he says "they spake (prophesied) as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Pet. i. 21. To these quotations we could, if necessary, add many more; but we regard them amply sufficient to satisfy every one that Jesus Christ was the only foundation of the Old Testament Church, in both its patriarchal and prophetic forms, and upon Him rested all their hopes of deliverance. The old Church still existed at the time of his birth at Bethlehem of Judea, and there was given the angelic annunciation, "Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord." And for this reason, when He was first brought into the temple at Jerusalem, Simeon, an aged prophet, who had been taught by the Holy Ghost that his life would be preserved until he had seen the Lord's Christ, as soon as he had looked upon Him, took Him into his arms, and after expressing his willingness now to depart, made many predictions concerning His future greatness and glory. Luke ii. 25-35. To the testimony of these and many others Jesus Himself appeals as his only testimonies. John v. 39. To such prophetic writings he had special reference when he so boldly exclaimed: "He that believeth on me as the Scriptures have said," John vii. 38.

The Church while she continued to preserve her first

estate was entirely pure and holy, and served all the purposes for which her great Founder had intended her. But she became corrupted by the devices of men. So much was this the case, that she was scarcely able to maintain her identity. She greatly needed reformation, renewal, and completion. When her great Author came to do these things, she rejected Him. "He came unto His own and His own received him not." John i. 11. Notwithstanding, when He had come in the manner predicted of Him, and had attained the age of thirty years, He went boldly to work in the discharge of the duties of His earthly mission. His first care was, by His own hand, to reform His Church, and perfect the work of building that superstructure which had already been nearly four thousand years in the process of erection. The first thing He did was to call, appoint and ordain a number of men, equal to the twelve tribes of Israel, whom He called Apostles, thereby indicating the work assigned them. To these men He declared that He would build His Church, and promised that the gates of hell should not prevail against it. In His inimitable sermon upon the mount, He very earnestly warned them that in the part they would take in the work, to use great caution in regard to the foundation, which must in all cases be a rock, and not the sand, Matt. vii. 24, 27. In regard to building His Church, He expressed His determination to build it upon a *particular rock*, Matt. xvi. 13, 18. This must be the same corner-stone upon which the Church of God was at first founded, and built in the time of the prophets. Otherwise the Christian Church would be another Church, which would be contrary to the Word of God, for the Word of God everywhere teaches us that God has not now, and never had, more than one Church. The Church of God is a unit—the same Church in all ages of the world. The only dif-

ference is, the Church of the Old Testament was built upon the rock Christ in the prospective ; that is, their faith embraced Christ to come. The Church now has retrospective faith ; she builds upon Christ, who has come into the world and redeemed it.

After Jesus Christ had accomplished the entire purposes of His mission to earth, He again committed the work of continuing to build His Church here below to human agencies. These were His apostles, their coadjutors and their successors. These men continued to build upon the same foundation—the one upon which the fathers did—and that was Jesus Christ. That this doctrine is true, is evident from our text. St. Paul says, “Jesus Christ, being the chief corner-stone, is the foundation of the apostles and prophets.” He is the only foundation that can be laid by any man. In proof of this, we quote the language of St. Paul, 1 Cor. iii. 11: “Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” It is plain, therefore, that wherever Jesus Christ is made the foundation as the Scriptures teach, there is the true and only foundation, and there is the “house of God, the ground and pillar of the truth.” 1 Tim. iii. 15. But wherever this foundation is wanting, no matter what the claims of any organization may be, the Church does not, and cannot exist. Every species of paganism is false, because no form of paganism has this foundation. As the Jews reject Jesus Christ, they set aside also the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and therefore the whole superstructure rests upon the sand, and can no more stand the storm of winds and rains that will one day beat upon it, than the churches of the pagans can do. For the same reason must Mohammedanism and Mormonism fail, utterly fail. It is true that they profess to build upon this unfailling foundation, but they fail to ac-



cept Him as the "Scriptures say;" and these are His only testimonies. John v. 39. On the same account the Romish Church is greatly in error, though she has the true foundation but fails to build upon Him as the Scriptures direct. The entire system of Unitarianism is utterly and baselessly unsound—because it denies the Divinity of Christ. Any system that does not fully recognize Christ as the only foundation, is not fully upon the foundation of the Church of the "living God."

Having fully established the facts that the Church of Christ is illustrated in the Holy Scriptures by the figure of a building or house, that her only foundation is Jesus Christ, who is the chief corner-stone, that God never has had more than one Church upon earth, and that her foundation in all ages of the world must be identically the same, we are now prepared to examine the material of which it must be composed, and the superstructure as we may now see it.

The Scriptures teach us that it is of no less importance to use proper material in constructing the Church than to build upon the proper foundation. St. Paul says, 1 Cor. iii. 10–15, "As a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now, if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's works shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's works abide, which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's works shall be burned he shall suffer loss, but he himself shall be saved so as by fire."

As the stewards of the mysteries of God to whom the

word of reconciliation is committed (1 Cor. iv. 1, and 2 Cor. v. 19), we, whom St. Paul declares to be workers together with him (2 Cor. vi. 1), should exercise the greatest caution in regard to both the foundation upon which we place our superstructure and the material we use in its construction. It is lamentably true that very many who have been, and many who are now, professedly engaged in this great work, have not only failed to be sufficiently cautious, but have been entirely reckless in regard to these things. The result, therefore, has been a vast deal of discord and division amongst those who are at work upon this building. Church history furnishes us evidences that such a state of things existed amongst the members of the Christian Church in the very earliest periods of her existence. Parties sprung up, and one chose this man as his leader, and another that one. But as their leaders were fully united, these differences were easily adjusted. But after a time, discordant elements appeared among the professed leaders. At first heterodoxy was limited both in the number of subjects and advocates. Orthodoxy was the rule, and heterodoxy was the exception. The unhappy disputes that arose concerning the proper time for observing the festival of Easter, resulted in such a state of feeling among the members of the Church, as finally to culminate in the complete separation of the Church into the Eastern and Western divisions. The sad result of this breach has not been wiped out by the lapse of more than twelve centuries. The Greek and Romish Churches are still separate, and probably will always remain entirely distinct.

Not far from the same time, though somewhat later, another controversy arose between one Arius, a Presbyter, and his Bishop, Alexander, which resulted in the expulsion of Arius from the Church, but failed to expel the error for

which he contended. To-day the orthodox Trinitarians, who maintain the true scriptural doctrines of the triune existence of God and the Deity and Eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ, are opposed by those who are distinguished by the various titles of Arians, Socinians and Unitarians, with the open denial of these fundamental doctrines of the sacred Scriptures, to the detriment of the truth and the salvation of souls.

The Greek Church has her errors, but from all we can learn she has preserved her original doctrines and usages much better than the Romish Church. For more than one thousand years errors, both in doctrine and practice, were multiplying in the Church of Rome. She planted herself in nearly all European countries. She seized upon the civil governments of the nations, and for a long time she proudly put to defiance all that in the smallest degree interfered with her proud claims and pretensions. The most terrible oppression prevailed everywhere. The common people were not allowed to read or even see the Bible. The severest penance was required for the smallest offences. Marriages were forbidden the clergy. Pilgrimages were lauded to the skies. The sacramental cup was not allowed the ordinary communicant. The absurd doctrine of Transubstantiation became an established dogma. The extravagances of the Popes demanded enormous amounts of money, which at last gave rise to the selling of indulgences for past and future sins, and very many were induced to invest money in them, and thus barter away their souls. Upon this nefarious business a monk, whose name was John Tetzel, was sent into Saxony. The effrontery of this man, with his enormous claims for the value of his wares, and the immensity of his vocal powers, secured for him great success. All were deeply interested, some were delighted, but many were disgusted, though for a time none dared to oppose him.

The time, however, at length came when the Great Head of the Church determined to interpose in behalf of His people. As in former ages he had raised up Noah, David, Samuel, Samson, Gideon, Daniel, Jesus Christ, Peter, John, James, Paul, and many others, for the particular work each one performed, so was Martin Luther raised up, and by many peculiar experiences prepared to commence and successfully carry out the mighty revolution by which the Romish Church was arrested in her abominable work of falsehood and oppression. In all his trials, advantages, and disadvantages, there was nothing that did so much to qualify him for the mighty work to be achieved by him, as his accidentally finding a copy of the Holy Scriptures. When he had found it, he eagerly read it, and meditated upon its truths day and night. He was surprised and greatly astonished at his own ignorance and the extreme ignorance of the people in regard to the holy religion they professed. He studied earnestly, faithfully, and prayerfully, and began to write, preach, and publish its life-giving words. On the 31st day of October, 1517, he boldly posted up his ninety-five theses upon the door of the palace chapel in the city of Wittenberg, and openly proposed to defend them against any who might oppose him. This extraordinary act, as might have been expected, at once created the most intense excitement in that community, and very soon spread all over Germany. And in no great while it spread over the length and breadth of the Romish Church. The supremacy of the Pope was called in question. The doctrines and usages of the Church were indirectly assailed, and especially was the whole doctrine of indulgences denounced. One who until then had lived in obscurity, very suddenly became one of the most prominent men in all Christendom.

The attack was not made upon the foundation of the

Church; but Luther openly pronounced much of the material employed in building it entirely unfit for use. He had studied the Holy Scriptures attentively and faithfully, and he had found that the instruction of Him who had said "I will build my church," had been lost sight of; that human devices had been substituted, and therefore the body politic had become a mass of error and corruption. He had no intention to become a reformer, but as he had found the only proper standard of the truth, he, in his simplicity, thought that all that was necessary to correct the mistakes he had discovered, was to call the attention of the leaders of the Church to this only standard of truth, and therefore he earnestly strove to give it all possible publicity. That word, concerning which the Psalmist sings in the 119th Psalm, "Thy word is a light unto my feet, and a lamp unto my path"—that word he had found in the Bible, and to these sacred writings his object was to direct the attention of the Church. By them he had been enabled to see the light, and he supposed that if others could only become acquainted with their teachings, they would all at once admit their capability of making men wise unto salvation. 2 Tim. iii. 16. But in this he was most sadly disappointed. He was destined to meet from the Pope and most of the higher clergy the most violent opposition, that must very soon have completely crushed his well-meant efforts, had they not been appreciated by some of the most wise, prudent, and otherwise distinguished princes of the empire. These men very soon boldly espoused his cause, and openly defended him and the truths he promulgated. Many, too, of the most learned men of Germany and other countries soon came to his assistance, and rendered him very important aid. Among these, Philip Melanchthon, George Spalatin, John Bugenhagen, Justus Jonas, Ulric Zwinglius, and John Calvin, de-

serve honorable mention. The ball once put in motion never stopped until the mightiest revolution the Church ever saw was effected. The most powerful efforts were made to suppress its progress, and to destroy Luther himself. But the hand of God was in it, and He has said, "My word shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish that which I please." Isaiah lv. 11.

Luther was arraigned before the Diet of the Empire in the city of Worms, and in the presence of that illustrious Emperor, Charles the Fifth, and all the princes of his mighty dominions, he was publicly called upon to recant all that he had published in regard to these things. This he most positively refused to do unless it were shown that his writings were contrary to the word of God. This his opponents did not attempt to do, yet he was persistently urged to recant without any proof of error. He was equally persistent in his refusal to comply with their demands, and finally, in the face of that august body of men and in the face of the greatest dangers to his person, he made that most noble and ever memorable declaration, "Hier stehe ich, ich kann nichts anders, Gott hilfe mir!" "Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise, God help me!" The result was that an edict of condemnation was pronounced upon him. He was publicly outlawed, and was thereby made liable to be destroyed by any who might meet him. His prince, Frederick the Wise, the Elector of Saxony, one of the most powerful princes of the empire, interposed, but he was arrested, and for personal protection he was for many months incarcerated in the Castle at Wartburg. Whilst there, he accomplished the most important and essential part of the work of the Reformation. It was then and there he made the translation of the Holy Scriptures into the language of his country. Hitherto, they had been shut up in the dead languages. But now, having

an open Bible, there could be no more “let or hindrance” to the progress of the Reformation. Every one could read and see for himself that Luther’s teachings were true exposures of the errors of Rome. All might now enjoy the blessings of the light by which Luther himself was guided. But opposition grew more and more violent, yet less and less effective. A mighty engine had been set into motion—the same that had been instrumental in the hands of the apostles and prophets in building the Church of Christ in the earliest periods of her existence, which had effected the mightiest achievements ever commenced upon the earth. It was the instrument which for so many ages had been lying dormant, but had now been discovered and brought into full play. It shook the very foundations of the papal throne, and inflicted the tremendous wound upon the Romish hierarchy, from which she has never been able and *never can recover*.

The work of the Reformation was carried on in a more general way from 1517 to 1527, when to assist the younger and more illiterate portions of the people, Luther published his Catechisms, the Larger and the Smaller, containing an epitome of the true teachings and interpretations of the Holy Scriptures. Three years later, on the 25th day of June, 1530, in the city of Augsburg, before another famous Diet of the Empire, the twenty-eight articles of the Augus-tana, or Confession of Augsburg, were publicly read and acknowledged by many princes and learned doctors of the empire. Luther and the other Reformers in this most noble Confession, by constantly appealing to the authority of the Church as expressed in the three universally acknowledged standards of the faith—the ancient Symbols, Apostolic, Athanasian, and Nicene Creeds—and the writings of the Fathers generally, and, above all, to the clear teachings of

the Holy Scriptures, incontestably proved that they were not the enemies of the ancient, time-honored and Heaven-blessed Church, but were the friends and true successors of those who were its founders, and that their work was only an effort to remove the rubbish which had been allowed to collect through the lapse of the preceeding ages, to dig down upon the only true foundation, "Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone," to expurgate the Church from all human redundances and appliances, to re-establish the customs enjoined by the Great Head of the Church, and to employ such means and materials as He has required.

Instead of receiving the thanks and esteem of the whole Church for their labor of love to the Redeemer, like their great Master, they met from many, and especially from the Pope and his admirers, the most violent and determined opposition. An attempt was made to refute the Confession made at Augsburg, which was completely disproved and exposed by Melancthon, in that unanswerable work known as the Apology. Other events occasioned the Articles of Smalcald. In 1580, only fifty years after the delivery of the Augustana, a fuller and clearer expression of the faith of the Church was of necessity brought out in what is known as the Formula of Concord, the Epitome and Full Declaration. It was then that a complete embodiment of all the authentic confessions of the Church was made in what has ever since been known and distinguished as *The Book of Concord*. This great work is now, and for the last three hundred and fifty years has been, the only true *confessional standard* of what has ever since been known as the Lutheran Church, an epithet at first given to her by her enemies, in derision, but which now for many reasons is accepted by her, though she has always preferred to be called the Evangelical Church, and hence the name, Evangelical Lutheran



Church, as she now names herself, to express her denominational distinction.

The Lutheran Church is confessedly the mother of all Protestant denominations in the world. Her numerical strength is equal to twice the number of all the other Protestants.

Formerly, in this country she was numerically small, but within the last forty-five years she has increased from not more than 40,000 communing members, to not less than 825,000. She now stands the third numerically in North America. There is one very noteworthy fact connected with the history of our Evangelical Lutheran Church, to which I desire to direct particular attention. Whilst she is divided into many different Synods, in this and other countries she, as a Church, is emphatically a *unit*. There are shades of difference in some things, which, in some places, and at certain times, have given rise to very unpleasant and even damaging strifes, yet everywhere and always she proudly adheres to the same time-honored Confession of Faith, the great Confession of Augsburg. Never has an effort to supersede this great centre of Lutheranism been successful anywhere, but all attempts of that sort have been but signals for a general uprising in its defense. This was the case in this country but a few years ago, when the Definite Synodical Platform, or the American Recension, was published as a substitute for the Augsburg Confession, by Drs. Samuel Schmucker, Benjamin Kurtz, and Samuel Sprecher, which not only proved an entire failure, but, I unhesitatingly assert, did more to establish true Lutheranism in this country than all else that has been done since then, and did much to damage the ecclesiastical standing of those great and learned men in the eyes of all true Lutherans, in this and other countries.

Another very noteworthy fact I deem it necessary to state here: The Augsburg Confession is not only the oldest of all Protestant confessions of faith, but has been acknowledged by many of the most learned divines in other Protestant denominations, to have been the model for most of the confessions subscribed by the leading Protestant denominations. The great similarity between our Confessions and the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, and the Protestant Episcopal of this country, is plain proof of this fact. The Twenty-five Articles of the Methodist Episcopal church—known as their Articles of Religion—are not much more than a transcript of our Confession. The Westminster Confession, which is the confession of most of the Presbyterian bodies, is so very similar in many of its features to ours, that there can be no doubt that it, too, is an imitation of our great Lutheran Confession.

The true scripturality of our Confession, has been the subject of the greatest controversy for the last three hundred years. The Romish Church on the one hand has done all in her power to disprove its doctrines. And ultra-Protestants on the other hand, even including some whose confessions are very similar to ours, have made every possible effort to set the truth of our doctrines in regard to some things aside. But thus far, all has been complete failure, and the glorious doctrines of the great Lutheran Reformation stand as the immovable monuments of the Divine deliverance by the hand of Martin Luther and his immortal coadjutors.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church, now as ever, claims that all the doctrines of her Symbols are in perfect harmony with the Word of God, and challenges contradiction. She claims that she stands upon the foundation mentioned in our text: "The foundation of the apostles and prophets—Jesus

Christ himself the chief corner-stone ;” that she “is fitly framed together, and is growing unto a holy temple in the Lord.” But she does not arrogate to herself the prerogative of being exclusively the one only true Church of Christ. She only claims to be an integral portion. It has always been the grand principle of her faith, as annunciated by Luther and the other Reformers, “that there are Christians scattered all over the world,” that “wherever the word of God is preached in its purity and the sacraments are administered according to the command of Christ there is the Church.”

The Lutheran Church has her distinguishing features, and by these she desires to be known wherever she exists. She alone, among Protestants especially, stands unequivocally upon her doctrines, and she regards her Confessions as a full and clear exhibition of them. Take away the mode of baptism, and the whole Baptist family will cease to be. Take from Methodists their system of itineracy, and their mode of getting up and conducting revival meetings, mourners’ benches, protracted and camp-meetings and all their paraphernalia for extraordinary conversions, and very soon no Methodist churches will be found. Take away from the whole Presbyterian family their mode of Church government, and their ministry of high literary attainments, and that numerous and respectable connection could maintain no separate existence. Take away Episcopacy and the theory of Apostolic Succession from the Church of England, and the Protestant Episcopal Church in America, and no such denominations will be heard of. Let a similar rule be applied to all who claim denominational distinction upon some merely theoretical hypothesis or some practical peculiarity, and the same result will be inevitable. Not so, however, with the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Take away any and

all her other peculiarities and leave her doctrinal system, and she will still be able to maintain her identity. She will continue to be the same old Lutheran Church. *She stands upon her doctrines, because her doctrines are founded upon Christ, "who is the chief corner-stone of the apostles and prophets."*

The founders of the Lutheran Church in America, such as Muhlenberg, Kurtz, Schaum, Handschuch, and others, were exceedingly careful to make these well-founded Confessions the ground of their work. Every congregation they planted was founded upon them. And when the first synod was organized, these men placed her squarely upon the entire collection of the confessional writings of the Lutheran Church, and to-day we find her occupying the same ground. The early Lutheran ministers in North Carolina were not so scrupulous in regard to the confessional standard. By reference to the records of the organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod in this State, we find that this was done in Salisbury in the year 1803. But by some means, no confessional basis was adopted. However, in the year 1807, a motion, submitted by Rev. Philip Henkel, was adopted, to publish the first twenty-one articles of the Augsburg Confession, for the convenience of the laity, in pamphlet form. It is probable that the reason all Lutheran Confessions were ignored, was that Rev. Robert J. Miller, one of the founders of the Synod, and for many years a prominent member, was not then, and never became a member of the Lutheran Church, but always continued to be an Episcopalian. Rev. Dr. Bernheim, an influential member of the Synod of North Carolina, in his History of the German Settlements in the Carolinas, says that "Rev. G. Shober, who very early became an active and influential member, was a member of the Moravian Church." I am not aware that

the North Carolina Synod, for the first sixty years of her existence, by any formal action of hers, ever placed herself squarely upon any one of the Confessions of the Lutheran Church. I know that, until within the last few years, she never made a formal recognition of the entire collection of the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as her confessional basis. As she has done this, I trust she will continue to occupy the stand she has, at last, so nobly taken in this matter.

The Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod acknowledges herself an offshoot of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of North Carolina. What the causes may have been does not matter for our present purpose, but she took her separate and independent existence in the year 1820, and at her first convention, by formal action, planted herself upon the Confession of Augsburg, and Luther's Smaller Catechism. In the year 1828 she incorporated these symbols, into her first regular organic law, and she made it obligatory upon all her ministers, to teach nothing that would conflict with these symbols. In the year 1864 she revised her Constitution, and so enlarged her doctrinal basis as to include all the symbolical writings of the Lutheran church, viz: The three Œcumenical creeds, the Apostles', Athanasian, and Nicene, the Augsburg Confession—the Apology—the two Catechisms of Luther, the Smalcald Articles, and the Formula of Concord. The North Carolina Synod has since then adopted the same confessional basis, and thus we see, that these two Synods, so far as Confessions are concerned, are now standing side by side upon the identical doctrinal basis upon which the Lutheran Church has stood for the last three centuries. It has been fully shown in the former part of this discourse that to be founded upon these great symbols, is to be built upon the foundation of the apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone.

The time was when the Tennessee Synod was held in derision by some on account of her determined adherence to the true Lutheran doctrines. Especially was this the case in regard to her uncompromising and open avowal of her adherence and defense of the distinctive doctrines of the Lutheran Church. But a very great change has taken place in the last few years. Confessionally she stands as she has always done. At first, and for a long time, she stood almost alone. But now she sees that her doctrinal basis is the same with the General Council, with her 207,205 communicants; the Synodical Conference, with her 436,000; the Synod of North Carolina, with her 4,500 communicants, and the Buffalo and Hauge Norwegian Synods, with their 10,000 members. If her own 7,500 communicants be added to the above figures, we have an aggregate of 660,700 in this country who are standing squarely upon this true and immovable foundation.

The congregation that has erected this very comfortable, neat and commodious edifice in which we are now assembled, and which, after the close of this discourse, is to be solemnly dedicated to the worship of the triune God, is to be an integral portion of the Evangelical Lutheran Tennessee Synod, and therefore in the fullest sense an integral portion of the great Lutheran family—the Church of the Reformation, the Church whose foundation is the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ the chief corner-stone. In view of these facts, the inevitable conclusion forces itself upon us, that this congregation has for its foundation the one mentioned in our text. If so, then this house rests upon the same sure foundation, and it is therefore our privilege and rightful duty to solemnly set it apart to the use of this congregation, as a suitable place in which to worship Him who is the foundation of this house, of this congregation, of the Tennessee Synod,

of the Lutheran Church, of the Church of the Reformation, of the Church Universal.

Take courage, brethren, and do not falter or be alarmed, though others sneer at us and even scorn us. Let Romanists charge us with heresy as they have done for the last three hundred years. Let ultra-Protestants charge us with being hyper-scrupulous in regard to doctrine, as some do. Let fanatics accuse us with having a religion of the head and not of the heart as some of them delight to do. Let some even of our household of faith who have the same confessional basis with ourselves, make unwise and ungenerous flings at us and term us Henkelites as some of them flipantly do. We need feel no concern. If the faith of the Lutheran Church is heresy then the Bible teaches heresy, for there is not a Church upon earth which can trace her doctrines more directly to the Bible than we can do. If we are hyper-scrupulous about doctrine, then the Apostles were, for St. Paul says, "the Scriptures are profitable for doctrine."

"The time will come when men will not endure sound doctrine." "Now I beseech you, brethren, to mark them that cause divisions among you, contrary to the doctrine." "Take heed to thyself and the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou wilt both save thyself and them that heed thee." St. John says, "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive them not into your houses, nor bid them God speed." If the religion we profess is of the head only and not of the heart, then the religion of the Bible must be of that sort, for we know no religion and will accept none but that which the New Testament teaches. If we are *Henkelites* because we hold, teach and defend the entire doctrines of the Confessions of the Lutheran Church, then there are many more Henkelites; for we have shown that there are in this country

nearly 700,000 that do the same thing, and among them our mother Synod of North Carolina, and at least 20,000,000 in other countries, who hold the same doctrines in truth and sincerity. This we all do, because we are certain that their doctrines are drawn from that inexhaustible source of truth, that word of God, which the apostle declares to "be quick and powerful, and that liveth and abideth forever"—that word which the Saviour of the world says, "Though heaven and earth pass away, my word shall not pass." Fear not, therefore, little flock, the Lord is with us; and, therefore, let us dedicate this house as we have proposed to do, to the worship of Him who has said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," "and lo! I am with you alway even unto the end of the world." God grant that you and your successors may always preserve the pure worship of God in it. Permit me to exhort you to see to it that the pure word of God be always preached within these walls, and that the Holy Sacraments be always administered here according to the command of Christ. Then you will feel assured that henceforth this will be none other than the "house of God, the gate of heaven," in which is the church of the living God, the ground and pillar of the truth, which is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone." May God bless you and your work to the good of the present and future generations, and may the generations that shall succeed you pronounce blessings upon your names. Amen.



























