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## A COMPARISON OF THE APOSTOLIC WITH OUR LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS IN REGARD TO THE LANGUAGE QUESTION.

(By request.)

A practical question of the greatest importance that confronts our Lutheran congregations to-day is the so-called language question. Every one of our German congregations must sooner or later answer the question: "Shall we introduce the English language into our pulpit and school"? Congregations that have already answered this part of the question in the affirmative will soon find it necessary to determine how much English it is expedient to introduce. These questions are more easily asked than answered to the satisfaction of all parties concerned. The experience of centuries teaches that there always will be some who declare themselves most emphatically against any introduction of a new language, who look upon such an innovation as a falling off from the faith of the fathers, as a pandering to syncretism and heresy, and as the ruination of our parochial schools. And if we pastors and teachers, and the members of our congregations do not know what ground and position to occupy when we are confronted by this question, much harm and havoc is likely to result which might have been avoided, if the question had been properly dealt with.

In studying the language question, we find that the first apostolic congregations experienced a transition of language somewhat like the one we are constrained to deal with. If experience is the best teacher, then, most undoubtedly, can we

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## STATUS OF THE ENGLISH WORK OF THE GERMAN MISSOURI SYNOD.

It is optional with the pastors who make report annually to the statistician of the German Missouri Synod whether or not they will note the fact that they are engaged in English work, and to what extent they will characterize such work. Accordingly, it is a fair presumption that the data furnished by the *Year-Book* of the Missouri Synod for 1908 do not repre-

sent the full magnitude of this work. In a number of instances where the writer is certain that English work is being done, no English work has been reported, or the report does not enable one to estimate correctly the extent and quality of the English work.<sup>1)</sup> Other readers of the *Year-Book* have probably made the same observation. This fact is mentioned not by way of censure, but merely to emphasize the insufficiency of the figures presented in this article, which deals strictly with reported facts, leaving out of consideration what has not been reported. A guess at the size of the unreported English work might be attempted, but the writer prefers not to make such a guess, lest the figures submitted might seem exaggerated. For this reason even such places where indications favor very strongly the assumption that English preaching has become a fixture of the congregational work, have been omitted from the present account. This remark refers to places from which the existence of an English Sunday school, or of an English parochial school, or religious instruction in English in the German parochial school, or the number of English catechumens, or of adult baptisms in English, or English "Christenlehre," or official acts in English have been reported, without a plain and direct statement that the congregation has also made arrangement for English preaching. Thus, *e. g.*, Knoxville, Tenn.; Springfield, Ill.; East Davenport, Iowa; Independence, Kans.; Fredonia, Mich.; Oakes, N. Dak.; Seymour, Ind.; and about twenty other places are not counted in the tables following. In regard to some of these places the writer is in possession of information to the effect that English preaching has been taken up, but it has been thought best to adhere only to the published facts, in order to enable any reader to verify the figures submitted by reference to the pages of the *Year-Book* for 1908.

At the close of 1908 English preaching was reported within the bounds of the German Missouri Synod from 379 different places, as follows:

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1) After this article was written, author was informed that in about 50 places the reference to English work had to be dropped from the last edition of the *Year-Book* for want of space in the respective column.

Western District .....	55	Southern Illinois District .....	15
Central District .....	52	Nebraska District .....	12
Minnesota and Dakota District.....	29	Northern Illinois District.....	12
Michigan District .....	28	Texas District .....	11
Eastern District .....	27	Southern District .....	10
Central Illinois District.....	24	Canada District .....	9
Kansas District .....	23	Oregon and Washington District	8
Atlantic District .....	18	South Dakota District.....	7
Iowa District .....	18	California and Nevada District.	4
Wisconsin District .....	17		

The English characteristics of these places are named in the *Year-Book* in about thirty different ways. Some of the terms employed by the parties making report are plainly synonymous, and may be identified or thrown together in the enumeration and computation, and thus four groups may be formed out of the 379 places named.

#### GROUP A.

1. Entirely English congregations and missions.....	37
2. Almost entirely English congregations.....	3
3. Congregations in which English predominates .....	5
Total.....	45

#### GROUP B.

4. English-German congregations .....	1
5. German-English congregations .....	23
6. German and English congregations.....	5
7. Congregations in which English and German preaching alternates	8
8. Congregations in which there is English preaching every Sunday evening .....	26
Total.....	63

#### GROUP C.

9. Congregations that have established regular English services ("regelmässig") .....	83
10. Congregations which conduct also English services ("auch englisch")	22
11. Congregations which have three English services a month.....	1
12. Congregations which have an English service every other week.....	18
13. Congregations which have English preaching twice a month.....	33
14. Congregations which have an English service every third Sunday...	2
15. Congregations which have one English service in three weeks.....	2
16. Congregations having English preaching every four weeks.....	1
17. Congregations conducting English service once a month.....	97
Total.....	259

## GROUP D.

18. Congregations having one English service in six weeks.....	1
19. Congregations having one English service every other month .....	1
20. Congregations having English preaching three times a month during summer .....	1
21. Congregations having English preaching frequently ("oefters")....	2
22. Congregations having English preaching at times ("zuweilen")....	5
23. Congregations having English preaching occasionally ("gelegentlich")	2
Total.....	12

Group A in this scheme, no doubt, enlists our interest chiefly. The 37 entirely English congregations and missions (some one has counted 39) are mostly small preaching stations. Nine of them have failed to report their membership. Only five are of considerable size, as, *e. g.*, Redeemer, Chicago, with 1500 souls, 950 communicant and 101 voting members; Racine, Wis., with 306, 120, and 25 members, respectively; Dallas, Tex., with 129, 61, and 29, etc. The entire number of souls in these congregations totals 3535. They are scattered throughout the United States and Canada: in New York 1, in California 1, in Ontario 1, in Colorado 2, in Kansas 3, in Oklahoma 1, in Michigan 1, in Saskatchewan 1, in Minnesota 2 (3?), in Indiana 1, in Nebraska 1, in Oregon 1, in Pennsylvania 1, in South Dakota 4, in Southern Illinois 1, in Florida 1, in Louisiana 2, in Texas 4, in Arkansas 1, in Missouri 3, in Wisconsin 1, in Central Illinois 2. The eight congregations that are nominally German, but have become nearly English, are congregations like that at Gretna, La.; Zion, New Orleans, La.; Lancaster, O.; Humberstone, Ont.; Hannibal, Mo., etc. They are nearly all city congregations of a considerable membership, and firmly established. They number altogether 2751 souls, 1776 communicant and 437 voting members. We have in Group A, all told, 7286 souls.

Group B represents a class of German congregations in which the transformation from German to English has progressed to such a degree that the pastor's activity is about evenly divided between the two languages. This group embraces some

of the oldest and largest city congregations of the synod, such as Schenectady, N. Y.; New York (Sieker-Walker), N. Y., etc. Again, there are in this group missions, newly begun, which report as low as a score of listeners. It is open to question whether subdivisions 7 and 8 should have been entered under Group B; they might also be thrown into Group C, for the fact that a large German congregation institutes English services for every Sunday is not a proof that the congregation has become half English. However, it does mean that the congregation intends to give to its German and to its English members an equal share of the pastor's time and care. For this reason it has been thought best to connect those two subdivisions with Group B, rather than to form them into a separate group. It is, of course, impossible to state the number of souls, communicants, and voting members in this group; for the pastors of these charges have reported their German and English membership in bulk. All that could be stated is the number of persons who are given an opportunity to worship in English regularly in the 63 places in Group B.

This remark applies also to the two remaining groups, with this difference that the proportion in favor of English grows smaller as we descend the scale. The reasons for dividing these groups from the two preceding groups and from one another will be seen from the nomenclature of the subdivisions: Group C embraces 259 congregations (a very small number are missions), which have made arrangement to have not less than one English service a month, while in Group D we find 12 congregations and missions that have less than one English service a month.

The status of the English work of the Missouri Synod may be seen at a glance from the appended table, which also enables the reader to trace particular items back to the respective section and page in the *Year-Book*, and to make his own estimate as to the number of souls, communicants, and voting members which he would allow for Groups B, C, and D.

SYNODICAL DISTRICTS.	*1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	TOTAL.
Atlantic.....	1	—	—	1	1	2	—	2	3	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	18
California and Nevada.....	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	4
Iowa.....	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	1	8	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	3	—	1	—	—	1	—	18
Canada.....	1	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9
Kansas.....	6	—	—	—	1	—	1	1	3	2	—	2	1	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	1	—	—	23
Michigan.....	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	4	—	—	2	1	—	—	—	16	—	—	—	—	—	2	28
Minnesota and Dakota.....	4	—	—	—	1	—	—	3	5	8	—	2	2	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	29
Central.....	1	1	1	—	1	—	—	4	22	2	—	4	4	—	—	—	11	—	—	1	—	—	—	52
Nebraska.....	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	4	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	1	—	—	—	—	—	12
Northern Illinois.....	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	1	—	12
Oregon and Washington.....	1	—	1	—	2	—	—	—	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	8
Eastern.....	1	—	—	—	—	—	3	4	7	—	—	1	5	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	27
South Dakota.....	5	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7
Southern Illinois.....	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	1	—	1	—	—	1	—	8	—	—	—	—	1	—	15
Southern.....	1	2	1	—	4	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10
Texas.....	4	—	—	—	3	1	—	—	2	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11
Western.....	4	—	1	—	6	—	1	5	8	2	1	2	5	—	—	—	19	—	—	—	—	1	—	55
Wisconsin.....	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	3	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	17
Central Illinois.....	2	—	—	—	1	—	—	2	6	2	—	1	5	1	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	24
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>379</b>
	Group A 45			B 63				C 259						D 12										

\* Numbers refer to subdivisions of groups as given pp. 180. 181.