

THE SPRINGFIELDER

Vol. XXXII

Autumn, 1968

No. 3

THE SPRINGFIELDER is published quarterly by the faculty of Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Illinois, of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

ERICH H. HEINTZEN, *Editor*

RAYMOND F. SURBURG, *Book Review Editor*

DAVID P. SCAER, *Associate Editor*

JOHN D. FRITZ, *Associate Editor*

PRESIDENT J. A. O. PREUS, *ex officio*

Contents

PAGE

EDITORIALS

M. Luther, b. Nov. 10, 1483(?)..... 2

Who speaks for the Missouri Synod?..... 4

A DANISH LUTHERAN DOGMATICS IN ENGLISH GARB: A REVIEW ARTICLE OF PRENTER'S CREATION AND REDEMPTION

RAYMOND F. SURBURG, Department of Exegetical
Theology, Springfield, Illinois

EVANGELICAL TESTIMONY AT SITTENSEN..... 3

OTTO F. STAHLKE, Department of Systematic Theology,
Springfield, Illinois

WHO CAN THIS BE? A REVIEW ARTICLE..... 4

EUGENE F. KLUG, Department of Systematic Theology,
Springfield, Illinois

BOOK REVIEWS

BOOKS RECEIVED

Indexed in INDEX TO RELIGIOUS PERIODICAL LITERATURE, published by the American Theological Library Association, Speer Library, Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey.

Clergy changes of address reported to Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Missouri, will also cover mailing change of *The Springfielder*. Other changes of address should be sent to the Business Manager of *The Springfielder*, Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Illinois 62702.

Address communications to the Editor, Erich H. Heintzen, Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Illinois 62702.

Editorials

M. Luther, b. Nov. 10, 1483 (?)

HE WAS ALSO A MAN—this Luther. Reformer, “German Heucules,” theologian, educator, linguist, musician, poet—and a man. We celebrate the day he came into the world, November 10, but his mother could not recall the exact year.

Heinrich Bornkamm has observed that in our preoccupation with the theology of the reformer, we are in danger of losing Luther the man. That would be tragic; because the man is the key to his work, the soul of his endeavors. Biography, it has been said, is an easy literary form to write, but it is one of the most difficult to write well.

Martin was almost too human, astonishingly open and frank. His candor made him all the more vulnerable to attacks. Sometimes he made mistakes—because he was a man. He had no illusions about himself as a man. And when he erred, or seemed to err, it was often because he was trying to help people who had brought their troubles to him; sometimes he was used by the very people he was trying to aid. Martin was no legalist. He well knew the letter, but understood preeminently the spirit, of the Law. He was never willing to crucify a person on a bare principle. His humanity coupled with his evangelical spirit often led him to the brink, and perhaps beyond the limits, of prudence. His humanity illuminates the regrettable counsel given to the not-quite-honest Philip of Hesse. As it does also his advice given in the case of a woman trapped in a legal but unjust marriage, namely, that she find another man and flee to a far country. To find a practical answer to someone’s problem somewhere, somehow, within the law of God and man, to bring peace to a troubled conscience—this helps explain the man. Even the insufferable Tetzl, after he had been discredited by his own superiors, must have been startled to receive a personal letter of comfort from his erstwhile adversary in Wittenberg. The humanity of the reformer only enhances his heroic proportions. Or, is it not a very part of his heroic stature?

Among the many volumes which form his legacy must be reckoned the volume of his life. It is an “open book,” which his heirs may read with profit or neglect to their loss. It is the story of a man, a man who lived, and dared, in glorious freedom because his conscience was captive to the Word of God.

E. H. H.

Who Speaks for the Missouri Synod?

WHO SPEAKS FOR the Missouri Synod?

Strickly speaking, no one.

The Synod speaks for itself.

The Synod speaks for itself, and that infrequently. It used to be every three years; lately, every two years. Outside of its official delegate conventions, except for implementation of its mandates by its agents, Synod does not speak.

Meantime, individual members speak. Some quite a bit. Others not so much, or rarely at all. Some take to print (as here). All of which could be a healthy sign of vitality . . . interest . . . concern.

With regard to controversial issues—and we do have them in Synod—one sometimes gets the impression that some speakers and writers, airing their own personal views, wish to be understood as speaking for Synod, and would bind all to their views. They may be stating Synod's position accurately or they may not. Either way, they are still speaking for themselves. If we understand correctly, Synod speaks officially for itself only in convention. It may not always speak precisely (e.g. on the existing "basis" of fellowship with ALC). Still, it is not the individual, but only Synod which can officially clarify any ambiguities. And that takes time.

The Missouri Synod enjoys unusually high esteem and loyalty on the part of its constituency. This loyalty, this love, no doubt moves each of us at one time or another to assume the role of self-appointed spokesman, or interpreter, where we we feel the interest of our beloved church is concerned.

What's the point of all this? Well, it seems under such circumstances it is very easy to overstate or understate or misstate the mind of Synod. When this happens, it can only compound confusion. Perhaps a little closer attention to what Synod has actually said, in distinction to what the individual spokesman or interpreter is saying, would go a long way toward clarifying the issues. In fact, reason suggests that such a differentiation must be maintained.

Who speaks for the Missouri Synod? No one. The Synod speaks for itself.

Is an editorial like this likely bring about the extinction of that not-so-rare species of self-appointed interpreter among us?

Probably not.

But it's something to think about.

Beginning with me.

F. H. H.