

Cleveland (West) Jersey St. 64.
July 14, 1865.

My dear Walther!

How I would have liked to have answered your letter [that was] delivered by Schwan, if we just would have hit upon something reasonable after the meeting. We were together again last night; but we don't know anything further than what was revealed to you, namely to relocate the institution to Addison, and the one (that's) there to St. Louis, although that will have its difficulties. In a letter from Brohm, to whom I wrote when the first report of the imminent misfortune reached us, to make provisions for my boys, I gained hope [I was hopeful] that the Constitution was not adopted, or if it should be adopted, that you, nevertheless, — also according to Brohm's opinion — could swear the oath, or that in the worst case the institution could be continued by others for a while without your official participation; that the matter will not last for long, is at least very obvious to me. Your letter to me and Schwan, taught me, of course, that all three of you can't swear the oath, nor [that you] will. It comes as a surprise to me about Krämer (Craemer) and Brauer since they got there at a time when at least there was no doubt any more about the validity of the government, which was difficult for you at the beginning, since Governor Davidson was still there.

Schwan at first was of the opinion: You should go to the governor, and present your situation to him, and to ask him for an authentic interpretation of the oath to be taken and at the same time [ask for] an opinion, whether you can take the oath or not according to his opinion; and for you to decide accordingly. And I must say, if you teachers among yourselves only have expressed your eventual sympathies for individual men there (J[efferson] D[avis] and R[obert] L[ee]), I don't see why you could not take the oath.

For according to the content of the oath, certainly sympathy for the entire matter of the Southerners against the North is meant. Indeed, in the word "manifested," according to a sound interpretation certainly a public declaration is meant. In the meantime since you wrote that you cannot take the oath nor will [take it], I am indeed not the man to persuade you in the least, for it is a peculiar thing about the conscience.

But what to do then? [But what is to be done then?] Resign your office, abandon the institution, for we have no other men to appoint, though that, according to my opinion, would be the formal right way, but [it] is of no use in this circumstance.

Two courses are remaining for us; the one would be: You stay at your post, and refuse taking the oath according to Bates' judgment. I can't understand your reasons against [it], for a theologian is also a citizen, and it is quite in order, according to my opinion, to obtain the judgment of jurists in such matters, and to follow it; and his judgment is obvious to me. Would I be standing alone [Were I by myself], and were a preacher, I would probably do that, and wait for what God sends yet. For I'm also of the opinion that the matter won't last long. In the meantime, if imprisonment were imposed on you, it would have the saddest consequences for all the students. Where should they go? Would they have to return home again, this would cause prohibitive costs for some, and

many would indeed have not even a place where they could go. Not even considering the yet much worse interruption of their studies. Of course, you must see if you can find out fairly accurately how the matter could turn, and decide accordingly. Were it to be seen in advance, that you cannot get through it, and the continuation of the institution would suffer too much interruption, nothing else would remain than to put the removal to Addison in action, but which, of course, would entail great difficulties with regard to the matter of expenses and other unpleasant, and in many cases, detrimental agitation in the congregations. Also, I don't know whether the Addison people would be willing to consent to the exchange, and whether the District Presidents would accept the responsibility in relation to the congregations. One of the two latter ones would have to happen, for I don't expect much of you revealing yourselves to the Governor, and asking him for his opinion, because he is, naturally, according to what I have heard of him, an instrument in the hand of his party; Schwan, too, thought yesterday, no doubt, nothing would come of it.

If, somehow, it could be foreseen that the institution would not be interrupted too much and too long, I would refuse the oath offhand according to Bates' judgment. You would then have the advantage that you with [-] a great, according to my opinion, in their right standing party [-], if it [-], and that would give the matter, according to my opinion, also better support vis-à-vis the congregations. But if it is foreseen that it would lead to nothing altogether, [other] than that you would come into danger, and the institution would be completely interrupted for a considerable time; one would have to attack the latter, as difficult as it would be; and you should write to Lindemann right away, if this has not happened yet [if this was not yet done]. Nothing can be decided before the District Presidents get together, and until then much water will flow into the sea [under the bridge] yet; and our dear LORD God also gets time to consider how He [may] help us poor wretches, who are still His children, out of a difficulty. Just inform yourselves as well as you can, how the wind is blowing in Missouri, so that when you are coming here to consider the matter, it may be properly resolved. Make allowances for my confused writing. I'm really unable to give free play to my thoughts as the product of my dark, indeed darkest, melancholy, which comprises me, or with which the devil has encompassed me as with yarn. I cannot help myself out of it. God the LORD help me, in Whom I have not fully given up my faith, and in Whom I put strong confidence for others, just as now for you and the Synod; of Whom I boast indeed. He will help us here also. Don't be anxious. [Worry about nothing.] Cast all your cares upon Him.

Kind regards from us all and Schwan to you all. Your

F. W.

The following are two news reports from the *Abendschule* of 1865:

April 15, 1865 *Abendschule*:

The official result of the election for a new Constitution of Missouri has now been issued and contains the number of votes against the constitution 41,808, and for it as 43,670. The votes cast for the constitution, by the way, contain only a weak third of the total number of those entitled to vote in the state. By a proclamation on July 1st, Governor Fletcher has declared the constitution is to take effect and to become law from July 4th onward.

Sept. 15, 1865 *Abendschule*:

From Missouri. In some counties of this state, a veritable reign of terror is the order of the day. Recently, Judge Wright, an honorable and respected citizen with four sons, two of whom had served in the Southern army, was arrested under various arbitrary accusations, and, on the way to Rolla, where the investigation was to continue, was shot dead by the accompanying militia. — The Presbyterian clergymen are determined not to swear the loyalty oath. Likewise, the archbishop of St. Louis has ordered the Catholic clergymen of Missouri to refuse [to take] the oath.

The “*Abendschule*” was a periodical published by Louis Lange:

Edited by Carl Johann Hermann Fick, charter member of the Missouri Synod and pastor at various Lutheran churches, authored several books and wrote poems including the hymn “Geh auf, du Trost der Heiden” (“Rise, Thou Light of Gentile Nations,” No. 498 in *The Lutheran Hymnal*).

Published by Louis Lange, under whose leadership a Synodal-Druckerei (synodical printery), the forerunner of “Concordia Publishing House,” was approved by the Missouri Synod and housed on the campus of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1869.

Printed by August Wiebusch & Son, who used the basement of Trinity Lutheran Church (pastored by Dr. C. F. W. Walther) in St. Louis from 1854 as a synodical printery (*Synodal-Druckerei*).