

THE REPORTER

of the Historical Society of the Evangelical and Reformed Church

Editor: DR. WILLIAM TOTH, *Franklin and Marshall College*

Volume 2

FALL, 1959

Number 2

GEORGE MERLE DE FERE ZACHARIAS

Elizabeth C. ~~Notter~~ Kieffer, Archivist

Each of us in the course of a lifetime, acquires a personal mythology. One such mythological figure in my own collection has been that of George Zacharias. My chief impressions of him, had been received from three women who recalled him with tender amusement: My mother, my beloved predecessor, Miss Lottie Appel, and Miss Lizette Woodworth Reese, the lyric poet of Baltimore. From them I had gained an impression of a gentle, unworldly scholar, quite incapable of facing realities, hence ineffectual. When I first examined the treasures of his collection in the library of our society, I swung to the opposite extreme, and felt him to have been misunderstood, and misprized. My pendulum has swung to centre and I shall try to make you see the man behind the myth.

It had been my first intention to begin with a direct quotation. The fear lest any of my hearers should momentarily mistake the style for my own, dissuaded me. Severely cut, this is it:

"In one of the narrow mountain dales which supply the brooks emptying into the Eder, a tributary of the Weser, is the village of Elsoff, the ancestral home of the Zacharias family. The liege lords of this picturesquely situated village were the counts of Wittgenstein, now bearing the title of princes. . . . The dales of Wittgenstein suggest wild and weird legends. It would be a locality in which gnomes and half-wild people in a prehistoric period would have revelled over vale and mountain, dell and height, cave and woodland, and where, in barbaric rudeness, a strong but innocent race lived as hunters, isolated from the tribes of the Rhineland." (Here the author digresses into a treatise on Germanic origins, and a philological dissertation on the origin of place names.) "My ancestors repose in the space immediately around the village church tower. For centuries they have had the right of being buried there . . . Sometimes the village bells would ring . . . their tones sounded for the confirmation of my great-grandfather in 1753 . . . The section of country around Elsoff has always been a religious center. . . . At Schwarzenau on the Eder, a princess of Wittgenstein considered it her religious duty to retire from her castle and, marrying a plain peasant, to live the rest of her days in a cottage . . ." Mr. Zacharias does not say that the peasant's name may have been Zacharias; he certainly makes you aware that he thinks so. It is somewhat anti-climactic to discover, that the original George Zacharias was not a native of Elsoff, at all. He came to the village as schoolmaster in 1614. The Daniel Zacharias for whose confirmation the bells rang, came to America as a redemptioner, settled in Berks Co., and became the grandfather

of the Daniel Zacharias who was for 38 years the beloved pastor of the Evangelical Reformed Church in Frederick, Md.

George Zacharias the seventh son of his second marriage, was born in Frederick on October 11, 1948. His mother had been Catharine Zinn Forney. Of her ancestry her son gives an even more detailed account, deriving them from French Huguenots with chateaux in the background, and more fairies dancing in the moonlight. A child of Frederick, I admit, tends to dream of fairies. The lovely little town in its amphitheatre of Catoctin Hills, has had that effect on many of its children. Francis Scott Key was one. Thomas Dunn English was another. Your essayist speaks with feeling; she was another.

Of his early life, I have found nothing. He was one of a large parsonage family. He probably attended the Frederick County Academy in its solid old building at Counsel and Record Sts. In 1866 he entered his father's college *Washington and Jefferson* as an "irregular" student in the scientific department. The adjective "irregular" was prophetic. He immediately justified it by leaving college at the end of the school year. In that time, however, he had created a legend. A pamphlet published for a class reunion in 1911 says: "When Welday had thrown him down and rolled him in the snow, and had gripped his neck, Zach was mad, and in his wrath declared 'No one shall press my tonsils with impunity,' and thereupon belted Welday with Silliman's Physics."

He is said by this same authority, to have worked in Baltimore for the next few years, in "some kind of a store," and to have done private tutoring. The death of his father on March 31, 1873 must have been a turning point for him, for the next fall he entered the Seminary at Lancaster. His irregular preparation was inadequate, for he took four years to complete his course. While he was here, St. Stephen's Congregation which worshipped in the college chapel undertook the remodelling of that sanctuary, a project into which George flung himself with wholesouled enthusiasm. This gave him a kind of proprietary feeling which lasted for his entire life. It is said to have been he who suggested to Mr. Wilberforce Nevin the presentation of the bronze lectern in memory of his mother, and urged the use of St. John's eagle as suitable to Dr. John Nevin, an idea which was later taken up in the St. John window.

The reports to the Maryland Classis, under whose care he studied were the usual meaningless ones of "satisfactory" and in 1877 he was graduated and instructed to report for licensure. He failed to appear. He sent instead a letter asking the advice of Classis as to whether he should be licensed. Classis replied that it had no way of telling until it examined him, and that, after all, licensure is not ordination. At the next special session (June 21, 1877) he appeared, was examined and licensed.

Thus began a very odd ministerial career. The term "ecclesiastical tramp" seems an unfitting one for a profoundly learned man, and a gentleman of culture and charm; yet what other term describes a minister whose longest pastorate was of two years duration, who lived most of his life on the bounty of friends and relations, who did his wide journeying mostly on foot, and got almost all his meals at the homes of his brother ministers. He was transferred from one classis to another so rapidly that it is a problem in research to follow him about. We find frequent reprimands to him for failure to report or to present his letters of transfer. His home address in the Almanac is usually that of his sister Mrs. T. J. Dunott of Harrisburg, where his mother also lived; or of his brother William who had a paint oil and varnish business in Baltimore. In his lifetime he served only five charges, each for an average of a year: Birdsboro, 1882; Grantsville, 1884; Marietta, 1890; St. Mark's, Cumberland, 1893; and Zion, Cumberland, 1903. He was of course assigned to supply many vacant pulpits, and may have received some fees for other ministerial services. This is all.

The report of the committee assigned by the Lebanon Classis to investigate his failure at Birdsboro, is illuminating (May 31, 1882):

"It is the opinion of this committee that Brother Zacharias entered with zeal into the work. That he labored hard, and with a commendable spirit of self-denial but it seems that dissatisfaction arose among some of the principal members, from no clearly defined cause that the committee could learn. . . . Your committee investigated this dissatisfaction and takes great satisfaction in stating that Brother Zacharias sustains an excellent character among these people; that there is not the shadow of any morally wrong action cast upon him; even by those who were opposed to him. The dissatisfaction arose from a want of adaptation to the peculiar disposition and character of these people. . . .

"But it seemed the almost universal opinion of the people, while many of these are good friends and best of well-wishers to Bro. Zacharias, that, under the circumstances he would better withdraw; to which course Brother Zacharias had previously made up his mind, and in this course your committee acquiesced."

This little masterpiece of stating the unstatable might stand as a history of all George Zacharias' pastorates.

The nearest to a reprehensible action which ever appears to his charge (and in this, I am sure, he felt himself entirely in the right) occurred the next year, when at the regular meeting of Maryland Classis (June 3, 1882) he requested permission to read a report (instead of presenting it in the usual written form) on the affairs of the Fairfield Congregation, in Adams Co., a part of the Emmitsburg Charge of which Rev. W. A. Gring was pastor. In it he apparently accused Mr. Gring of neglect of his pastoral duties. His speech was immediately followed by Mr. Gring's resignation. The classis, obviously puzzled, recorded the opinion that as Mr. Gring had held the charge for less than a year he could scarcely have learned to know his people, much less to influence them. A committee was appointed to investigate (they never did find out what

was wrong) and the suggestion was pointedly made that until they had reported Mr. Zacharias should stay away from Fairfield.

Meanwhile he had made the first of his trips to Germany, in 1881. He bore letters from Drs. Schaff, Nevin, Gerhart, Apple, and Gast, which were impressive enough to make him a winterlong resident at the Dom Pfarrei in Berlin, from which he made frequent journeys, on foot, to study the widely publicised deaconess work of the German Churches. His father's successor in Frederick, Dr. E. R. Eschbach, had recently established a lively deaconess group there, and this, with the newly established Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouse in Baltimore, may have given him the notion that there was a field for him in this work. The only tangible result of his investigations was a series of articles on *Domestic Life in Germany* published, that winter in the *Messenger* the domestic life being that of the parsonages where he stayed.

Six years after his licensure, he was finally ordained in 1883, in Grantsville. He is reported to have been gently disappointed that the committee was unable to arrange an academic procession to grace the ceremony. From that charming small volume, *Pastors and People of the Somerset Classis* (Berlin, Pa., 1940) I take my favorite of a hundred stories of Mr. Zacharias: "When he was settled in Grantsville, one of the well-meaning parishioners presented her pastor with a hen and a setting of eggs. Zacharias graciously accepted the gift and put the hen to work. One day he decided upon a journey to Meyersdale on horseback, a distance of some twelve miles. He was in a dilemma. To leave the hen at home would be to deprive her of the attention she required, to take her with him would add to his inconvenience. He chose the lesser of two evils. The story goes on that he carried the hen and eggs with him, in a hatbox. In spite of the ordeal some of the eggs did hatch; but as fast as the chicks came out, he added other eggs, thus confining the hen to her task beyond the normal period of incubation until she rebelled and left the nest."

In March 1884, the diary of J. Spangler Kieffer gives a brief glimpse of him: "A visit from George Zacharias. He was present at the last meeting of our (Sunday School) Association having come over with Rev. B. F. Bausman. . . . He came to us and remained from Saturday to Wednesday. He preached for me here on Sunday morning and on Sunday afternoon at Salem. We found his visit a very pleasant one for us. It gave me an opportunity to know George better. . . . I was glad to find how much there is in him of real worth and excellence. He was also very interesting especially in his accounts of his visit to Germany. He is at present without a charge, and has been so ever since his year's engagement (at Grantsville) came to an end. His experience in this respect has been a very trying one."

Most of the people who remember him as a guest in their homes (and that includes almost every parsonage family in the east), recall his visits as a pleasure. Many of them add that the greatest pleasure lay in his oddity. My mother used to chuckle over her own mother's frustration when to her polite inquiry as to whether he would like anything to eat or to drink before he went to bed, he

replied: "Why I believe a glass of goat's milk would be refreshing if not too much trouble."

Our invaluable friend Dr. Bready supplies me with a tale of such a visit to his home in Adams-town. "One day my father took a party to Sugar Loaf mountain. Mr. Zacharias being one of them. Mr. Zacharias had worn a heavy coat for the ride in the carriage, but took along a lighter one for the final half-mile climb on foot to the summit. When they arrived at the place to leave the horses, Mr. Zacharias excused himself, disappeared into the bushes, and appeared a few minutes later wearing the lighter coat. This in deference to the ladies present, as I suppose he considered it improper to change coats in the presence of ladies."

The Kieffer diary in recounting a call upon Mrs. Zacharias at Dr. Dunott's home in Harrisburg, in 1886, says: "George is, at present in Berlin, studying at the University and preaching alternately to an Episcopal and a Methodist congregation." The *Messenger* and the *Guardian* for the next three years carry articles by him from Germany, Switzerland, Palestine, and Rome. It is also possible that he attended the meetings of the Alliance of Reformed Churches in London, for it is certain that he visited that city at some time, as witness the extensive copies which he made from the 16th century newspapers in the British Museum, concerning the massacres in Piedmont, a subject in which he was deeply interested.

In Switzerland he visited the graves of the Ferree family, which in his nomenclature had become DeFere. By August, 1888, he had reached Rome and was studying at the Institute of History and apparently getting his meals with Dr. Robert Nevin, rector of the Episcopal church there. From this period, obviously derive the many fragments of Roman antiquities which came to the Society with his other collections. Few of them are identified, and save for occasional use in college Latin classes or by an enterprising Sunday School teacher, are of little significance to the collection, but they mark one of his happier years.

After his return he spent much time in Lancaster, obviously hoping for a professorship. While here, he held his brief pastorate at Marietta, and after his equally brief tenure at Cumberland, returned to Baltimore, where his mother died in 1895.

In 1896, the *Messenger* reprinted a news item from the Reading *Eagle* reporting that "George Merle Zacharias, of Baltimore, a member of the American Archaeological Society, had between 40 and 50 tombstones cleaned in Berks County." As this is followed by an article by him on *Early Moravians in Berks Co.* one assumes that the stones were Moravian. Possibly his archaeological interests had been channeled into courses nearer home than the well-worked Italian fields. At all events, from henceforth, he becomes one of the very early tombstone copiers for eastern Pennsylvania and Maryland. More than 40 pads and notebooks hold his manuscript copies of graveyard inscriptions and church records. The latter have been mostly superseded by Dr. Hinke's magnificent work, but the tombstones, according to experts who have examined the copies, show many which have since disappeared or became illegible. Unless these copies are soon recopied I am afraid that they too will

vanish, for he used, of necessity, the cheapest possible paper, and it is fast falling to powder.

At last, in 1896, the Classis found a place where his peculiar talents could be of real use. The Sesqui-Centennial of the founding of the Coetus by Michael Schlatter was to be celebrated throughout the denomination. Classis appointed Mr. Zacharias to its committee to gather materials on the work of Schlatter in Maryland. Here he appears at his best. During 1896, he visited on foot all the places mentioned in Schlatter's Journal. On this historical pilgrimage, he made some discoveries which are still of importance.

The first, reported in the *Messenger*, was that of the Glade Communion Set. This he acquired by apparently mesmerizing the sexton's wife who when it was discarded by the consistory had reverently stored it in her own attic. He remarks what many of us have observed, that such humble persons often have a truer sense of the values of the past than have their superiors. The other discovery was that of the Conewago record book, photographs of which were published in the Potomac Synod Proceedings of 1897. This he got by his knowledge that such records were often stored inside the altar. "A custom," he says, "no doubt perpetuating the idea of being baptised into Christ's death." He adds that the table tombs of the catacombs express the same idea.

The rest of the year's congenial labor, may be found in the published reports of the two celebrations. One in his father's church in Frederick, May 9 to 16, 1897, and the other at the Annual Meeting of Potomac Synod in Hagerstown, October 19, 1897. At both of these meetings the Glade Communion service was used. At the Frederick meeting, Mr. Zacharias delivered one of the principal addresses.

At the end of the Synod report, it is recorded: "Whereas The Rev. George M. Zacharias, a member of this Synod, contemplates making a visit to Holland, where he proposes to investigate documents relating to the early history of the Reformed Church in the United States; therefore: *Resolved* That this Synod directs its officers to place in the hands of Rev. Mr. Zacharias, in case of such a visit, a paper, under the seal of the Synod, expressing the Synod's approval of his proposed errand, and commending him to the confidence and kindness of the Authorities of the Reformed Church in Holland, and to the consideration of the custodians of the historical documents which he may desire to examine."

I find no record that, at this time, any money was advanced to him. Indeed the resolution is carefully worded to avoid making this an official commission.

Unfortunately for the unique quality of his errand, he was not the only scholar who was inspired by the 1897 celebrations to search the Holland Archives. When he reached Amsterdam, he found already at work, Dr. Edwin Tanjore Corwin, historian of the Reformed (Dutch) Church in America, and William J. Hinke, then just beginning his career as copyist and historian. The three were presently joined by Dr. Henry S. Dotterer, editor of *The Perkiomen Region*. Zacharias was not discouraged at finding himself one of a crowd. It simply enhanced his sense of the importance of

their work. He found ample cause for rejoicing that the German Reformed scholars were given equal privileges with Dr. Corwin. They were all given keys so that they could come and go as they pleased.

The four men seem to have worked out a rough division of labor, to avoid conflict and duplication. Dr. Corwin was of course interested only in the origins of his own denomination. Dotterer, who was on a general European tour, had least time to spend. He confined himself to material of use for his periodical, and to certain documents which Dr. J. S. Dubbs had requested him to check for him. Dr. Hinke, who was working under the guidance of Dr. J. I. Good, spent most of his attention on the official reports of Coetus and the Coetal letters, which he published in 1903. Zacharias spent his first year largely upon the correspondence between the Swiss, Palatinate, and Dutch churches before the emigration, and only after the others had left, began copying the Pennsylvania correspondence. The copies of Hinke, Dotterer, and Zacharias all await the careful attention of a scholar, in the collection of our society. There is much more than has ever been published, and they should be carefully collated, recopied, and edited. It is my opinion that some of our scholars are still going to Holland, when they need go no further than Lancaster.

In his report to the Maryland Classis, July 7, 1898, Zacharias made this gentle plea: "I hope that my interest and success in this work, may enable you to devise some means which will carry this work to completion without interfering with your classical apportionment. . . . My life is simple, and my expenses light, yet the sum at my command is not large." This letter was passed up from the classis to the Potomac Synod, which ordered the letter published in the *Messenger* and voted to send \$100 to Mr. Zacharias. Dr. Kieffer says that individuals (mostly lay members) of the Synod also contributed. Evidently this was enough to keep him in Amsterdam for another year. Its fruits are a total of 37 large volumes, some of them vellum bound. The purchase of the latter, taken from his small funds, may have been why he suffered so dreadfully from cold the following winter that, for awhile, he abandoned Amsterdam, and took a walking tour through the Palatinate.

This was when he made that visit to his ancestral home at Elsoff. He went also to Speyer, where he made copies from the Speyer archives. Here, too, he preached and was startled when, before his sermon, the pastor announced that all Jews and Catholics should now leave the church, as the sermon was for "Glaubensgenossen" only. He was later relieved to learn that this had nothing to do with him, but was a custom established during the Reformation. His letter to Doctor Eschbach describing this trip is one of his most readable.

In October 1899, he returned to Baltimore, just as Synod was convening in that city. The minutes say, rather wearily, "Rev. Zacharias addressed the Synod at considerable length." Among other things, he told them that he was \$200 in debt, and asked for relief. It was resolved that, "inasmuch as these transcriptions, letters, etc. are to be deposited in the library of the Theological Seminary at Lancaster, for the use of the Church, and as its property, this Synod hereby assumes the additional sum of \$100 of the debt incurred in securing these docu-

ments." Dr. Kieffer, who was present, amplifies this: "There is something very interesting about George and his work, and yet something very unsubstantial and unreal about it all. A sort of 'putting on,' an assumption of the existence of something that does not exist. For instance, on this occasion of George's appearance there was an effort, amusing to me, to clothe the occasion with something of the august character of the appearance of an ambassador before the body which had sent him forth on some important errand to a foreign land. When he spoke of 'the work which Synod had sent him to Holland to do.' I could not help feeling that it was a gross misrepresentation. Synod had not sent him, but had refused to send him. He had gone on his own responsibility."

His series of articles on the Holland Archives, which appeared in the *Messenger* throughout 1900 are very typical. In the first he quoted extensively in Dutch and in Latin, and spent nearly a column in a discussion of the philological justification for translating the Dutch word "kerke" as "congregation" rather than as "church." This was a *Messenger* article! Someone probably rebuked him, for his next one attempts to be popular. I quote a sample sentence (the title was *The Forest Church of the Conestoga*): "As the war-cry of the Indian grew fainter, the sweet hymns of our Colonial forefathers sounded over the peaceful slopes, quiet dales, and wooded ridges of Lancaster County. The swaying forest trees soon learned to bow in adoration when they heard the German Choral and the French Cantique resound through their branches."

The career of George Zacharias had now reached its zenith. He lived ten years longer in its memory. Except for a brief attempt to succeed as a German pastor in Cumberland, his time was divided between Baltimore and Lancaster. Dr. Bready who was a seminarian during this period, recalls his frequent sermons in the college chapel. A series, which he preached on the life of Paul, seduced the Seminarians into laying bets on the number of times he would mention the name *Puteoli* in any sermon. The record, I am informed, was sixty-nine. I wish I had thought to count the number of times in his European letters that he mentions *Ansgar*. He cannot sail through the North Sea without being reminded that Ansgar crossed these waters, nor walk through a German forest without "treading in the steps of the immortal Ansgar." (I must admit that the first intrusion of the apostle of the north took me by surprise. I thought he was a character in a Sigrid Undset novel.)

In January of 1910, during the inauguration of Henry H. Apple as President of Franklin and Marshall College he was taken ill, and died in the General Hospital on January 23. Funeral services were held in the College Chapel on the 24th. Sermons were preached by Dr. J. C. Bowman, Dr. H. H. Apple, and Dr. S. R. Bridenbaugh of Reading. Six ministers served as pall-bearers. On the following day, another service was held in his father's church in Frederick, and he was carried to his grave beside his father's monument in Mt. Olivet cemetery, by the consistory of the church.

Dr. Bowman said, in his sermon (*Messenger*, Feb. 10, 1910), "Mr. Zacharias was in some respects an anachronism. . . . He lived largely apart from the age, and yet he contributed to it something very needful, and very helpful. . . . He stood for the

ITEMS FROM THE ~~SECRETARY'S~~ ANNUAL REPORT

Purchased last year were the following items:

John W. Wayland, *Germana: Outpost of Adventure*, C. H. Huffman, *The Story of Germana Descendants in Reunion at Siegen Forest in Virginia*, a microfilm copy of Kenneth Moses Plummer's doctoral dissertation, University of Chicago Divinity School, March 1958, entitled *The Theology of John Williamson Nevin in the Mercersburg Period, 1840-1852*, and E. K. Kirkham, *A Survey of American Church Records*. A compilation of church records for the period prior to the Civil War and east of the Mississippi, this latter work gives a total of 458 listings for Southeastern Pennsylvania alone.

Singled out from the gifts of the year are a number of noteworthy items. Guy P. Bready, the compiler of the *Messenger Index, 1827-1953*, bound in 12 volumes, has now completed it with his index of *The Messenger* from 1954 to September 23, 1958, the last issue before the merger with *Advance* to form the *United Church Herald*. Dr. Bready very generously did the work for this last volume without cost to the Society.

From the Schaff Building have come the following: Dr. Mackey sent the financial records of the Forward Movement, biographical data and photographs of important laymen and lay women of the church, 62 folders of data on deceased persons and 53 folders on those living. Through the courtesy of Helen E. Groninger and Fred D. Wentzel the latest deposit of material published by the Christian Education Press and from James E. Wagner the silver-plated trowel used at the cornerstone laying of the Interchurch Center, New York, October 12, 1958, have been added. The *Year Book* of the Congregational Christian Churches for the years 1930-33, 1935-36, 1938-1943, 1946-1948, 1953, 1955-1956 (18 in all, came from Mrs. Henry J. Steele, Editor-Secretary of the Year Book Department. We also receive regularly *The Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*, and *The Congregational Christian Historical Society News Letter*.

Donald F. Lehman gave a typewritten copy of his work, *A Place in History*, an historical sketch of outstanding historical churches in the Reformed and Evangelical Synod traditions. John B. Frantz presented a typewritten copy of his master's thesis, *The Unionistic and Separatistic Movements in the Evangelical and Reformed Church, 1957*, 299 pp. Two dramatic works, *Christmas in Old Lehigh* by Mrs. Royce E. Schaeffer and William W. Swallow, and *Darkness Before Dawn* by H. Clayton Moyer, Jr. and two books, *Feed My Lambs* by Henry T. Vriesen and *He Stirreth Up the People* by H. J. Hahn, came from authors of our church. William Barnhart presented William Rupp's mimeographed *Lecture Notes*, twelve lectures, paper bound in seven parts, as copied by "J. N. B., '04 Sem." A photograph album containing 48 photographs of Reformed Church ministers, collected during the latter part of the 19th century, was received as an anonymous gift.

Don Carl Markham, a 1959 graduate of the Lancaster Theological Seminary, presented the 1864 and 1865 issues of the *Evangelische Zeugnisse aus*

dem Deutschen Kirchen in America, edited by Philip Schaff, thus adding to, and probably completing, the set of this periodical, of which the Society owned only the 1863 issues.

Winston W. Wernecke made it possible for Clara and Erma Neudoerfer to present Johann Friedrich Stark's *Tagliches Hand-buch . . . 1854*. William G. Seiple presented a German Luther Bible (Philadelphia, Mentz, 1831) containing genealogical information principally on the Seiple and Marx families. Through the generosity of Henry I. Stahr the Society acquired three music books, the property of his grandfather, John Stahr, who was the father of John S. Stahr and Isaac S. Stahr. Clair V. Rhodes brought to the Society as the gift of Mrs. James Helffrich five association items of the Helffrich family, among them W. A. Helffrich's *Das Reich Gottes auf Erden, 1933*, and *Lebensbild aus dem Pennsylvanisch-Deutschen Predigerstand, 1906*.

The Society received fifty items from the estate of Irwin H. Delong. These books and pamphlets are in the field of genealogy, particularly rich in works published in Germany, especially church records of Palatinate churches, and works on the origin of family names. Also included in the gift are a number of cartons of Dr. Delong's notes and correspondence on genealogy, which are now being sorted and filed.

Other significant materials, too numerous to list, have also come from individuals, Synod historians and presidents, local congregations, pastors and laymen and serve to enrich our growing deposit.

Use of the Archives

Several church committees and individuals writing histories of their congregations have found material in the archives. In addition, historical data have been supplied to persons sending in inquiries by mail. A total of 25 microfilm rolls, all Hinke transcriptions of early church records, were lent to seven persons. An unrecorded number of items were also borrowed directly from the collection and several lent by mail, including some examples of anniversary. A number of photostats, made at a local store, were sent out at the expense of the persons requesting them.

Our Increasing Membership

The number of paid-up annual members and life members has been rising steadily for the past few years. As of December 31, 1956, the number totalled 192, 125 of them annual and 67 life members. This number increased to 235 at the end of 1957, 164 annual and 71 life members. By the end of 1958 the total was 353, 263 annual and 90 life members. Fifty-three per cent of the Synods were represented in the membership roster in 1956. This figure rose to 88% in 1957, and in 1958 all of the Synods had members. The total membership list as of May 1959 consists of 313, 207 paid-up annual members and 106 life members. We need the cooperation of Synod historians, presidents and pastors to continue this trend. Let us join hands in doing the work that is needed to preserve the record of those who have faithfully labored for the Lord.