THE ORIGINS OF

SWEDISH RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

With Special Reference

To

OLOF GUSTAF HEDSTROM

AND

THE EARLY STRUCTURE OF SWEDISH METHODISM

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OLOF GUSTAF HEDSTROM

AND

THE EARLY STRUCTURE OF SWEDISH METHODISM

By

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A THESIS

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DOCTOR OF THEOLOGY

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Dedicated To

My Dear Christian Parents

Benjamin Lawson

and

Edla Sofia (Johanson) Lawson

With Gratitude, Admiration and Love

Christians, while on earth abiding,
  Let us ever praise and pray,
Firmly in our God confiding,
  As our fathers in their day;
Be the children's voices raised
To the God their fathers praised.
Let His bounty, failing never,
Be on us and all forever.

(Augustana Hymnal 315.5)

PREFACE

PREFACE

The picture of four churches, clustered together in the city where the author's boyhood was lived, has been indelibly impressed upon his mind. It was but natural that the church (Lutheran) in which he had been baptised and nurtured won his primary loyalty; nevertheless, he felt a genuine kinship with the other three, also, for he knew that nearly the entire population of that particular section of the city was of one blood, and blood was a uniting factor. Perhaps even then he asked the question: why <u>four</u> churches? For were they not all of the Swedish race? Large groups of good church folk could be seen every Sunday morning wending their way along the main thoroughfares, inevitably to part at the crossing of the ways which led to the various church edifices. But why this parting?

He grew to love the old church which above all others on earth became his spiritual home. An inviting sanctuary, good and faithful pastors, the unique appeal of the church year with the festal seasons, the rich and dignified order of worship, the almost overwhelming spirit of reverence and devotion when Holy Communion was celebrated, all

played a part in moulding his love for Mother Church. Somehow he came to feel that in that hallowed place his petty and sundered life was taken up into the majestic and victorious life of Him who is the Lord of the Church, and made a living part in the perfect vastness of the Kingdom of God. The opening words of the Confession of Sins at Vespers, "Merciful God, Heavenly Father, Whose grace endureth from generation to generation . . . ," came to mean much to him. The Church appeared as a golden chain of many links; we were a part in that glorious fellowship, the noble succession of Christ-filled souls; we were numbered in that blest communion which embraced the saints of God of all generations, back to the days of the first followers, and to Christus Victor. Ages before his life came into being God was present with His prevenient grace. In the Word and the Holy Sacraments the Church owned her greatest treasures; with these she declared the love and grace of God, from generation to generation. -- So too, in those days, we prayed and planned concerning the new church we were to build. More than once since its erection, it has been brought home to him that the physical structure is a symbol of that which is greater. Peter knew that even rock would crumble; the mightier, therefore, are his words to us: "Ye also, as living stones, are built

up a spiritual house" (I Peter 2.5). The author is indebted to his old home church for preparing the way for the idea of the Church which he now holds, and which concept alone to him proves satisfying.

From occasional visits to the other three churches he came to know something of their genius and character. There stood the Methodist church, with the very name suggesting an Anglo-American factor in its origin. Its mode of worship was quite different from that which in his church had grown to be a very part of him. When he passed by that church, numberless times, he had no way of surmising that it was going to be his joy to prepare a whole monograph on the interesting character who is deservedly called "the Father of Swedish Methodism", and who had been the first to preach to the Swedish people in his old home settlement. In the same way the name Baptist suggested something which it was difficult for him to consider germaine to the Swedish temperament. Were these people Baptists from across the seas, or had they come as Lutherans and changed their allegiance in the new land? Of one thing he felt certain; on a specific doctrine they differed from us, and therein, he reasoned, lay the origin of their name.

The fourth church displayed the words "Swedish Congregational" on its signboard. Was it therefore re-

lated in any way to the old South Church (Congregational), whose towering spire was the first in that part of the city to bear its telling testimony of the Kingdom of God, and which always seemed to the writer to be the very center of his community? He knew that the members of this congregation were also called "Missionsvänner" (Mission Friends) and he had heard it said that they once belonged within his own communion. Were they then related in any way to the Lutherans? Their singing seemed so fervent and spirited, and he was secretly pleased, upon opening their hymnbook, to find Luther's majestic chorale "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" listed as the initial number. On one visit he entered the sacristy and stood for a moment before a large picture hung on the wall. At the time he did not recognise the name, P. P. Waldenström, but he remembered that he wore the traditional collar of the Lutheran pastor. How were we related?

In those days the life of the Swedish element of the community was centered in these four institutions. There must have been reasons for the difference between them; if not, why would there not have been only one church? Some differences there may have been, and yet on the way home, on Sundays, groups from the one would join in the ranks of the others. They walked together,

worked together, lived together, and on occasions they worshiped together; there was an essential unity in the seeming diversity, a unity at once deeply human and deeply spiritual. In later years this "unity in diversity" has been impressed upon the author more and more. It has been accorded classic utterance in the ancient Sequence of the Church:

> Veni, Sancte Spiritus!
> reple tuorum corda fidelium,
> et tui amoris in eis ignem accende:
> qui per diversitatem linguarum cunctarum
> gentes in unitate fidei congregasti.
> Halleluja! Halleluja!

* * *

But why did our church folk part company on Sunday mornings to go to their respective houses of worship? That was the question the present writer propounded above, and in the pages of this dissertation he seeks to offer one answer, especially as it is found in the life and mission of Olof Gustaf Hedstrom.

The preparation of this work has often taken the author far afield and he is deeply indebted to a large number for very kindly and able assistance. He dares not attempt to list the names of all of these -- librarians, pastors, church officials, custodians of archives, directors and secretaries at denominational headquarters, teachers, fellow-students in Church History, and others --

lest anyone be inadvertently omitted, but their gracious help will never be forgotten.

It is imperative, however, that he mention the name of the Rev. Prof. Howard Tillman Kuist, M. A., Ph.D., his faculty adviser at the Biblical Seminary in New York, a respected, valued and beloved friend, who has given sound guidance to him along the path of scholastic work.

Every sincere study in the field of Church History will lead the student to a greater reverence and respect for individual communions, their genius, characteristics and spirit; such study, the author is convinced, will also unfold the deeper inner meaning of the Church, as the body of Christ (Ephesians 1. 23). In the history of the churches born out of the later immigration there are many pages which are gloomy and uninviting. However, his admiration for those who laid the first foundations upon which succeeding generations may build is unbounded. In more ways than one the pioneer immigrant remained a sojourner in his adopted land. He was a pilgrim in a distant country. On the fly-leaf of an early hymnbook he printed words with an almost nostalgic suggestion: "Remember Jehovah from afar, and let Jerusalem come into your mind" (Jeremiah 51. 50). Could he then really feel "at home" here? Not entirely. But he built a

church in order that he might have a spiritual home, and in his heart he felt a yearning for another homeland. In the spiritual home which his hands had reared he enjoyed a foretaste of the Home toward which he looked forward in faith and confidence.

Let Thy Church, O heavenly Father,
  Be to us the open way
To that temple where we gather
  Round Thy throne some blessed day.
    Gentle Shepherd as of old,
    Feed us, tend us, in Thy fold,
And at last Thy flock deliver,
In Thy heaven to dwell forever.

(Augustana Hymnal 340, 4)

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ABBREVIATIONS

S	=	Sändebudet. (Official weekly of the Swedish Methodist church.)
LWW	=	Liljegren, Westergreen and Wallenius, Svenska metodismen i Amerika.
Witting	=	Minnen från mitt lif som sjöman, immigrant och predikant, etc.
CAJ	=	The Christian Advocate and Journal.
CA	=	The Christian Advocate.
ARMS	=	The Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church.
Tidskrift	=	Tidskrift för svensk ev. luth. kyrkohistoria i N. Amerika och för teologiska och kyrkliga frågor.
Norelius	=	De svenska lutherska församlingarnas och svenskarnes historia i Amerika.
EK	=	Emigranterna och Kyrkan. (ed. Westin)
SBB	=	Brev från och till den svenska baptismens banbrytare 1850-1858. (Ur den svenska folkväckelsens historia och tankevärld.) (ed. Westin)
AHSP	=	Augustana Historical Society Publications.

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PART I

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

American Church History, with its complex and variegated pattern, is seemingly limitless in scope. All nations of the world, and especially the European countries, have given of their sons and daughters to the increase of our population. Religious liberty has been one of the cardinal principles of our land; we have never known a national or established church; groups and individuals have been free to worship God according to the dictates of conscience. The churches of America are, accordingly, of widely different structure; there are denominations which are virtually transplantations from Europe; there are others, which though having a European source, have been significantly shaped and influenced by the American environment; again, there are groups which mark their origin here and have remained entirely germane to this country.[1]

As a result of the mass immigration of the nineteenth century great social, civic and cultural changes were wrought in America. The multitudes who sought our shores from every land of Europe brought with them contributions, religious and cultural, which have since

. . . . .

1. The Episcopal, Lutheran and Unitarian churches may be cited as illustrations of these classes, respectively.

proved important strands in the weaving of the fabric of American thought and life and institutions. This great movement in history, involving an addition to our population between 1815 and 1914 of more than thirty millions, presents to the historian numerous virgin fields which invite investigation, a fact which has been recognised by the American Historical Association and advanced in suggestive form by Dr. Marcus L. Hansen.[1]

Immigration from Sweden began in the late forties although it was not until the last three decades of the nineteenth century that the real "awakening of the Swedes" took place. The factors involved in this immigration are numerous and much splendid research has been conducted in the field. Dr. John S. Lindberg has made a study of Swedish emigration from the economic and sociological point of view.[2] A lasting contribution - economic, cultural and religious in scope - has been made by Dr. Florence Janson through her extensive and painstaking studies.[3] A specialized treatment of the religious aspects

. . . .

1. Hansen, The History of American Immigration as a field for Research, The American Historical Review, April, 1927.

2. Lindberg, The Background of Swedish Emigration to the United States. An Economic and Sociological Study in the Dynamics of Migration. Minneapolis, 1930.

3. Janson, The Background of Swedish Immigration, 1840-1930. Chicago, 1931.

of Swedish immigration has been offered by Dr. George M. Stephenson, whose very informative work will forever remain a basic study in the field.[1] The treatise by Stephenson gives a survey of all the denominations which have grown up among the Swedish element in America, their old world backgrounds, their interrelations, characteristics and accomplishments, as well as the highly interesting process of Americanization and amalgamation. With this study a notable advance is noted over the work of the several earlier historians of the individual denominations, and a stimulus has been furnished for future researches.

That there is an increased interest in the religious history of the Swedish-Americans is evident in the progress marked by the Augustana Historical Society, founded in 1930, and supplanting the Swedish Historical Society of America. With the center of its work at Augustana College and Theological Seminary, Rock Island, Illinois, this society has worked to set in order and catalog the rich collections already found at the Denkmann Memorial Library, at Augustana, and has issued appeals that other available materials be deposited in its archives. Annual publications have appeared since the inception of the society.

. . . . .

1. Stephenson, The Religious Aspects of Swedish Immigration, A Study of Immigrant Churches. Minneapolis, 1932.

The present writer is happy to join hands with the many others who have a vital interest in Swedish-American history, and particularly in its religious aspects.

Whereas the works referred to above represent general studies, broad in scope, it is the purpose of the present study to give more detailed and intensive consideration to the early structure of a single church body, the first to effect a permanent organization among the Swedish element of the nineteenth century immigration. A very genuine religious experience in the life of Olof Gustaf Hedstrom, an humble tailor, marks the origin of Swedish Methodism and the present writer does not hesitate to consider that the Bethel Ship Mission conducted by him constitutes one of the most unique chapters in all Swedish-American history. The whole development of Swedish Methodism in America is inextricably bound together with the life of that individual who proved a Good Samaritan to many thousands; and the influence of his work extended even far beyond the borders of our own land.

The Swedish Methodists, in common with other denominations, have had their own historians. H. H. Liljegren, N. O. Westergreen and O. G. Wallenius collaborated in producing a history of Swedish Methodism in America, published

in 1895.[1] The highly fascinating autobiography written by Victor Witting, issued in 1903, contained large sections given over to the history of Swedish Methodism, both in the United States and in Sweden.[2] In his account of Methodism in Sweden J. M. Erikson has of necessity incorporated an account of the beginnings in the United States.[3] As is so often the case in denominational histories these works are primarily concerned with individual pastors and congregations, giving a broad survey of the entire field. In this dissertation the present writer has considerably limited the area of enquiry and focused his attention upon the individual who stands at the very beginning of Swedish

. . . . .

1. Liljegren-Wantzgreen-Wallenius, Svenska Metodismen i Amerika. Chicago, 1895.

2. Witting, Minnen från mitt lif samt själfbiografi, immigrant och predikant, samt en historisk afhandling af metodismens uppkomst, utveckling, utbredning bland svenskarne i Amerika och Sverige från dess början, 1846, till dess organiserande i konferenser, 1876 i Sverige och 1877 i Amerika. Worcester, Massachusetts, 1903.

3. Erikson, Metodismen i Sverige. En historisk-biografisk framställning af metodistkyrkans verksamhet i vårt land. Med porträtt af samtlige predikanter och vyer af de flesta kyrkor. Stockholm, 1896.

Methodism and the relations he sustained to the early structure of that movement. The author has had access to a large amount of virgin material, a great portion of it in manuscript, which has never been used before, and the value of building a history on such sources is apparent. He has been encouraged by his Swedish Methodist friends to believe that this presentation of the earliest chapters of their work gives more adequate expression to a fascinating subject which has previously been known only in a fragmentary way.

A proper understanding of the religious organizations of Swedish origin in the United States necessitates a knowledge of religious conditions and backgrounds in Sweden, both before and during the period of immigration with which this thesis is concerned. This is especially true with reference to three denominations: the Lutheran church among the Swedish element in the United States was founded through the instrumentality of pastors from Sweden who came to serve as spiritual shepherds for their scattered countrymen; the beginnings of the Baptist church in Sweden and among the Swedes in the United States were simultaneous, and there was intimate contact and cordial cooperation between the two groups; the Mission Friend movement was a direct outgrowth of the hyperevangelical tendencies in Sweden. Methodism, however, was not transplanted to Swedish-American soil from abroad, and Swedish

Methodism as it developed under Hedstrom was quite independent, historically, of the Methodist enterprise, directed by George Scott, that lived for a time in Sweden. Methodism among the Swedish element in the United States had its roots in American soil, with a minimum of Swedish antecedents. For that reason, though the author has familiarized himself with the historical backgrounds of the immigrant churches by a thorough orientation in the movements and tendencies in Sweden, he has not felt it necessary to incorporate in this work any considerable body of this information, merely offering suggestions and references to such an extent that the main currents of religious thought and activity may be grasped.

Again, a proper understanding of the history and peculiar genius of any single religious body that has developed among the Swedish element in the United States is gained only when the organization in question is studied against the broader background of the historical structure of the several church groups which have occupied the scene among this portion of our population. Such a study reveals the social sources, contacts and affiliations of the various denominations, their comparative emphases, the basic content of their religious culture, the types of piety and manner of religious expression, as well as the modes of organization and the methods of prosecuting the work. There is much that suggests confusion and even

chaos in the early church life among the Swedish-Americans; yet, there are very definite lines of demarcation between the several groups, and these loom large in importance. In the study of the struggles that took place in the early period, and in the many cross-currents and inter-relations, there is found a key which opens the way to appreciating the real mission and purpose of each group as these were understood and advanced by the several leaders. The Swedish immigrants were nominally members of the Lutheran State Church; that they were not all to be gathered into one and the same religious fold in their adopted land, however, became obvious from the very beginning. The competition for converts became a very lively and sometimes acute issue. Swedish Methodism is understood only when viewed in its proper relation to the whole field, and for that reason the author purposes, after offering a brief portrayal of Swedish immigration to the United States, to present a general historical survey of the origins of Swedish religious organizations in the United States, a foundational study for the presentation of Olof Gustaf Hedstrom and the early structure of Swedish Methodism which will immediately follow.

The part played by Hedstrom in the development of early Swedish Methodism may be conveniently set forth in three sections. In the first of these an account will be

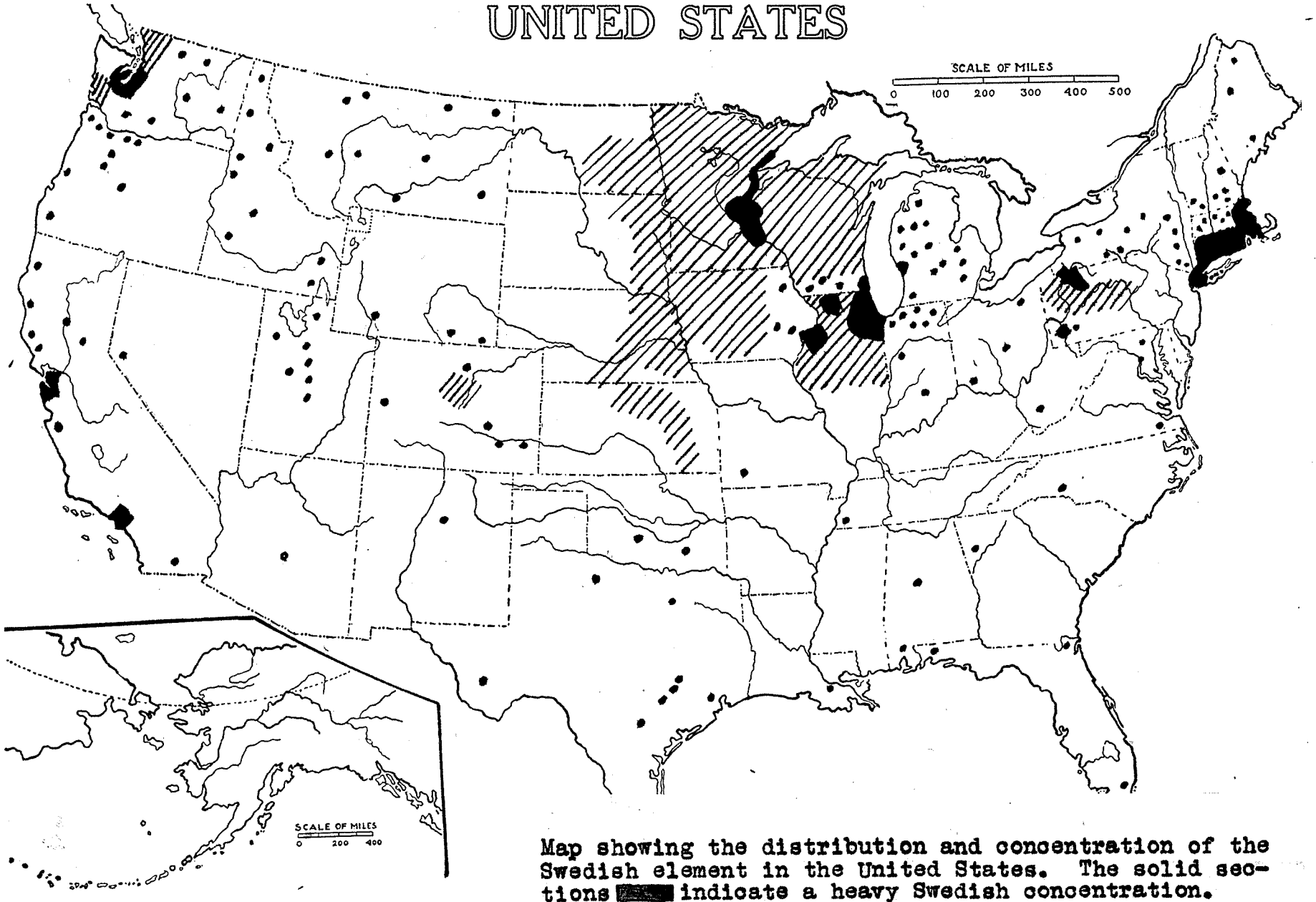
given of his early life and ministry, up to the year 1865, when he was transferred to New York City. The second section will give the unique story of the Bethel Ship Mission, an institution which has rightly been termed "the crucible of Swedish Methodism". Though the ardent Nedstrom was intimately associated with this enterprise for the better part of three decades, giving himself unstintedly to the work, he also found time to undertake preaching journeys and to direct the extension of Swedish Methodism through the agency of those whose lives had been influenced at the Bethel Ship, and thus his missionary efforts and influence will constitute the subject matter of a third chapter. Something of the confusion which marked the early religious history of the Swedish element in the United States will be reflected in the materials dealing with the leaders of other denominations in their relations to early Swedish Methodism, and it will plainly be seen that it was a period of intense competition and rivalry. The author has felt it of value to continue the enquiry through the period when with a growth in the number of churches and converts there resulted an increased self-consciousness among the Swedish Methodists finally becoming articulate in the establishment of conference organizations, special reference being made to the nexus between Nedstrom and this

development. An evaluation of the life and work of Olof Gustaf Hedstrom and the "immigrant church" (even now outgrowing this nomenclature and showing conformity to the American pattern) of which he was the real founder, based upon the preceding researches, will bring this dissertation to a close.

CHAPTER II

SWEDISH IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES

An Orientation



Map showing the distribution and concentration of the Swedish element in the United States. The solid sections ▬ indicate a heavy Swedish concentration. The shaded sections //// indicate a lighter concentration. The dots (•) represent an occasional settlement or very slight Swedish element. This map is based on the 1930 Census Reports (see tables at close of this chapter).

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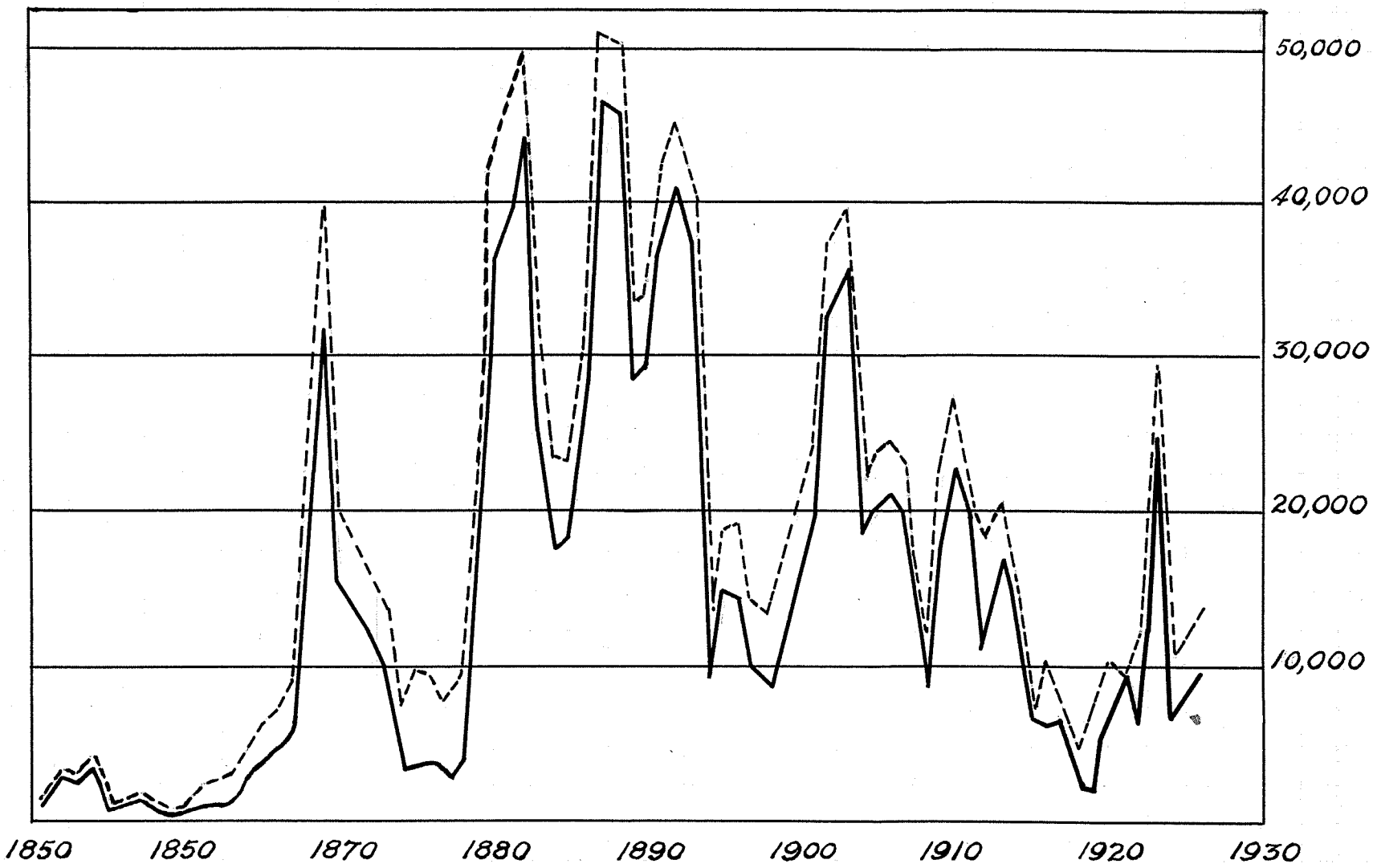
SWEDISH IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES

An Orientation

Of the more than one million individuals who have emigrated from Sweden since 1850 the vast majority have established themselves in the United States. These have settled almost exclusively in the northern half of their new country, doubtlessly on account of climate, and three groupings can be recognized. By far the largest concentration is found in the middle west and the northwest. The fertile Mississippi Valley proved exceedingly attractive to the early immigrants, who were for the most part tillers of the soil, and the major portion of those who sought these shores in the initial decades of Swedish immigration went directly to the western areas where they and their children have played a dominant rôle in the upbuilding of that sector of our land. Swedish stock is also well represented on the west coast, north as well as south, although Swedish settlements in these parts are of more recent origin. A third grouping is found in New England and the middle Atlantic states, concentrated especially in the urban centers and the industrial areas.

Swedish immigrants have sought our land both as

Emigration from Sweden
1851 - 1926



Legend

------ Emigration from Sweden

——— Immigration to the United States

individuals and as members of groups or companies. The "group immigrations" are a most interesting social phenomenon; they took place principally during the early period of immigration and in most instances went westward where the fertile plains awaited them.[1] Through the propaganda of emigration agents, as well as by the medium of descriptions sent home via "America letters", America came to be pictured by great numbers as the promised land. With pressing economic conditions in the homeland it did not take much soliciting or urging on the part of some leader to gather a sizeable group and set out on the pilgrimage. In some instances the members of these groups parted company when they reached America, but frequently they would settle together, forming the nuclei for whole villages and cities.

It is very apparent that economic conditions in Sweden were the greatest factor in influencing emigration. When good times and prosperous years were enjoyed there seemed no purpose in assembling one's belongings and setting out for the new world; but in the periods when there was scarcity of work and when need knocked at the door, then it would often occur that the last crown would be spent to procure passage, ties were

. . . . .

1. Norelius, I, pp. 26-60; Janson, op. cit., pp. 117-166.

severed, and the emigrant set out on the voyage westward.

The influence of the Swedish people in America has varied in the different sections in which they have settled. Swedish immigrants came to the middle west and the northwest at a time when these areas were largely in the formative period, with the frontier spirit clearly in evidence. In many respects their coming was equivalent to a colonisation; they created the social pattern themselves, and made their influence felt at the very foundation. In these sections there is a great frequency of Swedish place names, a positive indication of the vital rôle played by the Swedish element. In the eastern states, on the other hand, a definite social structure had been established long before the time when the newcomers from Sweden began to arrive, and immigration for the most part meant merely an infiltration. The Swedish belt along the Pacific coast, again, did not come about so much through direct immigration, but was rather built up through the moving thither of families which had earlier settled either in the middle and northwest, or in the east.

The type of the Swedish population in America also varies somewhat in different sections. Early immigration to the western states represented for the most

part a people primarily interested in agriculture; by perseverance and hard work they came to own their own farms, and with that they gained an independence which they had never known in the land from which they came. In their religious life large numbers of them had been influenced by the hyper-evangelical movements in Sweden, and in their new land, which to them appeared as a "free country", freer modes of expression in church life came to be the rule. Swedish immigrants came to the eastern states, especially New England, at a later period, and settled chiefly in the cities. The majority of those arrived after 1880, and by that time the läsare movement (pietism) had run its course in Sweden; Stephenson makes the interesting observation that the eastern Swedes "are more Swedish and high church than their precursors."[1]

Very obiously those who emigrated from Swedon did not represent the educated, nor the ranks of the landed and wealthy, but were drawn for the most part from the peasant groups, the "landless agrarians", the lower and underprivileged classes. Though they came from a land which was far from poor in culture, the immigrants themselves certainly did not have high attainments. The culture which they did possess was largely that

* * * * *

1. Stephenson, op. cit., p. 306.

which had been planted in them through the medium of the State Church of Sweden, in which venerable institution practically all of them had been nurtured. The immigrant trunk nearly always contained a Bible, given the youth at the time of confirmation, as well as the Psalmbook, containing the hymns, the order of liturgical service, the prayers, etc., employed in their mother Church. The culture of the Swedish immigrant was decidedly fashioned and colored by the Church.

When the Swedish immigrant arrived in his new land the first problem to face him was naturally economic in nature. He was pitched into a struggle for his very existence, a battle which at times may have assumed such proportions that he could give little thought or attention to anything else. However, we note that the founding of religious institutions occupied the attention of the immigrant at an early date; like primitive man he became occupied with "tool-making and ritual-making". If he was to have a church organization he must labor for its realization himself, for no ready-made institution was on hand to welcome him. Swedish Lutheran churches had been founded in Delaware and New Jersey following the Swedish colonization there as early as 1638, but these gradually

went over to the Episcopal fold, the problem of language standing in the way of any affiliation with early German Lutheran bodies. It is safe to say that the average Swede who came in the later immigration knew next to nothing of this earlier Swedish enterprise on American soil.[1]

With circumstances such as they were it is but natural that the religious history of the Swedish immigrants should be marked with a great deal of confusion. Numerous groups strove to gain the upper hand and there resulted a conflict of issues and personalities. In no small degree the religious life in Sweden during a considerable part of the nineteenth century is reflected in the religious history of the Swedish element in America, but it does not lie within the scope of this dissertation to present any comprehensive portrayal of the same. From the preliminary statements in regard to Swedish immigration, set forth in this chapter, I purpose to make a historical survey of the origins of Swedish religious organizations in the United States, in order that a proper setting and perspective may be established for the study of Olof Gustaf Hedstrom and the

. . . . .

1. Cf., Amandus Johnson, Swedish Contributions to American National Life, 1638-1921, and the same author's monumental work, The Swedish Settlements on the Delaware.

early structure of Swedish Methodism.[1]

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1. In addition to the works already cited on Swedish immigration the following may be listed: Emigrationsutredningen (several contributors, but directed by Gustav Sundbarg), 12 vols.; „Beckman, Amerikanska studier; Larson, Statistik ofver svenskarne i Förenta Staterna intill året 1910 (2nd edition); Nelson, Nordamerika. Natur, bygd och svenskbygd. The following articles by Stephenson will be found very informative: The Background of the Beginnings of Swedish Immigration, 1850-1875, in the American Historical Review, July, 1926; The Mind of the Scandinavian Immigrant, Norwegian-American Historical Association, Studies and Records, 4, pp. 63-73; Typical 'America Letters', in the Yearbook of the Swedish Historical Society of America, 1921-1922, pp. 52-93; When America Was the Land of Canaan, in Minnesota History, September, 1929.

TABLE I

Persons Born in Sweden Resident in the United States
1850 - 1930*

1850	-	3,559
1860	-	13,625
1870	-	97,332
1880	-	194,337
1890	-	478,041
1900	-	582,014
1910	-	665,207
1920	-	625,535
1930	-	595,250

* Department of Commerce, Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Population, II, p. 233, Table 4.

TABLE II

Country of Origin of the Foreign White Stock, By Divisions and States: 1930*

Swedish Stock - Total U. S. - 1,562,703

Geographical Divisions	Number
New England	147,920
Middle Atlantic	198,122
East North Central	430,563
West North Central	473,282
South Atlantic	13,399
East South Central	3,912
West South Central	20,414
Mountain	77,907
Pacific	207,224

* Department of Commerce, Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Population, II, p. 272, Table 7.

Note: The term "foreign white stock" is used in the Census Reports to indicate the combined total of three classes, namely, the foreign-born white, the native white of foreign parentage (both parents foreign-born), and the native white of mixed parentage (one parent native and the other foreign-born).

TABLE III

Country of Origin of the Foreign White Stock, By Divisions and States: 1930*

State	Foreign White Stock	Born in Sweden**
Maine	5,010	1,332
New Hampshire	3,799	1,608
Vermont	2,514	1,099
Massachusetts	61,106	36,810
Rhode Island	14,117	6,181
Connecticut	41,374	18,455
New York	121,503	61,253
New Jersey	29,849	13,360
Pennsylvania	46,770	16,452
Ohio	19,864	7,390
Indiana	13,825	4,666
Illinois	261,374	111,016
Michigan	69,577	25,905
Wisconsin	56,915	18,908
Minnesota	270,773	90,623
Iowa	57,365	16,610
Missouri	15,371	5,695
North Dakota	29,893	8,470
South Dakota	25,563	6,540
Nebraska	50,007	14,355
Kansas	28,200	7,315
Delaware	718	294
Maryland	2,038	764
District of Columbia	1,388	435
Virginia	1,359	467
West Virginia	924	303
North Carolina	515	160
South Carolina	364	106
Georgia	855	266
Florida	5,239	2,145
Kentucky	631	170
Tennessee	875	232
Alabama	1,690	638
Mississippi	716	206

TABLE XII — Continued

Arkansas	931	249
Louisiana	1,341	435
Oklahoma	3,777	835
Texas	14,365	4,017
Montana	16,286	5,655
Idaho	12,328	4,200
Wyoming	5,157	1,783
Colorado	23,730	8,328
New Mexico	885	263
Arizona	2,506	778
Utah	15,838	4,369
Nevada	1,238	445
Washington	76,843	34,084
Oregon	26,778	11,032
California	103,603	41,734

* Department of Commerce, Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Population, II, pp. 272 ff., Table 7.

** Ibid., p. 234, Table 5.

TABLE IV

The Distribution of the Total Swedish Stock in the United States — Urban, Rural Farm, Rural Non-Farm - By Divisions*

Division	Urban	Rural Farm	Rural Non-Farm
New England	118,842	7,104	21,974
Middle Atlantic	159,092	9,510	29,720
E. North Central	320,110	56,272	44,162
W. North Central	214,403	130,103	78,147
South Atlantic	9,533	1,410	3,456
E. South Atlantic	2,288	875	751
W. South Atlantic	10,767	6,491	3,156
Mountain	36,459	21,986	19,462
Pacific	139,622	30,262	37,340

* Department of Commerce, Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Population, II, pp. 284 ff., Table 10.

TABLE V

Persons Born in Sweden Resident in American Cities of Over 100,000 *

Chicago	-	65,735
New York	-	37,267
Minneapolis	-	24,866
Seattle	-	9,634
St. Paul	-	8,404
Worcester, Mass.	-	7,570
Boston	-	6,432
San Francisco	-	7,152
Portland, Oregon	-	4,885
Los Angeles	-	8,917
Denver	-	3,500
Omaha	-	2,977

* Department of Commerce, Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Population, II, p. 348, Table 8.

CHAPTER III

THE ORIGINS OF SWEDISH RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

Historical Survey

THE ORIGINS OF SWEDISH RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES

Historical Survey

A. Introduction

Early in the forties of the nineteenth century America became a lively topic of conversation and discussion among great numbers in Sweden. In 1841, George Scott, a Wesleyan Methodist from Scotland, who had engaged in evangelistic work in Stockholm, the capital of Sweden, made a five months' journey in the United States, with the purpose of winning the interests of the Americans for his church project and of gathering funds for the support of the same. Here and there in his travels he met Swedes, and these were by no means flattered by the descriptions which Scott gave of religious and moral conditions in their homeland. Their protests reached editorial desks in Sweden and helped to increase the bitterness toward the Methodist missionary which had already flared up, and which finally forced him to leave the country in the spring of 1842. The

long drawn out press campaigns against Scott had served to imprint the name of America in the minds of great masses of people.[1]

The visits to Sweden in 1836 and 1840 of Robert Baird, a Presbyterian clergyman from America, also served to direct the attention of the Swedish people to America. Baird was vitally interested in the temperance movement and appeared as a lecturer on the same in Sweden, also giving addresses on religious conditions in America which found many attentive listeners. A history of the temperance movement, with special reference to the United States, written by Baird, was published in Sweden following his first visit there,[2] and some years later (1847-48) a Swedish translation of his volume on Religious Liberty in the United States appeared in two parts, gaining considerable attention.[3] The

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1. Westin, George Scott och Hans Verksamhet i Sverige, I, pp. 605 ff.
2. Baird, Historisk teckning af nykterhets-föreningar i Nord-Amerikas Förenta Stater jemte några upplysningar angående dessa föreningar i England, Sverige och andra länder.
3. Baird, Om religionsfriheten i Förenta Staterna, translated by C. A. Bergman. Cf., also, Baird, A Visit to Northern Europe: or Sketches Descriptive, Historical, Political and Moral, of Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland, etc.

minds of large numbers had been attracted to America.

B. Erie-Jansenism

The nineteenth century witnessed a second religious reformation in Sweden in many respects equally momentous as that of the sixteenth century under the leadership of Gustavus Vasa. However, whereas the first reformation was largely directed by the ruling powers, the second was born among men of lowly birth and very modest attainments. The läsare (i.e., readers, given that name because they met in the cottages for devotional reading and prayer sessions) were in open revolt against the dead orthodoxy of the State Church. A pastor of the period has characterized the church in which he served in the following way: "The spiritual level in the church and state is so low that conditions could hardly be worse if we were under the dominion of the papacy."[1] Membership in the established church was open to all, the unregenerate as well as the regenerate. The church was an impersonal institution and had lost its contact with the rank and file. The non-conformist

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1. Wadström, Ur minnet och dagboken. Anteckningar från åren 1848-1897, I, p. 364. The statement was made by Hans Birger Hammar at a meeting to advance the cause of religious freedom.

movement was a violent reaction and its followers demanded that the fruits of faith should be visible in the lives of those who called themselves Christians.

Erie-Jansonism, first in Sweden, and later transplanted to America, was an evidence and expression of the great awakening which was beginning to sweep Sweden. The movement was characterized by many extremes and much fanaticism, and yet it was undoubtedly a symptom of the great disorder which obtained in the established ecclesiastical body of the land. Of this interesting religious cult Stephenson has stated the following:

> "It can not be denied that Jansonism and all its excesses, terminating finally in the emigration of a colony to the New Jerusalem on the prairies of Henry County, Illinois, is a phenomenon worthy of study; and the historian who surveys the field cannot shirk the duty of recording that, for the most part, the same causes that produced an Eric Janson and gave him followers fired other men of poise and balance to strive and hope for a new day."[1]

Eric Janson, who came to be known as the prophet of this strange cult, was born in 1808 in Biskopskulle (Bishop Hill), near Upsala, Sweden. He passed through a cataclysmic religious conversion in the summer of 1830 and later began to gather his

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1. Stephenson, op. cit., pp. 49-50.

spiritually-minded friends about him for religious discourses. He parted with the "old readers" on the doctrine of sanctification and came to hold a theory of perfectionism which proved attractive to many who considered the prevailing Lutheran theology too gloomy. In the province of Hälsingland, where he had settled, he traveled extensively, inciting the people against the State Church, and calling himself a prophet who had revelations, and who was able to perform miracles and cast out devils. His defiant attitude toward the church and state caused him grave trouble: there were threats on his life, court trials and imprisonment. Events moved rapidly and finally the situation grew desperate; the prophet and his people looked westward, where America, so often described as the land of religious liberty in the "America letters" printed in the newspapers of Sweden, loomed inviting as a haven of refuge for the oppressed and persecuted.

In the summer of 1846 the exodus of the Janssonists began, and continued through 1849. During this period fifteen hundred disciples of the fanatical prophet were transported to America, thus ridding Sweden of nearly all the adherents of this cult. The trials and sufferings met on the transatlantic

voyage were well-nigh indescribable, and more than one wrote home at a later date to friends and relatives warning them lest they, too, be misguided. Others accepted in blind confidence everything which their "bishop" (a name appropriated by Eric Janson in America) said and did.

The Eric-Jansonists settled in the fertile plains of Henry County, Illinois, and the community was named Bishop Hill, from the prophet's birthplace in Sweden. The settlement was communistic in character, and Janson must have reigned supreme. His devoted followers came to believe that there was no salvation in the whole world except for those who accepted the prophet, for Eric Janson was the chosen one of God, a savior and mediator, and was clothed with the perfection of the Almighty. But there were also a large number of deserters who were far from mild in their criticism of the whole enterprise and its leader. These did not hesitate to make capital of the many rumors in circulation concerning the colony, and also pointed out that through the virtual serfdom of the faithful adherents Janson was accumulating a considerable amount of wealth.

The career of Eric Janson came to a very abrupt close. On May 13, 1850, he was assassinated by a

certain John Root, whom he had enraged by his verdict in a domestic problem, in the courthouse at Cambridge, Illinois. The title to the Bishop Hill property had been vested in Eric Janson's name, and with the leader dead all manner of difficulties arose. In 1853 the colony was incorporated under the leadership of Jonas Olson, a shrewd and intriguing individual who had forced himself to the forefront, but this form of organization lived only seven years. In 1860, the communistic colony of Bishop Hill, unique in the annals of Swedish immigration to the United States, went the same way as most similar experiments on American soil.[1]

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1. Eric-Jansonism and the Bishop Hill Colony have been treated by a large number of writers. The two standard histories are: Mikkelsen, The Bishop Hill Colony. A Communistic Settlement in Henry County, Illinois. Johns Hopkins Studies in Historical and Political Science, Vol. 10. Nerlenius, Erik-Jansismens historia. Mrs. Anna Forsell Soderblom, wife of the late archbishop of Sweden, has written a scholarly account based largely on documents found in the Anna Lindewall Collection in the archives of the castle at Uppsala, and published in Julhelg, 1925, pp. 80-93. The account in Stephenson, op. cit., pp. 49-75, is exceedingly informative, and he makes use of much material previously unknown. Several essays have appeared on the subject in American historical journals, as well as in Swedish works. Stephenson lists the same in op. cit., p. 93.

C. Olof Gustaf Hedstrom and Swedish Methodism

By the time the Eric-Jansonist cult had been transplanted from Sweden to American soil another form of religious activity had already seen the light of day among the Swedish element in the United States. This movement did not pass out of existence in a relatively short period of time, as did Eric-Jansonism, but was destined to become the first permanent religious organization among the Swedish element in America since the days of the Delaware Colony. The history of early Swedish Methodism is largely the history of the activities of the ardent missionary, Olof Gustaf Hedstrom. Admitted into the ministry in 1835, Hedstrom served parishes in New York State for a decade, and in 1845 began the mission in New York City which was to continue thirty years and prove exceedingly influential.

The burden of this thesis is concerned with this interesting character and his labors in behalf of his countrymen; for that reason no extended mention is made of the same at this point, more than to designate the setting, and illustrate its relation to other religious efforts of the period.

In this connection, however, mention should be made of the fact that Swedish Methodism as it came to be known in America was not an importation from Sweden, and had few, if any, historical antecedents in that country. The whole movement was born through a vital religious experience which entered into the life of an humble tailor, and was sponsored by a denomination which had enjoyed a long history in America. Interestingly enough, however, many parallels are found between Rodstrom and the more pietistic among the Swedish immigrants. The Lidsare movement and Anglo-American Methodism had many things in common. The emphasis on personal experience and conversion was the same, both demanding purity of life, and not only purity of doctrine. The concept of the Church was identical: church membership was reserved for those who could testify that they were saved, and were living children of God. There were many points of similarity in the type of preaching, with the emphasis on sanctification very pronounced, and efforts toward social welfare, especially the temperance movement, were mutually embraced. In addition to these, both movements found their appeal strongest among the broad classes of common people. A positive reason for the success of Olof Gustaf

Hedstrom and the Swedish Methodist movement, in this early period, is found in the fact that the läsare among the immigrants who came to America found in Hedstrom one of their own kind who spoke the same religious language as did they, even though his spiritual life had been kindled under influences somewhat different from their own.

D. Gustaf Unonius and the Episcopal Effort

In the same year that Hedstrom was appointed by the New York Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church to labor as missionary in New York City the Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Wisconsin ordained Gustaf Unonius to serve as missionary among the Scandinavians in Pine Lake, Wisconsin, and the vicinity.[1] Unonius, who earlier in life had studied both law and medicine at the University of Uppsala, in Sweden, had emigrated to America with a group of settlers in the year 1841, and became established at Pine Lake.[2] For a year before his appointment he had pursued theological studies at Nashotah House, and in 1847 he received Episcopal ordination and was named rector of a Scandinavian

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1. The Spirit of Missions, X, September, 1845, p. 302.
2. Forsberg, New Upsala, the First Swedish Settlement in Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Magazine of History, 1936.

parish in the Pine Lake settlement.[1] Two years later Unonius was in Chicago and there organized a Scandinavian congregation with the name Saint Ansgarius, under the jurisdiction of the Diocese of Illinois. Church and parsonage were built, thanks to a liberal donation from Jenny Lind, and the work progressed to such a degree that there was even talk of making a Swedish translation of the Book of Common Prayer.[2]

The choice made by Unonius of the Episcopal church is most interesting. For one thing, the group which had emigrated with him in 1841 were of the "better folk". Unonius had native high-church leanings, held strongly to the doctrine of apostolical succession and had not imbibed at all of the läsare spirit which characterized the early Swedish Lutheran pastors. Add to that the fact that he found the Lutheran church of that time divided into several mutually hostile synods. He wrote for guidance to Carl Fredrik af Wingård, archbishop of Sweden, who in making his answer pointed out three major points of disagreement between the Lutheran

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1. Protestant Episcopal Convention, 1847, Journal of the Proceedings, p. 267.
2. The Spirit of Missions, XVI, June, 1851, pp. 254 ff.

and the Episcopal churches. Unonius evidently considered the differences minor and did not swerve in his conviction that as a Lutheran he could take orders in the Episcopal church and still keep his Lutheranism unblemished.

The type of churchliness emphasized by Unonius was in direct contrast to that represented in Hedstrom and his mission, and in the fact that the frontier environment was far from being a fruitful soil for planting ritualistic churches we find the main reason for the lack of success on the part of Unonius. The Swedes who were at this time coming to America, if religious at all, were influenced by pietism; apostolical succession, the altar and the sacraments were matters of minor importance as compared to the conversion of the individual soul. The mind of the immigrant of this period simply did not have the capacity to grasp the meaning of the Church as an institution of sacramental grace.[1]

A bitter feud raged between Unonius and the early Swedish Lutheran pastors. The latter, of a pronounced läsare spirit, viewed the congregation of Unonius in Chicago as a refugium peccatorum, where no demands were voiced for a Christian life, and they held that the leader of the Episcopal work was an impostor, posing as a Swedish Lutheran while yet defin-

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1. Lawson, Are Changes in Our Liturgy Desirable?, Augustana Quarterly, October, 1934; Norelius, I, p. 89. Cf., also, the words of Wentin, HK, p. 14.

itely affiliated with the Anglican communion. Unonius, on the other hand, considered his Lutheran competitors too rigid confessionalists, stating concerning them: "Everything which is not stamped with the name of Lutheran, is pretty much equal to heresy."[1] The battle between Unonius and Lars Paul Esbjorn, the first of the Swedish Lutheran pastors, became especially bitter and assumed serious proportions.[2]

Unonius journeyed to Sweden in 1855 but remained only a few months. He returned to his parish in Chicago where he continued for a period of five years. However, the mission which he had initiated gave no great promise and it became increasingly clear to him that the Episcopal church did not enjoy any real appeal among the Swedish immigrants, and in 1858 he returned to his homeland a disappointed man.[3]

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1. The Spirit of Missions, XX, February, 1855, p. 42.
2. An account of this battle is given in Svar till herr G. Unonius pa hans 'Bihang till Minnen från en 17-årig vistelse i Nordvestra Amerika', published in Tidskrift, 1898, I, pp. 15-51.
3. Unonius has given a detailed description of his sojourn and experiences in America in his two-volume work, Minnen från en Sjuttonårig Vistelse i Nordvestra Amerika. Cf., Westin, Ett närmande mellan Protestant-episkopalkyrkan i U.S.A. och svenska kyrkan, Svensk Teologisk Kvartalskrift, 1935, 2.

E. The Swedish Lutherans

When Rev. Lars Paul Esbjorn, the first Swedish Lutheran pastor among the nineteenth century immigrants, arrived in this country in 1849 he found his countrymen scattered in small communities, struggling for an existence, without churches, and without pastors. It is next to impossible for those of the present generation to visualize the problems and difficulties which faced this pioneer pastor. The fact that he had been somewhat dissatisfied with his lot in Sweden no doubt influenced him definitely in making his decision to journey to America to care for the spiritual needs of his countrymen, but in his new land he was to find conditions and perplexities never dreamt of while he enjoyed the material benefits of a State Church system.[1]

Esbjorn arrived in America nearly penniless. However, he was given promise of aid by the American Home Missionary Society, with headquarters in New York City, and years later he paid a glowing tribute to the Christian spirit manifest in this organisation which asked only one question, "Do you desire to

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1. Andreen, L. P. Esbjorn and the Pilgrim Fathers of 1849, Augustana Bulletin, October, 1925.

build up the kingdom of Christ?" When he arrived at his destination, Andover, Illinois, he learned that other religious leaders had begun work in the settlement and caused much confusion.[1] When in March, 1850, he organised a Swedish Lutheran church at Andover, with only ten members, he found such a fear of the Swedish State Church among the people of the community, a fear intensified by Esbjorn's rivals, that he did not dare to list the names in the Church Book which he had brought from Sweden.[2] To raise funds among poor immigrants for the erection of a church building was no mean task. Add to that the fact that cholera raged in the settlement and took its heavy toll.

The problem of synodical affiliation was a very vexing one for Esbjorn. There were several alternatives open to him: he might have joined with a few Norwegian churches in Wisconsin to form a separate synod, but the leaders of the Norwegians reflected the high-church tendencies of the University of Oslo; the German synods were distant, and moreover were torn with dissension; the English synods in the East were even more remote and were

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1. Detailed accounts of Esbjorn's work are found in the related chapters in Norelius, and in Stephenson, op. cit.
2. The original membership list is preserved in the archives of the Lutheran Church of Andover.

battling over the issue of "New Lutheranism".[1] The problem was temporarily solved when Rev. Paul Anderson, a Norwegian Lutheran pastor at Chicago, suggested that his Norwegian church people and Esbjorn's congregation unite with Americans in organising a synod in the West, a suggestion to which Esbjorn responded favorably. The negotiations culminated in the establishment of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Northern Illinois, at Cedarville, September 18, 1851.[2] Esbjorn was not completely satisfied with the doctrinal basis of the new synod, which accepted the Augsburg Confession as "mainly correct", and there was inserted in the Minutes the principles on which his congregations were organized, namely: "That the symbolical books of the Lutheran church contain a correct summary and exposition of the divine word; wherefore we declare and adopt them as the foundation of our faith and doctrine, next to the Holy Scriptures." At the October, 1852, convention of the Synod of Northern Illinois, Esbjorn's confessional loyalty was once again in marked evidence, for when it was proposed that the new organization become a district synod of the General Synod -- an advisory body including two-thirds of the Lutherans

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1. Form, The Crisis in American Lutheran Theology.
2. Cf., the very comprehensive account of this early period in Stephenson, The Founding of the Augustana Synod.

in America -- Esbjorn was one of a committee of three which recommended affiliation "provided that this union shall not be construed into an acknowledgment on the part of all the members of the Synod of Northern Illinois of the precise doctrinal basis of the General Synod." The Swedish Lutheran churches from the beginning, it is noted, displayed a sound loyalty to the symbols of the Church.[1]

With increasing immigration from Sweden Esbjorn found his tasks multiplied. In addition to his work at Andover he organized congregations at Galesburg and Moline, Illinois, in 1850, and soon saw the need for additional pastors to assist in the growing work. In October, 1852, Esbjorn was joined by Rev. Tufve Nilsson Hasselquist, destined to become the greatest formative influence in the Swedish Lutheran church, who assumed charge of the congregation at Galesburg.[2] Three additional pastors came during this decade: Erland Carlsson, in 1853, to serve at Chicago; Jonas Swensson, in 1856, the first pastor to labor on an eastern field (Sugar Grove, Pennsylvania, and Jamestown, New York); and O. C. T. Andrén, to take charge of the work at Moline.[3]

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1. Sources pertaining to the organization of the Augustana Synod have been collected by Stephenson and published in The Founding of the Augustana Synod: Illustrative Documents, in Swedish-American Historical Bulletin, March, 1928.
2. Andér, T. N. Hasselquist, The Career and Influence of a Swedish-American Clergyman, Journalist and Educator.
3. Cf., the introduction by Westin, in HK.

The American environment did much to fashion the views and procedures of the early Swedish Lutheran pastors. It may be brought out that they were representatives of pietistic movements during their period of service in Sweden. Esbjorn, for instance, though free-churchly and even "Methodistic" during his years in Sweden was forced by circumstances into a position of uncompromising loyalty to the Lutheran symbols; such a stand was to him the surest way of combating the inroads of the sects. Hasselquist, in like manner, though a stern critic of the State Church in Sweden, and definitely influenced by pietism, became a Lutheran of much sterner and more rigid design in his adopted land.[1] Pure doctrine came to be regarded in a way more suggestive of the period of orthodoxy than of pietism. The confused state of religious life among the Swedish-Americans in this early period developed among the Lutherans a new sense of confessional loyalty.

The American environment also proved to be a determining factor in regard to the cultus. Free-churchly strains were in evidence from the start, and the early pastors found it difficult to transplant the liturgical pattern of the Church of Sweden

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1. Andor, op. cit.

to the rudely built pioneer structures of the frontier. Numerous changes and innovations were effected, in hymnology, the order of service and the various offices, as well as in such matters as the church year, the garb of the clergy and church customs. The individual who has visited Swedon and given any observation or study at all to the life of worship soon becomes aware of the differences obtaining in the Augustana Synod (the name later given the body which formed the Swedish Lutheran church in America), and it is only in comparatively recent times that a genuine interest has been awakened to make a definite study and evaluation of the cultus of this body. The pietistic influences at the start of the work, patterns set by the American denominations, the frontier environment and spirit, and the mind of the nineteenth century immigrant have all been factors which must be considered.[1]

The decade of the fifties was a turbulent one in mid-western Lutheranism, the scene of the earliest Swedish churches. The Lutherans in Illinois had founded Hillsboro College in 1849, an institution removed to Springfield, in 1852, and given the

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1. Lawson, Are Changes in Our Liturgy Desirable?, in Augustana Quarterly, October, 1934. The author has also written on this topic in his article, Music, Art and Architecture in the Augustana Synod, published in After Seventy-Five Years, a volume given out on the occasion of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Augustana Synod.

formidable designation Illinois State University. From 1851 Esbjorn had been a member of its directors, and in 1858 he was elected to the Scandinavian professorship, with fifteen or twenty students receiving instruction from him. The question of doctrine, however, so prominent even from the start, finally became acute, leading to a definite break in March, of 1860, when Esbjorn suddenly severed his relationship with the institution and together with his students effected an exodus to Chicago where a seminary for the training of ministers was launched, with Esbjorn at the head. This project developed into Augustana College and Theological Seminary.[1] The early attempt at union among Lutherans of various nationalistic origins, as attempted in the Synod of Northern Illinois, had proved a failure.

The Synod of Northern Illinois had been divided into three conferences — Chicago, Rock River and Mississippi — according to decision reached at its convention of 1852. Esbjorn and Hasselquist, together with Valentin and Holmsson, lay preachers, and all four Swedish, were the sole members of this

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1. The institution was located at Paxton, Illinois, for a few years before being removed to Rock Island in 1875.

group, and at the meeting held by this Conference at Moline, Illinois, January 6-9, 1855, we find the first official expression of a Swedish Lutheran group consciousness. Joint meetings were also held by the Mississippi and the Chicago Conferences (the latter also predominantly Scandinavian), and when these bodies, meeting in Chicago, in April, 1860, gave sanction to Esbjorn's break with the Synod of Northern Illinois the stage was set for the organization to be effected among the Scandinavian Lutherans alone.[1] In June, 1860, the Scandinavian Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod was consummated at Jefferson Prairie, Wisconsin, and Hasselquist was elected the first president.[2] The new organization embraced thirty-six Swedish and thirteen Norwegian churches, with 3,750 Swedish and 1,220 Norwegian communicants. There were seventeen Swedish and eight Norwegian pastors. Of the Swedish clergymen five had received their training and been ordained in Sweden, and the remainder had been recruited from the ranks of the immigrants and had

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1. The Minutes of these Conferences are printed in Tidskrift, 1858, 1 and 2.
2. Protocoll hållet vid Skandinaviska Ev. Lutherska Augustana Synodens Första Möte i Clinton, Rock County, Wisconsin, d. 5-11 Juni, 1860.

taken orders after a brief course of study. Ten years after the organization of this body the Norwegians, who had been in a minority, withdrew and established their own ecclesiastical unit.[1]

The rising tides of immigration brought large increases to the membership of the Augustana Synod. In spite of the fact that the Methodist and Baptist groups enjoyed liberal support from their American brethren their gains were relatively small. Among the immigrants, notwithstanding that many of them had no great love for the State Church, there were many more potential Lutherans than potential Baptists or Methodists, and by 1890 the Augustana Synod numbered more than 78,000 communicant members.[2] The initial chapters in the history of this body were marked with confusion and peculiar problems, but once the organization was placed on firm footing, largely through the dominant personality of T. N. Hasselquist, it enjoyed a most respectable growth and development, becoming the largest and most influential of the religious organizations among the Swedish element in the United States.

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1. Ibid., 1870.
2. Ibid., 1890.

F. The Swedish Baptists

It is a fact not lacking in uniqueness that the three individuals -- Gustaf Palmquist, Anders Wiberg and Fredrik Nilsson -- who led the work of establishing the Baptist faith among the Swedish element in America were also the pioneers in behalf of the same movement in Sweden. To be sure, the first Baptist preacher to appear in Sweden was the Dane, P. E. Ryding, who preached there in 1843,[1] but the permanent structure of the Baptist movement in Sweden is traceable to the labors of the three leaders mentioned. The Baptist movement in Sweden and that among the Swedish immigrants in America were simultaneous, and were closely related.

In 1850 a large group from the Province of Hälsingland made plans to emigrate to America, among them being the young Eric Norelius who was later to play a prominent part in the history of the Augustana Synod. This assembly was much dissatisfied with the new Handbook, Psalmbook and Catechism that had been adopted by the Church in their native land and hoped to establish in America a pure Lutheran church where they might en-

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1. Nordström, En Kulturbild från 1800-talets religiösa brytningstid. Den första svenska baptist-församlingens uppkomst och kamp för samvetsfriheten.

ploy "the old books". A delegation was sent to Anders Wiberg, until but recently a Lutheran pastor, and known to them as an evangelical preacher, seeking to persuade him to journey to America to become their spiritual guide. Wiberg found this impossible, but suggested that Gustaf Palmquist, a school teacher in Stockholm, be approached in the matter.[1] Palmquist had been deeply influenced by George Scott and also C. O. Rosenius, and thus had already shown allegiance to the free-churchly elements. Palmquist agreed to the proposal and arrived in New York in the fall of 1851. When he came to Andover, Illinois, however, expecting to take up his duties, he found the flock widely scattered and saw no hope of organizing the people into a congregation. Palmquist had shown sympathy toward the Baptist views even while he lived in Stockholm, but intended nevertheless to affiliate with the Lutherans in Illinois, never doing so, however, because it seemed to him that there was as much bondage among the Lutherans here with Esbjorn at the head as there had been in the State Church of Sweden.[2] Deeply influenced

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1. Cf., the account of early Swedish Baptist history in Westin's introduction to SBB.
2. Westin, EK, p. 21.

by a religious revival that swept through Galesburg, Palmquist received baptism in June, 1852, and thus definitely united himself to the ranks of that denomination.

After a few weeks Palmquist was ordained into the Baptist ministry, receiving aid from the Baptist Home Missionary Society for work among the Swedes in the mid-west, and in the autumn of 1852 the first Swedish Baptist Church in America was organized at Rock Island, Illinois. Many of the members were recruited from the original company of emigrants that had set out from Hälsingland and Esbjorn even had fears that the young Norelius would go over to this fold, as his parents and brother Anders had done. In the late summer of 1857 Palmquist returned to Sweden to aid in the establishment of the Baptist faith in his home country.[1]

Anders Wiberg, powerfully influenced by revivalism and very critical of the State Church of Sweden, had resigned as pastor in September, 1849. He definitely accepted the Baptist faith and was immersed in the Baltic Sea, in July, 1852, by Fredrik Nilsson, pastor at Copenhagen. Anerica as a

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1. Schröder, History of the Swedish Baptists in Sweden and America; Lagergren, Efter sjuttio år (1852-1922).

land of religious liberty was much in his mind and it was no doubt a relief to his restless soul when his physician prescribed a journey to the land in the West. In September, 1852, he landed in New York, and received a warm welcome from his co-religionists. He was appointed a colporteur for the Baptist cause and in March, 1853, shortly before making a long journey to the Swedish settlements in the western areas, he was ordained at the Mariners' Church, in New York City. For some time he was engaged by the Baptist Publication Society in the translation and preparation of tracts and other Baptist literature, at the same time serving as the paid correspondent for Aftonbladet, an influential Stockholm daily. In the autumn of 1855 he returned to Sweden where on October tenth the first Baptist congregation at Stockholm was organized. The first Baptist congregation in the whole land of Sweden had been organized with a nucleus of six baptized converts at Borekulla, Halland, with A. P. Förster, a Danish minister who had been sent from Hamburg, in charge. With Wiberg's return to Sweden a new day was inaugurated for the Baptist cause, and with the aid of American money for support, and the ability and

zeal of the colportours, large numbers of converts were won.[1]

Fredrik O. Nilsson, an individual whose early life was filled with varied experiences, went over to the Baptist fold when he was baptized in the river Elbe, in August, 1847. He had previously been in the employ of the New York Tract Society, and later (1839-1845) engaged in missionary work in Swedon, then receiving an appointment from the Seamen's Friend Society of New York to work among the mariners in Gothenburg.[2] Conversations with Gustavus Schröder, who had been baptized in New York in 1844, led him to a definite position in regard to Baptist doctrine, views which he held from 1845 and on. In May, 1849, Nilsson was ordained into the Baptist ministry at Hamburg. In Swedon he launched an energetic campaign in behalf of Baptist doctrine which led him into serious difficulties. He was charged

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1. Stephenson, in writing of the Swedish Baptists in op. cit., has had access to the Diaries of Wiberg kept in the Bethel Seminary archives, in Stockholm.
2. A large number of reports from Nilsson, during the years he served as a missionary of the New York organization, are printed in the columns of the Sailor's Magazine.

by the court with propagating doctrines contrary to the "true evangelical faith", was convicted, and exiled from Sweden in the summer of 1851. Until the spring of 1853 he was stationed as pastor at Copenhagen when with a company of twenty-three Swedish Baptists, harried by persecution, he sailed for America. For seven years Nilsson performed the rôle of a circuit rider in the Mississippi Valley, and made a journey to Sweden in 1860, made possible through the steps the government had taken in the direction of religious liberty.

From one point of view the Baptists labored under a heavy disadvantage in competition with the other groups, for the major portion of their mission rested with a single theological tenet. Among the thousands of immigrants who entered our country there were many who had been immersed in Sweden, but they were too few to augment the Baptist congregations to the degree that the Lutheran immigrants augmented the Augustana Synod. The missionaries of the Baptist faith were faced with the necessity of proving to their countrymen that the Baptist doctrine was in absolute accord with the Word of God, and that

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1. Byström, En frikyrklig banbrytare eller F. O. Nilssons lif och verksamhet.

the Lutherans were in error. In 1860, the year of organization of the Augustana Synod, the Swedish Baptists numbered only eleven congregations with 400 members, and at the close of the second decade there were thirty-four congregations with 1,500 members.[1]

C. The Mission Friends

The Mission Friend movement in Sweden was a direct outgrowth of the waves of revivalism which swept the country in the sixties and seventies of the nineteenth century. As long as the movement was led by the dominating personality of Carl Olof Rosenius, the great lay leader and preacher, there was no acute danger of the adherents breaking away from the established church, for Rosenius, in spite of dissatisfaction with conditions in the state institution, was opposed to separation and held firmly to the belief that the church could be reformed from within. However, the gulf between the state church and the free-church parties was constantly growing wider and with the death of Rosenius in 1868 a different type of leadership came into evidence.

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1. Lagergren, op. cit.

Rev. Paul Peter Waldenstrom, a strong personality and intellect, became the leader of the movement after Rosenius. He was a pastor in the State Church, and it should be noted that in 1862 he had been issued a call to serve as professor at Augustana Theological Seminary, then at Chicago, only two years after the Swedish-American Lutherans had withdrawn from the General Synod fearing doctrinal laxity in that body. An open break came with the publication of Waldenstrom's famous sermon on the text for the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity, in 1872, an act which not only made his name a household word but also led to a controversy that shook the religious foundations in Sweden and divided Swedish congregations in America. The doctrine of the atonement became the burning issue, and after eight years of bitter controversy the Swedish Mission Covenant was organized at a free-church meeting held at Stockholm, August 2, 1878.[1] Though Waldenstrom was critical of the State Church he was that much of a student of his-

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1. Hovman, Den Waldenströmska församlingsläran i historisk belysning; Olsson, Församlingen enlight C. O. Rosenius och P. Waldenström.

tory that he understood how closely it was bound up with society, and he maintained that it was the duty of the believers to use their influence to make it a faithful steward of the treasures entrusted to it; thus there came about the curious paradox of the members of the largest free church in Sweden retaining their membership in the State Church and taking part in its affairs.

At the time the revival in Sweden was at its height, in 1876 and 1877, great numbers of young people, unable to get work in their homeland crowded the emigrant ships for America. Masses of like-minded people had also emigrated during the years 1867-1869, the period of the great famine in the province of Småland. These groups were thoroughly imbued with the läsare spirit. In 1882 emigration reached its very highest figure.[1]

Here and there in our country independent congregations had been founded which, though generally bearing the name Lutheran, showed definite allegiance to the free-church spirit of the läsare movement in Sweden. Early in the seventies efforts were launched to effect an organisation

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1. Jansson, op. cit., pp. 222 ff.

among these. In May, 1873, the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Mission Synod was organized at Keokuk, Iowa. It had been initiated through the efforts of Rev. Charles Andersen, who until 1870 was the only pastor serving the Lutheran congregations outside the Augustana Synod. The new Synod included some congregations which had affiliated with the Synod of Northern Illinois (but had remained distant from the Augustana Synod) and some which had an entirely independent status. From the beginning there was disagreement in the new synod over the matter of becoming a unit of the General Synod and strangely enough Andersen and a few other pastors withdrew within a very few days from the very synod they had been instrumental in organizing. Under the leadership of Andersen a conference was held at Galesburg, Illinois, in May, 1874, when those who broke away from the Mission Synod organized themselves into the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Ansgarius Synod, affiliated as a unit of the General Synod, and adopted the constitution of that body.[1]

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1. Accounts of the work of these bodies were published in Zions Banér and Chicago-Bladet.

The two synods thus organized were very similar in spirit, the only difference of any consequence being that the Mission Synod attached less importance to organization than did the Ansgarius Synod, criticising the latter for following the example of the Augustana Synod in admitting "worldly" individuals to membership. The years following were marked by turbulence in both groups, and the matters of church organization and the concept of the Church became very live issues. Both synods professed to be Lutheran and yet they were one in opposition to the practice and polity of the Augustana Synod. With so many points of likeness, however, it became evident that a merger of the two bodies was both sensible and desirable, and thus out of these two groups, in February, 1885, the Swedish Evangelical Mission Covenant was organized at Chicago.[1] The visit to Sweden in 1884 by Rev. H. W. Montgomery, an official of the American Home Missionary Society, awakened an interest in the Mission Friend movement among members of the American Congregational Church, especially in the New

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1. Minutes of this organization meeting are published in Missionsförbundets första femårs period. Bowman, The Mission Covenant of America; Myvall, The Swedish Covenanters.

England States.[1] The Mission Covenant won its adherents among the immigrants who had been under the influence of the Rosenian revival in Sweden, and came to be the largest of the free-church bodies.

Curiously enough, the Mission Friend movement, with its origin in the wave of new-evangelism which swept Sweden in the latter half of the century, has a point of contact with the free-churchly Methodists and Baptists in the emphasis on experiential religion, is related to the American Congregational church in the New England states, having been given liberal aid from this typical New England denomination,[2] and withal has a very definite Lutheran color, many of the individual congregations still having the word "Lutheran" in their

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1. Montgomery, A Wind from the Holy Spirit in Sweden and Norway. Also, the same author's volume, The Work among the Scandinavians, Including the Swedes, Danes and Norwegians.
2. The author has consulted the Minutes of the Congregational Church in each of the New England states, and has found that very definite efforts were launched to bring the Swedish immigrants into the fold of this body.

official name.[1] Where Mission Friend groups broke away from Lutheran churches the defections generally represented the more pietistic elements.[2] It is a curious fact in the early history of Swedish-American religious organizations that even though so many of the Lutheran groups showed open distaste for the formalism which they believed had brought about a state of atrophy in the Church of Sweden, they, in turn, though "free" in spirit according to the suggested comparison, were often labeled lifeless ceremonialists by others who desired to go still further in the direction of a religious life and cultus characterized by spontaneity.[3] Besides this, the doctrine of the atonement was the burning issue in the strife between the Augustana

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1. On the relations of the Augustana Synod and the Mission Covenant, cf., the interesting words of Stephenson, in op. cit., p. 295: "There has always been a trace of the Mission Friend spirit in the Augustana Synod. This leaven might have worked more powerfully had it not been for the Waldenstromian 'heresy'."
2. Josephine Princell, J. C. Princells Levnadsminnen. Princell was a clergyman in the Augustana Synod and was the most notable example of defection from the ranks of the Lutherans at this time. Princell was serving the Swedish Lutheran Church at Brockton, Massachusetts, at the time, and the author has consulted the church records of that parish from that period. Princell became one of the founders of the Lutheran Free Church.
3. Lawson, Pastor Differed Then, Too, in Augustana Quarterly, April, 1936.

Synod and the Mission Friends in the early period of their history. At the present time, however, this group finds itself in spirit and in belief much closer to the communion from which it broke away than it does to the American denomination whose name it has appropriated. Thus the Swedish Congregational church offers an interesting medium in the study of cross-fertilization of cultures.

H. Conclusion

From the foregoing presentation it is plain that early religious work among the Swedish element in the United States followed a very checkered course. A great variety of types came to be represented, all the way from the high-church emphasis of Unonius to the extremes of the fanatical Eric Janson. From the beginning it was very much an open question which group would eventually assume the leadership, an issue made more real when American bodies entered the field and appropriated liberal sums for missionary work, seeking to win the immigrants for their respective communions.

With the early stage set in this way it gives cause to marvel that the Lutheran church eventually came to dominate the field, completely outdistancing all other groups in regard to membership. The

writer believes that three reasons are at the foundation of this. The average Swedish immigrant was suspicious of extremes, neither high-churchliness nor pronounced revivalism appealing to him; he was content to follow the middle way. The venerable religious institution in which he had been nurtured had exerted a greater influence over him than he himself could realize, and even though he may have been critical of the State Church of Sweden, he came to feel that he owed her allegiance; no matter what amount of missionary zeal the Anglo-American groups expended to win him, the old church, even as it was expressed in the Swedish Lutheran communion in America, was a spiritual home to him. The early leadership in the Augustana Synod, particularly among the first pastors, who were ordained in Sweden, was of a superior type and one of their first concerns was the establishment of an institution for the training of the clergy in their new land, according to good academic standards. In this formative period no individual meant more than did Tufve Nilsson Hasselquist, whose biographer has advanced the claim that "the Augustana Synod is the creation of Hasselquist, and its spirit is still Hasselquistian."[1]

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1. Andor, op. cit., p. 2 58.

PART II

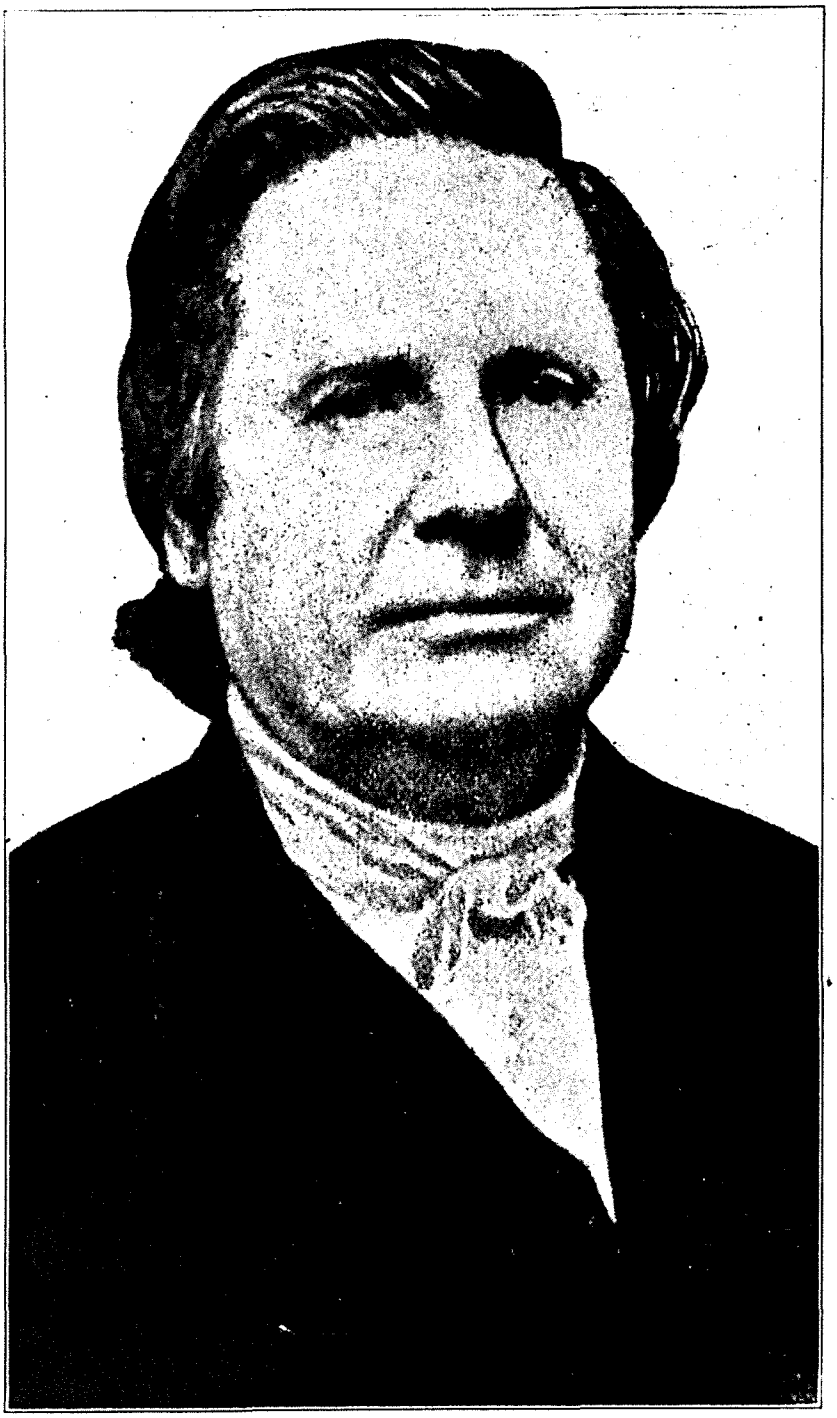
OLOF GUSTAF HEDSTROM

AND

THE EARLY STRUCTURE OF SWEDISH METHODISM

CHAPTER IV

EARLY LIFE AND MINISTRY



THE REV. O. G. HEDSTRÖM

EARLY LIFE AND MINISTRY

A. Early Life in Sweden and America

The sources for knowledge of Hedstrom's early life are very meager. Writers who have treated Swedish Methodist history (Norelius, Liljegren-Westergreen-Wallonius, Witting, Stephenson, et al.) have relied chiefly on information supplied in articles appearing in Sändebudet, the Swedish Methodist organ, on the occasion of his death (New York, May 5, 1877), and the address delivered at the unveiling of the monument on his grave (Brooklyn, October 17, 1866), for the essential facts of the missionary's career.[1]

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1. An editorial, evidently by Dr. William Hanschon, is published in S, May 15, 1877. An obituary, written by Albert Ericson, of Brooklyn, appeared in the issue of May 29, 1877. The address in question, delivered by H. Olson, was incorporated by Norelius in De Svenska Lutherska Församlingarnas och Svenskarnas Historia i Amerika, I, pp. 16-23. The English version of Olson's article is printed in CA, June 23, 1887. A Memoir over Hedstrom, signed by O. H. Tiffany, is found in the archives of St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church, New York City. Thunström in Olof Gustaf Hedstrom, Den svenska metodismens fader, Hans mission på Betelskeppet i New York och hans insatser för evangelisering bland svenskar i Amerika och Sverige, has consulted the church records of Nottebäck parish, now in the provincial archives at Vadstena, although for the major portion of his monograph he has relied on the general histories. Cf., LWW, pp. 152 ff.; Witting, pp. 135 ff.; Stephenson, op. cit., pp. 117-119.

The Book of Births and Baptisms of Nottebäck parish, the County of Kronoberg, in Sweden, shows that Olof Gustaf was born May 11, 1803, the son of Johan Carlsson Hedstrom, from the village of Twinnesheda, and his wife Annica Persdotter. The father served as a corporal in the regiment of Kronoberg.[1] The church record also states that at the age of sixteen the youth moved to South Mörum, in the county of Blekinge. At the age of twelve the boy had been placed by the father with the parish tailor to serve as his apprentice. From Mörum young Hedstrom moved to Karlskrona, and it was here that the call of the sea proved its drawing power. At the age of twenty-two he was appointed secretary to Captain C. R. Nordenskiöld on the cannon-frigate "af Chapman", bound for South America, which vessel, however, because of political complications could not land at its proposed destination, and proceeded to New York where the expedition was abandoned, toward the close of 1826. The crew were allowed funds for the return to Sweden.

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1. The Parish Records of Nottebäck, quoted by Thunström, op. cit., p. 9. Twinnesheda is a small village lying 6 kilometers southeast of Flybo railroad station, between Åseda and Växiö.

but Hedstrom is said to have been robbed of his money and was stranded.

The stranger in New York secured employment with a tailor named Townsend, through which connection he met Caroline Pinckney, a cousin of the employer, with whom he was united in marriage June 11, 1829. The wife was a loyal Methodist and visits were made to the Willett Street Methodist Episcopal Church, where the Rev. Dr. J. Phoebus served as pastor. Here Hedstrom was "soundly and gloriously converted,"[1] and together with his wife enrolled in one of the "classes" of the church.[2] At one time following this experience the young convert worked at his trade in Pottsville, Pennsylvania.

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1. Tiffany, Memoir. Witting, pp. 139-140, quotes Hedstrom to the effect that after being pierced by the sword of the Spirit in the church he came into deep anguish of soul, but "after many hours of struggle, alone at night in a lumber yard, came to peace with God." The experience meant a going "from death to life". Witting does not state his source but may very well have heard this from Hedstrom's own lips.
2. Eight M. E. Churches, Classes - 1829-1852, Willett Street Church (MS), p. 140.

B. The 1853 Journey to Sweden

In 1853 Hedstrom returned to his fatherland for a brief visit. The recent finding of a diary kept by him on this journey casts new light on this period of his life and it is only to be regretted that the diary is so brief and sketchy; the notations are very revealing and contribute much in aiding us to make a proper estimate of the man. To our knowledge this is the first piece of writing that is preserved from Hedstrom's own hand. Although this diary is very incomplete, it is unique in being one of the first extant documents written by a nineteenth century immigrant who returned to visit his homeland, recording his impressions, thus having a sociological value.[1]

From the pages of this diary we gather that Hedstrom went on board the brig "Standard", bound for Bremen, on Monday, May 27, 1853. He wrote very touchingly and intimately of the guidance he had felt in his life the past years in America,

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1. Hedstrom, Diary. One section is given over to a report on the distribution of the funds from the Jenny Lind concert in November, 1850; another to the record of marriages performed on the Bethel Ship.

and his lines reflect a religious sincerity and earnestness which are not open to question. His religious experience while in American had evidently taught him to look for certain distinguishing characteristics among Christians; on this boat he found "clever people", but they had "no mark of Jesus". The drinking and swearing made him feel that he had a particular mission in suggesting reform, and he wrote: "I see that there is something for me to do here; Lord give me grace, and may I be wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove."[1] The sailing was delayed a day, there being no wind, but the young convert spent the time profitably in discussion with the captain about liquor and tobacco. He left copies of The Christian Advocate and Journal up on the deck for people to read. The next entry was made three weeks later (June twenty-first) when the vessel was nearing the old world; Nedstrom mused that it was about eight years since he was providentially carried over this mighty ocean.

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1. Nedstrom wrote English inaccurately, even at a much later period in his life than this. The present writer has therefore corrected spelling, etc., in the quotations made from his writing.

Land was sighted two days later, welcome news after the hurricane experienced the night before, and the Holland coast first visible on June twenty-fourth brought a sense of relief to one who felt that there had been an overabundance of salt pork in his diet the immediate weeks past. Bremen, Hamburg and Lübeck were briefly visited, and on July third, across the sound from Copenhagen, "this morning for the first time in eight years I saw the land of my native country."

The following day (July fourth) he crossed to Sweden, but the difficulties in getting landed made him feel that "Sweden is under bondage as compared to the happy land of America." At the same time he praised God that "he had been led to be amongst his people that talk the pure word of God . . . I have not had any rational doubt on my mind but that it was my duty to go and see my relations and with the help of God do what I could for God and their immortal souls."

At a hotel in Lund, the cathedral and university town in southern Sweden, he had a casual meeting with one who by his dress appeared to be a Lutheran preacher, and the conversation between the two centered about the problem of church and state. Hedstrom's part in the conversation shows

that he did not at all hold to the concept of the Church and of membership in the same which was common in a land such as Sweden, with a national church; to him Church was quite evidently the society of the saved. To wit: "I told them that though our civil laws were made according to Christianity they had no connection with the church government so church and state are not united. . . . I told them that so long as people swore and lived a wicked life they can not belong as members of our Christian societies." Even in this audience there seemed to be some swearing. The Lutheran preachers in the company did not reprove the guilty ones, but the visitor in their midst, who very likely during his years in Methodist circles in America had learned something of the duties of an exhorter, made bold to suggest that "our Christians tried to live a holy life. . . They seemed then to be very silent." One in the group, an agent of a temperance society, called Hedstrom aside. He told him that the temperance advocates had increased in numbers in Sweden, and learned in turn from Hedstrom that "almost all Christians in America belonged." Hedstrom inquired how many läsare (readers) there were in Sweden, and learned that there were about 6,000. When Hedstrom asked how this clergyman liked

them, the churchman's conversation "bordered on the ridiculous". Hedstrom, in reply, gave assurance that he liked them and was "of the same kind . . . Then the conversation changed." Later it was learned that even the Lutheran minister attended their meetings at times. Together, the Lutheran clergyman and the visiting Methodist "took a little wine and water."

The entry for Sunday, July seventh, informs us that Hedstrom went to his brother's home, intensely serious in his solicitude for the brother's spiritual life. Again we find the contrast of formality and spontaneity: the brother "used prayers from the Lutheran Prayer Book" but the American convert "prayed from the sincerity of heart."

The final notation in the diary was made the following day. Hedstrom was chagrined to find that the people who had experienced repentance and faith were evidently held in scorn by the preachers. The country that had seen his birth now appeared to him as a "benighted land".

Hedstrom's visit in Sweden led to conversions among his own kinsfolk. The diary is silent on this matter but an article written by Hedstrom for Sändebudet following his second visit to Sweden, thirty

years later, gives an intimate picture of the initial return to his native soil of the young man from a distant land.

> "I sought my father, who was an old soldier, and fell on his neck, praying him, while the tears streamed down my cheeks, to seek the Lord with all his heart. God, in His grace, awakened him from his sleep in sin, and he came to know peace, for Jesus' sake, two weeks later. Many others were also awakened. My two brothers, Jonas and Elias, I took with me to America. On our journey, God, in grace awakened my one brother, Jonas Hedstrom, when I was giving an exhortation to all on board (at a time when we were in grave danger). He later became the medium of our dear God for the conversion of many countrymen, through the preaching of the Word, and died triumphant in the Lord , after 22 years of faithful work in His service. Elias, and my third brother, Johan, also found peace with God, through Jesus Christ, and died happy in their Saviour." 1

C. Return to America and Associations in Methodist Circles

Upon his return to America Hedstrom continued his associations in Methodist circles. A correspondent to The Christian Advocate and Journal of the period has recorded a description of a "love feast" held (at the close of 1833) in the Willett Street Church, in which the part played by the young con-

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1. S, December 1, 1865.

vert evidently left a decided impression. The account is of value to us in that it casts further light on the circumstances surrounding Nodstrom's religious experience and on certain details concerning the Sweden visit as well, in addition to affording an insight into a typical Methodist practice of the times. -

> "I attended a love feast last Friday evening in the Willett Street Church, and was not only gratified but exceedingly profited. - The many lively and sensible testimonies that were given of Christian experience and spiritual enjoyments rendered it a feast indeed. . . But the most interesting of all was the testimony of a Swede, who gave, in substance, the following account: - That some twenty years ago, perhaps under the last sermon that the late Dr. Phoebus preached in that house, the truth of God reached his heart, and was the means of his conversion to God. After being himself brought out of darkness into God's marvellous light, he felt such a deep concern for his parents and friends in Sweden, that, last May, he took ship and sailed for his native land. On his passage he felt it his duty to reprove sin, and bear witness for his Saviour, which he did until sin was ashamed; and the captain evidently became a reformed man. When he arrived at home, he met his father, who was an officer under that government, and three score years old, and embraced him in his arms with so much affection, and such earnest solicitude for his soul, that he melted into tenderness and yielded to his entreaties, and was persuaded to seek salvation through faith in the blood of the Lamb.
>
> "With several other relatives he conversed to good effect, and visited a number of towns, speaking to all with whom he had opportunity of the nature and importance of experimental religion, and many listened

with astonishment and great seriousness. The night before he took his departure from a place near his native town, several persons requested to come together and see him, to take their farewell. Accordingly arrangements were made to receive them at his uncle's house, and about fifty or sixty persons came, among whom was the head man of the town. After getting them seated, he gave an account of the state and progress of religion in America, related his own experience, and then proposed to take his leave of them by speaking to them individually concerning their own views and religious feelings, and inquire what were their hopes of heaven, and how they expected to obtain eternal life.

"Before he had got half way through they were all in tears. The meeting lasted until twelve o'clock, and they were yet unwilling to go away. The next morning a number came in to see him, weeping and confessing their sins, and anxious to know what they must do to be saved. Among them came the wife of their principal man, rejoicing that her husband had that morning commenced family worship. He has since received letters, informing him that the good seed is springing up in hopeful conversions. On his return passage one young man was converted to God, and is now a member of a class in this city. A younger brother came out with him, and has experienced religion since his arrival here.

"This interesting account, which I have nearly spoiled by this meagre and cold recital, produced in my mind a train of reflections upon the wonderful works of God, and the ways of His providence. I thought of my venerable friend Dr. Phoebus, as the pioneer of Methodism . . . that one of his last sermons should kindle a light in the dark and cold regions of Swedon."[1]

. . . . .

1. CAJ, January 10, 1834. The article is signed "Zero".

In 1834, evidently in rapid succession, Hedstrom was made an Exhorter, Class Leader, and Local Preacher, and was thus recognised as a member of the officiary in the Methodist Episcopal church in the metropolis.[1] It is recorded that he was a Leader for Class CIX, meeting in the schoolroom of the Second Street Church, also that he removed May 25, 1835,[2] when he was named a "circuit preacher".[3]

B. Early Ministry in the Catskills

Admitted as a minister on trial Hedstrom received his first appointment to Charlotte (in the Delaware District), New York, where he served two years.[4] In 1837 he was admitted into full connection as a minister and sent to Jefferson, where he also remained two years.[5] The conference

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1. Quarterly Conferences, Members, 1819-1835 (MS).
2. M. E. Church, East Circuit, Classes - 1832-1837 (MS), p. 211. In the aforementioned obituary, Ericson also states that Hedstrom served as a class leader and as a local preacher before being definitely appointed to a charge.
3. A General Alphabetical Register of the Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the New York East Circuit, 1832, (MS).
4. Minutes of the Annual Conferences, II, pp. 320, 360.
5. Ibid., pp. 454, 541.

years 1839-1840 and 1840-1841 were spent at Cooymans,[1] 1841-1842 at Windham,[2] 1842-1843 at Catskill and Durham,[3] and 1843-1844 and 1844-1845 at Prattsville.[4]

The circuit-rider of that period, primarily given to action, was not likely to leave any written records behind him; seemingly the only note bearing on Hedstrom from these several parishes is one from the Windham circuit, in which Hedstrom's "quarterage" is mentioned, varying from $46.00 to $78.00, and his traveling expenses, ranging from $.50 to $1.25.[5]

However, a characterization of more than ordinary interest, referring to this period of Hedstrom's life, is given in a memoir penned by the Rev. Dr. Daniel Steele, who served as professor in the School of Theology of Boston University. From his writing it is evident that the immigrant circuit-rider exerted a very definite spiritual in-

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1. Ibid., p. 630; Minutes of the Annual Conferences, III, p. 46.
2. Ibid., p. 139.
3. Ibid., p. 232.
4. Ibid., pp. 337, 445.
5. Information furnished me by W. L. Comstock, pastor at Windham. The Rev. Dr. C. C. Wallenius has informed me that when he made a recent visit (summer of 1936) among the Catskill parishes he found that in the home of one old settler "Dominie Hedstrom" and his power as a man of prayer were still in mention, the memory of the same having been handed down to posterity.

fluence on his life. To quote:

"I am not fully certain, inasmuch as I do not have the General Conference Minutes at hand, but I believe it was in April, 1841, that Olof G. Hedstrom was named as the second preacher in the Windham circuit of the Delaware District, New York Conference. This was in the same territory where Bishop Francis Burns had been converted and prepared for his future labors in the dark continent of Africa. Brother Hedstrom was the nearest neighbor to my parental home and lived in a house owned by my father. At this time he was rather imperfect in his use of the English language; for example, in his speech he would often confuse w and v, saying 'salvation' instead of 'salvation'. He did not undertake to write his own accounts concerning awakenings, but on such occasions he called upon me to serve as his secretary, and this proved to be quite often, for his 'preaching was in spirit and power'. The circuit was large, including no fewer than eighteen preaching stations, for most part in schoolhouses in the Windham-, Lexington-, and Hunter- districts, in the Catskill Mountains. In his sermons he displayed an extraordinary seriousness. No person ever doubted his sincerity or the genuineness of his conversion. He had a burning zeal for souls which conquered indifference and opposition. Those who came to criticise his broken English often remained to pray. His warm-heartedness and sympathy increased greatly the influence of his sermons. Some of those I still have in living remembrance, although heard half a century ago. On the text 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation' his points were the following:

1. There is no escape from the call to the judgment.

2. There is no adjournment of the court.

3. Clever advocates have no possibility of evading the law.

4. The judge can not be bribed.

"Shortly after he came to the circuit he asked me to accompany him to his next preaching station, and with the purpose in mind of inviting me in the most personal way to come to Christ. On one of those journeys he predicted that before he left the circuit he would see me 'happy in the love of God'. He was also to see me a sincere seeker after salvation, although I did not experience the peace of forgiveness of sins and assurance until some weeks later.

"My first experience at teaching school was in Hamton, the winter of 1841-1842, and next to the schoolhouse stood a Methodist church. To this church the untiring Swede came to conduct a series of meetings. I do not know how many were converted at these; but I do know that the young school teacher began to pray in his school and also to confess his need of Christ and he began to discern the plans for his life work which were to lead him to enroll in the Wesleyan Seminary, at Wilbraham, where he was to experience in full 'the glorious liberty of the child of God'.

"I saw him only two times thereafter. Once I called on him in New York, shortly after he had begun his mission on the floating Bethel, and he accompanied me to his ship, named 'John Wesley'. He told me of the inspiring meetings which were being held there, and of the large number of conversions. He also described for me how he went on board Swedish vessels, as well as those from other parts, advising the immigrants that they could not be good American citizens unless they received and read the Bible, 'the cornerstone of American government'. On these visits he always took with him a number of Bibles distributing them to the newcomers and to the members of the crew.

"Several years later he visited Lynn, in Massachusetts, in company with one of the missionary secretaries, on which occasion he gave an address; in this he described his

feelings when, after a long absence from his fatherland, he visited it again. When he landed he fell upon his knees and kissed the beloved soil of his native Sweden. This was the last time I saw this good and high-minded man. He was the chosen medium of God not only to open the doors of Methodism unto his countrymen, the Swedish people, but also to open the door of salvation unto me, who had been fostered in Methodism. For this reason I join my voice gladly with the great multitude of Swedish Methodists and say: 'Praised be the Lord Jesus for the life and work of Olof G. Hedstrom!'

"I can see him before my mind's eye to this very day, a well-built and manly individual, thirty-five years of age, about six feet in height, with clear and healthy complexion, a well-shaped head covered with thick wavy hair, black as the wing of a raven. I can still see him, standing in the little red schoolhouse in the Catskill Mountains, admonishing with holy earnestness the sinners to be reconciled to God.

"Again I see him by the door of his house, saddling his horse, preparing to depart for his three-weeks circuit. His wife draws a bucket of water for the horse. He mounts the carriage and says: 'Come, Car'line, and open the gate. His devoted wife trips forth to the gate, and away rides the messenger of salvation happier than a king."[1]

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1. Stilla Stander, V, 1835, pp. 260-271. This paper was edited by Witting. Quoted by Witting, pp. 141-146; LHW, pp. 155-157. The translation is by the present writer.

E. Relations to George Scott

When Hedstrom was in attendance at a conference meeting in New York, May 21, 1841, he chanced to meet George Scott, the Scotchman who had been sent by the English Wesleyan Methodists to labor in Sweden, and who at the time was journeying in America to raise funds for his Stockholm mission. It did not take long before the enthusiastic Scott conceived plans for bringing Hedstrom to Sweden to assist him in the work there. In his diary he entered the following:

"May 21. Met a dear Br. (Hedstrom) a Swede, who has been a travelling preacher in this Conference for 3 years, a good and zealous man, and ardently desirous of advancing the interests of his country.

"May 25. - - made my proposition that Br. Hedstrom might be supported in a visit to Sweden next Spring, to see what the Providence of God would open for him to do; this was well received, and Dr. H. spoke on the subject in a manner that melted all to tears.

"June 16. At a meeting of the Meth. Missionary Board. Got a promise that Hedstrom should be sent out next Spring, at the expense of the

Board, on a visit to Sweden."[1]

At the same time (New York, June 18, 1841) Scott wrote a letter to the Committee of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in which the following was stated:

> "The Methodist Missionary Board has agreed to bear the expense of a visit to be made next year to his friends in Sweden, of a Preacher in the New York Conference, who is a native of that country, and could, I have no doubt, be usefully employed in his own land, though till I converse with the Archbishop I am not prepared to say in what way."[2]

So anxious did Scott appear to secure the services of Hedstrom for the mission in Sweden that he made it his very last item of business before sailing to address a letter through Dr. Pitman to the Missionary Board. More than twenty years later, when the Methodists were increasing their efforts to plant missions in Sweden, the letter was made public in an effort to further interest in the project:

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1. The notations, from George Scott's first American Diary, have been furnished me through the kindness of Dr. Gunnar Westin, a docent at the University of Uppsala, who has in his possession a large number of sources pertaining to George Scott. Cf., Westin, George Scott och hans verksamhet i Sverige, I, p. 633, n. 58; Westin, George Scott's Journey to America in 1841, Swedish American Historical Bulletin, June, 1932. Scott also referred to Hedstrom in the Appendix (pp. 81-82) of his book, Tellström, The First Swedish Missionary to Lapland. With an Appendix, giving an account of the Stockholm Mission.
2. The letter, found in the archives of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, London, has also been supplied me through the good offices of Dr. Westin.

"On Board the Narragansett
September 30, 1841.

Dear Brother:

Lest the statement I made regarding Brother Nodstrom's projected visit to Sweden should have, in the multiplicity of your onerous duties, escaped your mind, I make it my last employment in leaving New York, to repeat it in this form, feeling assured it will receive that degree of attention from you and the Board of Missions which it may be found to deserve. I understand, of course, that, according to the decision of the Board, Nodstrom is to come to Sweden next spring, and having had frequent opportunities of knowing his devout wish to benefit his native land, and of listening to his ardent appeals for Sweden, I felt that could he be liberated from his circuit for some months previous to his setting out; and allowed to visit several Methodist societies, to talk to the churches about Sweden, and his intended mission there, he would not only obtain by collection and subscriptions what might be requisite for the expense of his journey, but what is perhaps of more consequence in the future aspect of the enterprise, secure the sympathies and prayers of numerous Christians in his work and labor of love. It would be well if he could be in Sweden early in the year 1842, say before the end of April, though his voyage ever would be more pleasant in May, and if he reached his native soil by the close of that month he would have good opportunity of ascertaining what his future course ought to be. I need not say how heartily and gratefully I shall welcome this beloved brother, or how readily I shall exert what little influence I may possess to promote his benevolent purposes. Please present to the board my respectful and most affectionate regards, and believe me, dear brother, yours in love unfeigned,

Geo. Scott" [1]

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1. CAJ, August 14, 1862.

Nothing came of Scott's proposition, however, and Nodstrom continued in his mission in the region of the Catskills until the spring of 1945, when a new chapter in his life's work began.

CHAPTER V

THE BETHEL SHIP

THE BETHEL SHIP

A. Earliest Religious Services Among the Swedish Element in New York City

In the year 1844 the first religious services were conducted among the Swedish people in New York City. A young man by the name of Peter Borgner had come to New York in 1832 as a mate on a Swedish vessel. Years later, while lying in a hospital recovering from injuries received in an accident, he chanced to read a pamphlet, "A Conversion with an Infidel," which a Captain R. Colston, tract missionary, had left on the breast of the sleeping ex-sailor. A very definite spiritual experience followed and soon services were arranged on board a German ship anchored at pier 11 on the North River; at the first of these Peter Borgner and four sailors were the sole attendants. Luther's Postil was used as a preaching medium. With increased attendance at the services Borgner felt constrained to turn to the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal church, and to its secretary, the Rev. Dr. David Terry, to seek assistance in the plans to make better arrangements for the mission thus started. It was in this manner that the way was prepared for the estab-

HOOPER, DEL & SC.

ment of the Bethel Ship Mission, and the appointment of Olof Gustaf Hedstrom to serve as missionary-in-charge.[1] When Hedstrom, in May, 1846, told the story of the origin of his mission to the Seamen's Chaplains' Convention he ascribed "the origin. . . as far as human agency is concerned" to this experience and initial effort of Peter Bergner.[2]

B. The Founding of the Bethel Ship Mission

In 1845 a group of Methodists in New York City purchased a ship belonging to the New York Wesleyan Bethel Association (of the Wesleyan Methodist church).[3]

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1. Reid, Missions and Missionary Society of the M. E. Church, II, pp. 180-181; Newman, Sjelfbiografi, p. 82; LWW, pp. 159-160; Witting, pp. 146-151; Wallenius and Olson, A Short Story of the Swedish Methodism in America (reprint from The Swedish Element in America), pp. 6-7; Berger, De Svenska Methodist-församlingarna i New York, N. Y., p. 5. Cf., article, That Bale of Cotton, by B. W. Selin, CA, April 19, 1934.
2. Article, Bethel Ship - The John Wesley, signed by O. G. Hedstrom, the Sailor's Magazine, August, 1846.
3. The "New York Wesleyan Bethel Association" had been formed in 1844 and purchased the hulk of the old ship "Henry Leeds" moored at Rector Street, in the North River. The purpose of the association was "to provide seamen with religious instruction in accordance with the usages of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of the United States of America; and to advance among them the temperance reformation." The "Henry Leeds" was fitted up to accommodate five or six hundred persons, renamed the "John Wesley", and religious services were begun November 21, 1844. Seaman, Annals of New York Methodism (Being a History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the City of New York) From A.D. 1766 - A.D. 1890, pp. 308-309. The Sailor's Magazine, December, 1844, and August, 1845. Cf., also, The Seventeenth Annual Report of the American Seamen's Friend Society, in the issue of June, 1845.

Leaders in the project were George T. Cobb, William G. Boggs and the Rev. Dr. David Terry, the latter, as we have already noted, the secretary of the Missionary Society. The purchase was made in the name of the Asbury Society of New York City.[1]

The account of Hedstrom's coming to the Bethel Ship, as handed down by Methodist historians, is not lacking in dramatic interest. Bergner and Terry were evidently in correspondence with Hedstrom, then stationed at Prattsville, during 1844, in regard to the beginning of a mission among the Swedish element in New York City. The up-state circuit-rider felt reluctant to consider the matter with favor, however, for he had largely forgotten his mother tongue, and the prospect of a New York mission looked doubtful; he is reputed to have said, "It is as dark as a pocket." The New York Conference convened at the Forsythe Street Church, May 14, 1845. Bergner, Hedstrom and Terry gathered in the former's home for a session of consideration and prayer, following which Hedstrom is said to have stated: "I believe that it is of the Lord and if the bishop appoints me I will come to the ship."[2]

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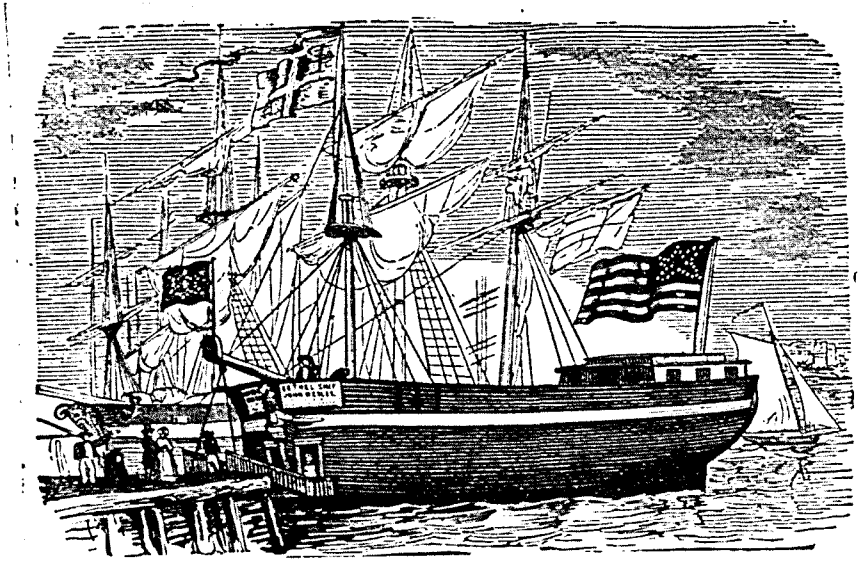
1. Reid, op. cit., pp. 182-183.
2. LMW, pp. 157-159; Witting, pp. 149-151; Norelius, I, p. 18; Wallenius and Olson, op. cit., p. 7.



Gamla Betelskeppet, "svenska metodismens vagga."

The record of this conference meeting shows that O. G. Hedstrom was appointed to the "North River Mission".[1] In this connection it should be pointed out that the term "North River Mission" was changed to "North River Bethel" in 1847, and that "Swedish Bethel" became the designation from 1849 and thereafter.[2]

Although May 25, 1845, has been cited by Methodist historians as the date when the opening service was held on the Bethel Ship[3] - and this is the date given in a signed article by Hedstrom in the Missionary Advocate of August, 1846 - an account published in the Christian Advocate and

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1. Minutes of the Annual Conferences, III, 1845, p. 576.
2. Seaman, op. cit., pp. 398-399. Several missionary ships bearing the name Bethel were stationed in American harbors, and an official Bethel Flag had been adopted to guide seamen to these havens of religious life (The Sailor's Magazine, May, 1846; March, 1848; February, 1849). Although Hedstrom was directly in the employ of the Methodist church he was also closely related to the work of the American Bethel Society, a branch of the American Seamen's Friend Society, and his name occurs in the list of seamen's chaplains and missionaries at times published by that society (cf., e.g., The Sailor's Magazine, June, 1847; June, 1850; June, 1852).
3. A memorandum to this effect, signed by a Mrs. Oberg, is also found in the archives of the Immanuel Swedish Methodist Church, in Brooklyn. May Fifth is given as the date in ARMS, 1846, pp. 94-96.

Journal[1] would indicate that the work began June eighth, for the latter date is attached to an article from which the following is quoted:

> "Rev. C. C. Hedstrom having been appointed to this mission for the benefit of seamen and others at the late session of the New York Conference, this day entered upon his work on board the Bethel Ship John Wesley, between Rector and Carlisle Streets. The morning service was conducted in the Swedish language, and the afternoon and evening services in English. A Sunday School was opened with twenty children and three teachers but these teachers were first obliged to find the children to teach."

C. Hedstrom's Initial Labors

In the first quarterly report[2] concerning his work made by Hedstrom to the Missionary Society, June is again given as the time when the initial labors were begun. The informative nature of this report, one of the extremely few extended writings

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1. CAJ, June 18, 1845. The issue for July 16 carried an article signed by D[avid] T[erry], Jr., in which mention was made of a particularly happy Sunday spent on the ship, of visiting clergymen, subscriptions to aid in meeting the costs of purchase, groups which contributed furnishings, etc. In an article in the issue of September 17 particular mention was given to the provision made for the seamen by the Bethel Ship, since most churches had moved uptown. The same article stated that the ship had been purchased for "about $2500" and that Hedstrom had been engaged by the Missionary Society of the Methodist Church "about June 1".
2. CAJ, October 1, 1845.

we have from the missionary's hand, makes it worth quoting in extenso:

"To Rev. P. P. Sandford.

Esteemed Sir, - In presenting this first quarterly Report of my work, my unfeigned gratitude to the Father of mercies ought to be declared by me.

Having entered upon my work the sabbath immediately after my appointment in the month of June last, I found in the morning a congregation of seamen and landsmen, consisting chiefly of Swedes; but with them were also a few Danes and Norwegians. As I had advised the Conference Missionary Committee that I had not used my native tongue or language for about twenty years, and should not attempt to preach in it, and especially because my conversion and godly edification to the time of my appointment had come wholly through the English language; but knowing a pious layman, I desired him to read a sermon to the congregation in their own tongue, to which I would add an exhortation and prayers in the same tongue. This is the course I at first adopted, but such was the success — by the good hand of God upon me — which I found in re-acquiring a familiarity with my mother tongue, that but three weeks passed before I entered upon the work of extempore preaching to my countrymen, and from that time forth I have conducted the morning service in the Swedish tongue. This, however, has been attended with great labor of mind and spirit; and, I thankfully add, with most sensible and strong comfort from above.

My Swedish congregation has steadily increased, and has exceeded my expectation. I have administered the holy sacrament at three different times to them, and beginning by holding a preparatory service with them in the morning, at which I explained to these children of the Reformation and members of their national Church, the sense we entertain of this sacred rite. We at the first time had

17 communicants, at the second 22, and at the third 31. There were besides at these several seasons a number of our American brethren.

You will see that what we have said relates exclusively to our morning service; but we have also an afternoon service, or we should say, services; for at 5 o'clock our service in English commences, and at this might be found at times persons from almost every European nation; Great Britain, Germany, France, Switzerland, Holland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Russia and Italy; and although all of these could not perfectly understand the English, yet by the means of the Bible and tract societies we were enabled to present to all, portions of the glad tidings, by which they might come to the possession of the great salvation.

At five o'clock in the afternoon a congregation of Germans assemble at the ship, and to these in their own tongue one or other of our missionary brethren, Lyon or Hartman, or those sent by them, have ministered the word of life.

We affectionately, but from a solemn sense of duty to yourself and the Church, submit whether to a population of 60,000 Germans in this city, we are doing our duty by barely sustaining two missionaries, when they are so ready to hear the word of God, and a regular congregation of, say at least, 200, may be gathered at our ship every sabbath.

Our evening service is again conducted in the English language. We have usually at this service a large and attentive audience. You have yourself seen what it is; and it ought to be declared, to the glory of God, that the divine presence has been most evidently with us, and He, who to redeem our race ministered in the ship as well as on the dry land, has spoken in our ship, and produced both the storm and the calm which have led to the joy-

ful acknowledgment of His power and the adoration of His majesty; souls have been born there, and we have now a society of 16 persons, 11 of whom are Swedes.

A sabbath school was commenced the second Sunday after my appointment, and it is illustrative of the nature of missionary work as can well be conceived. The teachers take their dinners and their suppers too, with them, and begin in the morning by calling at the houses for the children, and thus leading them to school. They in many instances return them to their homes in like manner, to prevent them, as far as may be from running in the highway of sin, at least on the Lord's day. As the character of the population is nearly as migratory as the native tribes of the west, we have as yet but an average attendance of 35 children, out of a registered number of 90 or more.

Some of the Christian women connected with our work have organized a society for clothing the more destitute for the winter.

At our sacramental services the regular collection of the poor is taken up.

Your missionary ought to say, that a great portion of his time is occupied in assisting the poor and the stranger, which is attended with almost unending toil, and much pecuniary sacrifice, but this may not be left undone, if we would illustrate the faith of Him who went about doing good. And here we will say, that nothing short of the grace of our merciful High Priest could induce us even to look at this great work.

We ought thankfully to refer to those friends of Jesus of every name who have contributed to sustain us in our work, both by their prayers and means as we have sought them, and in many instances they have anticipated our case. Surely God is not unmindful of them for these things.

We beg our brethren to look into our work, and know its nature and interests, and espec-

> ially that their affectionate and prayerful regards may be so engaged as to make our "Church in the Ship" the joy of the whole Church, and fruitful as the garden of the Lord. Nothing more do we desire for our lot than His constant presence, who has so mysteriously thrust us into this field of abundant labors.
>
> Your son and servant in the Gospel,
>
> O. G. Nodstrom."

The mission conducted by Nodstrom on the Bethel Ship for a period of thirty years, with one major interruption (1860-1863) due to illness,[1] was most varied and comprehensive. He was at once a missionary, interpreter, social worker, advisor and travel agent for thousands upon thousands of immigrants; he was the organizer of a congregation and Sunday School at his home base, and instrumental in furthering other missions both in this country and abroad; in addition to ordinary pastoral duties he was exceptionally zealous as a Bible and tract colporteur; he launched particular efforts in behalf of the temperance cause; to countless seamen who visited the port of New York he was the trusted friend. It should also be pointed out that although the mission was established principally to

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1. During these years Ole P. Petersen was in charge of the work. Cf., the account of the Bethel Ship work in ARMS, 1861-1864.

aid the Swedish element, it was by no means limited to them. Even from the beginning of his work Nodstrom ministered to people representing many different nationalities.[1]

The active program set up for the group that congregated at the Bethel Ship included a regular schedule of services, prayer meetings in Swedish, German and English, a busy Sunday School department, class meetings, temperance lectures, etc.[2] The spiritual side of the work, seemingly, was never made secondary. The mission was still young when Nodstrom could report that its influence had radiated "to Iowa and to France", and that letters had been received from sailors from many parts who gave testimony of changed lives won on the Bethel Ship, and of the group meeting in the improvised chapel on the ship Nodstrom entertained a truly Methodist hope, ". . . we humbly trust that the most of them are going on to perfection."[3]

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1. CAJ, December 24, 1845, July 8, 1846. This fact is also revealed in the record of marriages in Nodstrom's Diary.
2. CAJ, June 18, December 24, 1845. Copies of the printed card and circular used to advertise the work are found in the archives of the Immanuel Church.
3. CAJ, March 4, December 16, 1846.

D. Organization of Congregation

Definite organization of a congregation was effected within a few weeks following the first gathering on the Bethel Ship. The record is found in the office of the New York County Clerk. A notice of meeting for the purpose of incorporating "The First North River Bethel Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church" was issued June 21, 1845; the meeting was called for July seventh, and was signed "O. G. Hedstrom, minister." On the appointed day the meeting was held, with the following present: Rev. O. G. Hedstrom, David Terry, Jr., Peter Bergner, Peter Dahlen, and George B. Pollock. Rev. Hedstrom was appointed chairman and Mr. Pollock served as secretary. "The First North River Bethel Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church" was officially designated as the name of the congregation and the following were elected as the first trustees: Francis Hall, Reuben C. Bull, George T. Cobb, Roland Gollston, David Terry, Jr., John Raynor, William Foster, Benjamin F. Clark and Louis B. Lodar. The Certificate of Incorporation was recorded July 11, 1845, in Liber 2, page 90, of Religious Corporations, New York County Clerk's Office.

E. Program of the Bethel Ship Mission

The columns of the Christian Advocate and Journal and the Missionary Advocate, as well as the Annual Reports of the Missionary Society contain many intimate references to the type of work carried on by Nodstrom and his associates in the early years of the Ship's history. The spiritual program in behalf of the sailors and immigrants, as above mentioned, always received the chief emphasis, and the added social work truly made Nodstrom appear as a modern Good Samaritan to the hundreds with whom he came into contact. The Bethel Ship came to be regarded as a home for those who in their own land were "hated of all men,"[1] and continued "to flourish as the garden of the Lord."[2] Converts from the Ship made their way into western states such as Ohio, Illinois and Wisconsin, and even to Germany and distant South America.[3] The mission was described as "the battery which sends back its evangelical shocks to Europe, to awaken a religious concern in old Scandinavia," and the source from which the Scandinavian immigrants proceeding to the west received

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1. CAJ, March 4, 1846.
2. CAJ, November 25, 1852.
3. ARMS, 1847, pp. 97-100, 1848, pp. 99-101. The North River German Mission, a project urged by Nodstrom, was begun in 1849. ARMS, 1849, pp. 90-93.

"good religious advice and influence."[1] Hedstrom was in close touch with the American Bible Society and the New York Bible Society and was instrumental in having the former import the Scriptures in Swedish directly from Sweden.[2] A liberal supply of Swedish Psalmbooks was received through the good graces of "an esteemed Swedish captain and his lady."[3] The Bethel Ship served much like a Post Office for the transients and its missionary was the kindly factotum for the multitudes who came to these shores. Hedstrom was present to alleviate distress among the immigrants, to visit the sick and the dying in the hospitals, to give relief to the poor, and very likely often served as an information bureau for those with inquiries concerning the strayed and the missing. Reports of revivals and conversions were frequent.[4] The work was evidently not limited to the sailors and immi-

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1. ARMS, 1858, pp. 34-35.
2. ARMS, 1848, pp. 99-101.
3. ARMS, 1850, pp. 76-79.
4. Reports and notices concerning these, too numerous to list in detail, are found during the years of the Bethel Ship Mission in the following: OAJ, ARMS, the Sailor's Magazine and the Missionary Advocate.

grants[1] for it is a matter of record that Jenny Lind, the Swedish soprano, and one of the greatest singers of all time, was attracted to the work and even considered the Bethel Ship missionary as her spiritual adviser. From the proceeds of Jenny Lind's charity concert in New York City, in November, 1850, $275.20 was allocated to Hedstrom for poor relief and $200.00 designated for the distribution of Swedish Bibles and Testaments.[2] The celebrated Swedish contatrice and the Bethel Ship missionary had some correspondence during 1851 and 1852[3] and they evidently met together in New York

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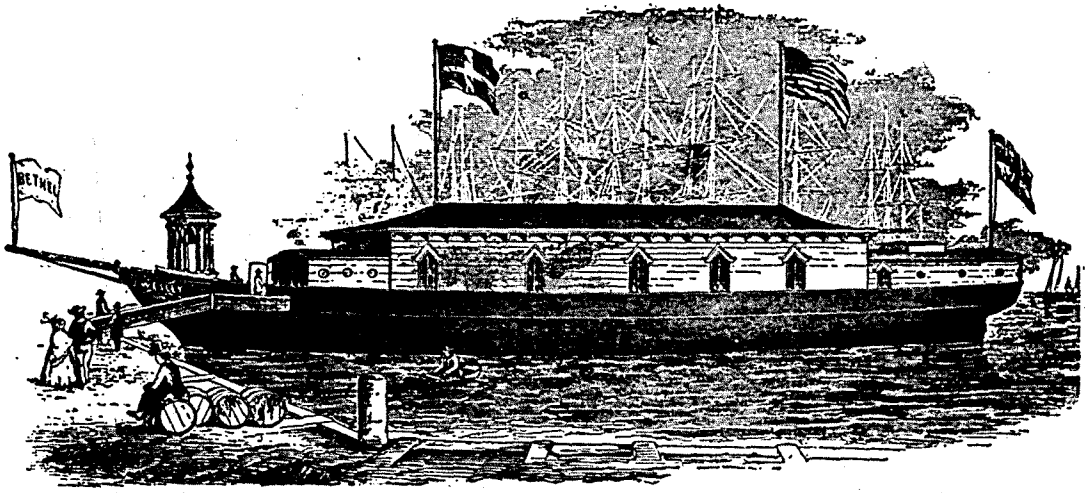
1. It should be pointed out in this connection that Hedstrom performed an invaluable service for the sailors in advising them in the matter of the care of their money. In 1860 he reported that sailors, acting upon his advice, had during the past years sent home to wives and mothers more than $40,000.00, and that more than one million dollars had been deposited by them in the Seamen's Bank for Savings. CAJ, April 26, 1860. A reference to the latter item is also made in ARHS, 1855, pp. 83-84.
2. Apparently this was the morning concert given on November 13. The reviewer wrote of the artist's rendition of the aria "I Know that My Redeemer Liveth" in the following way: "It is a broad deep gush of divinest day - the white light of heaven." The charities benefited are listed in a report published in the New York Tribune, November 20, 1850. The clipping is also pasted on the inside cover of the Hedstrom Diary.
3. Mrs. Esther Anderson, Montclair, New Jersey, has in her possession two letters of Jenny Lind to Hedstrom: Niagara Falls, [New York], October 4, 1851, and Northampton, [Massachusetts], March 2, 1852. A facsimile of the former is published in Vinterposor, 1904, pp.49-52, and a Book of Remembrance, pp. 18-19.



Nya Betelskeppet, invigdt år 1857.

at the time of the Lind concerts there. Witting refers to a Bethel Ship member who describes a prayer session held by the two in the office of the Ship.[1]

F. The New Bethel Ship (1857)

The passing years took their toll in the physical life of the Ship and as early as 1855 the missionary asked if there was not "a prince among us who would, for the glory of Christ, provide another ship for this mission."[2] The indefatigable labors of the missionary also told on him, but his spirits did not lag or grow dull. "I need not tell you that, though almost broken down by constant labor for over twenty years, ten of which have been spent in the Mission, I was often so blest that I felt, that if I had a thousand souls and bodies, I would offer them all on the missionary altar. . . My soul burns for the salvation of the Scandinavians." This expression of zeal came

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1. Witting, pp. 169-170; Newman, op. cit., p. 86. In the Witting account mention is made that Jenny Lind's spiritual experience at the Bethel Ship was so vital in nature that it led her to forsake the theater and opera and to devote herself to concert work exclusively. A study of reliable Jenny Lind literature, however, reveals that this decision on her part, which proved so startling to the world of art, was reached long before her American concert tour, and that her final operatic appearance took place in London, May 10, 1849.
2. CAJ, May 26, 1855.

before the Missionary Society at the same time that Hedstrom revived his plea for a new ship for the continuation of the work.[1] At a meeting held June 17, 1856, it was voted that another ship should be purchased, and for the $10,000.00 considered necessary to meet the costs an appeal was directed to the New York and New York East Conferences. At the same time the following statistics were cited: the Bethel Ship had been in service for eleven years, and marked the beginning of Swedish and German missions; there were now twenty-four Scandinavian missionaries in the home work and three in the fatherland; the Swedish Methodist communion numbered 1,004 members at home and eight classes in the fatherland.[2]

The new Ship was ready in the spring of 1857.[3] S. B. Newman, who was assistant to Hedstrom at the time, states that a Swedish builder from Gothenburg remodeled the bark "Carrier Pigeon" to serve as the

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1. ARMS, 1856, pp. 55-59. Cf., also, ARMS, 1854, pp. 67-71.
2. CAJ, July 10, 1856. Leaders of the work approached the Old John Street Church with the suggestion that the work be continued there, but this did not prove feasible. The Board of the Church even considered buying lots in West Street and erecting a church there for the Mission, but the price of the land proved prohibitive. Newman, op. cit., pp. 165-166.
3. ARMS, 1857, pp. 82-85.

second Bethel Ship, and that the new temple was dedicated by Bishop Matthew Simpson, May 12, 1857.[1] Three years later, in a report given to St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church in New York City, which church took a very direct interest in the Bethel Ship Mission, Hedstrom called attention to the fact that of the original Trustees of "The First North River Bethel Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church," four, John Raynor, Louis B. Lodar, George T. Cobb and David Terry, Jr., continued to serve in the same capacity. He recalled that it was the Rev. Dr. Terry who had first projected the mission. In addition he advised that the new Bethel Ship had cost $11,000.00, that the number "in all the Scandinavian missions raised up from this effort we put at 2,000," that there were now forty-one traveling and twelve local preachers in the service, and also two colporteurs, and that the nineteen churches had an aggregate value of $35,000.00. Hedstrom estimated that more than 2,000 Scandinavian immigrants had been assisted in this enterprise.[2] One by one, missionaries went out from "Pastor Hedstrom's 'Theological Seminary',

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1. Newman, op. cit., p. 166; Witting, pp. 156-158.
2. CAJ, April 26, 1860.

as he sometimes calls his ship when speaking of the number who have gone out to preach."[1]

G. Statistics of the Congregation

It is easily understood that the congregation at the Bethel Ship never grew to any great proportions, mainly because the group consisted for the most part of a transient element. The statistics for 1846, after the first year of work, showed 55 members. The lowest number (40) was recorded in 1848, and the highest number (269) was reported in 1872.[2] A regular appropriation for the work was voted by the New York Conference at its annual conventions. Though a complete tabulation is impossible, at a conservative estimate the New York Conference appropriated a total in excess of $60,000.00 for the maintenance of the work of the Bethel Ship Mission, during three decades, not including the original costs of the two vessels.[3]

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1. CAJ, July 19, 1860.
2. The membership statistics are summarized in Seamon, op. cit., p. 399, and are also given in the statistical sections of the published Minutes of the New York Annual Conference.
3. I have consulted the Minutes of the New York Conference from 1852 and on, found in the Historical Library of the Methodist Book Concern, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York City. The earlier issues are missing.

II. Type of Religious Life and Churchliness

It is in place here to add a characterization and summary of the type of religious life and churchliness that Nodstrom represented. His character was marked with zeal and spontaneity. It certainly can not be said that he was an educated man, and intellectual problems never gave him any real concern. From the few bits of writing that we have from his hand we can see that he was not too proficient in his use of either Swedish or English. Though he was lacking in this way, his spiritual fervor and sincerity are unquestioned. It is plainly seen that the nature of his religious experience was a determining factor which must be taken into consideration. Nodstrom had passed through a conversion of the Methodist pattern; his own preaching came to be marked with revivalistic emphases, with exhortations to personal decision and the leading

of a sanctified life.[1] The Methodist leaven in his general religious outlook is also evidenced in his attitude toward tobacco and spirituous liquors, and the fact that many of the readers (läsare) indulged in these made him believe that they were a bit too close to the State Church of Sweden.[2]

Hedstrom was evidently a warm admirer of Luther, but he noted with considerable disfavor the dead formalism of the Lutheran churches.[3] His con-

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1. A Bethel Ship member has written the following: "That which most impressed my child-mind was his mighty voice, in prayer, song and address, and his earnest exhortations, often with tears. He did not attach much importance to staying with the text, - to reach the sinner's heart was the all-important. . . It would often happen at the praise services that two and three would give testimonies at the same time, and with loud voices. On such occasions Hedstrom would raise his voice above all others to say: 'This is just the way God would like to have it. All this is good order. Let all praise the Lord. He has many ears'." "An Old Christian Veteran" writing on "Metodismens början bland Skandinaverna i New York och Brooklyn," clipping (obviously from Sändebudet) in Immanuel Church archives.
2. Letters of Hedstrom to Albert Ericson, written in Sändebudet during 1865, 1866 and 1867. "An Old Christian Veteran" suggests the ascetic emphasis in Hedstrom in stating that the Bethel Ship members were not allowed to carry jewelry or other ornaments, when attending services, and were given to utter simplicity in the matter of dress.
3. Letter of Hedstrom to Hasselquist, in Hemlandet, January 24, 1856.

cept of the Church was certainly typical of the free-churchly: membership in the Church was reserved for those who were spiritually experienced and who could testify that they were children of God. He must have had open distrust of every suggestion of the inclusivism of a State Church. One has ample reason to believe that Hedstrom eschewed every thought of the Church as being an institution of sacramental grace, and although he continued through his long ministry with the administration of the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion, it is reasonably sure that he never developed any adequate dogmatic formulations of his beliefs concerning their nature and value. The altar in the auditorium of the Bethel Ship came to be regarded in the Methodist way as the place for the kneeling penitents and converts, losing something of the more high-churchly character ascribed to it by the Lutherans. - The type of churchliness that came to be expressive of the Bethel Ship and its missionary offers a primary medium and splendid data for a study of the cross-fertilization of religious cultures.

This cross-fertilization is seen, among other things, in the types of the religious services in-

troduced by Nadstrom and which differed radically from those of the tradition from which he was sprung. "To witness the devotions of the Scandinavian congregation on a Sabbath morning," wrote one observer, "will of itself prove a more edifying service than usually occurs in the experience of good men."[1] With the introduction of a service such as the love feast the Scandinavian element of the Bethel Ship certainly witnessed a religious practice entirely novel to them. Nevertheless, it is amply attested that this typically American Methodist institution was accorded genuine religious fervor. An attendant has left us the following description:

> "At the love-feast on board the Bethel Ship Sabbath morning, March 6, the people commenced speaking while they were yet receiving the tokens. In this they were led off by a lady over seventy years of age, who upon receiving the water arose and said, with the greatest emotion: 'This is the first time I ever made such an expression of affection for the friends of Jesus Christ. I bless God for this opportunity.' This was uttered in her native tongue, and with a pathos that seemed to open every fountain of love in the house, for tears and smiles and audible thanksgiving were apparent all over the audience. She said she had been waiting for years to have her children go with her, but she could wait no longer. She had been taken into society a few days before. There was no stay to the testimonies from then on; some fifty must have

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1. Missionary Advocate, February, 1864.

> witnessed for Christ, among whom were a greater number for the blessing of perfect love than we ever before heard in one congregation. Probably the witnesses were equally divided between seamen and their wives or mothers, and sisters. Such an exhibition in a single mission among the children of strangers is enough to repay a lifetime of labor to the pastor, and be at the same time a satisfying portion to the good brethren who have adhered to him through all his toils, and relieved his anxieties with their ceaseless sympathies and material support." [1]

The cross-fertilisation of religious cultures is further illustrated by the hymn books that came to be used at the Mission. We have already noted that Hedstrom received a shipment of the Psalmbooks used in the State Church of Sweden, and no doubt this great collection of chorales (edited in 1819 by Sweden's great hymnodist, Johan Olof Wallin) -with its objective, churchly, almost austere character - saw considerable use in the early period of the Bethel Ship Mission.[2] Hymnals with a freer and an emphasized evangelistic note, however, more in keeping with the type of services conducted by Hedstrom, came gradually to displace the Psalmbook. The collection compiled by Jacob Bredberg, and published in 1862, must have seen some use, especially since

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1. Missionary Advocate, May, 1864.
2. Johnson (trans. and ed.), Early Life of Eric Norelius, 1833-1862, p. 100.

Brodberg served for a time as assistant to Hedstrom.[1] In the archives of the Immanuel Church, in Brooklyn, there are also found "Methodist Hymns (with Supplement)," and "Methodist Hymns and Ritual", editions of the 1849 Methodist Hymnal, the standard one of the period.[2] With the introduction of services in English at the Bethel Ship the majestic creations of Wallin were transplanted by the experiential products of the Wesleys.

Churches of the frontier tradition in America, and a mission of the type of that conducted by Hedstrom, were not likely to regard a liturgical service with much affection or appreciation, wherein we find illustrated a further stage in the process of cross-fertilization. The formal and ordered arrangement of the service gave way to the free and the spontaneous. For all of that Hedstrom did not completely discard the Swedish liturgy, to which he

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1. Psalmer och Sånger för Enskild och offentlig Uppbyggelse, Cincinnati, 1862. The copy of this hymnal, in the Immanuel Church archives, belonged to Mr. Charles Gustafson, and was donated to the library by Mr. and Mrs. Edvard Gustafson, of Hartford, Connecticut (March 15, 1936).
2. On the outside cover of "Methodist Hymns and Ritual" the words "Bethel Ship John Wesley" are stamped in gilded letters. On the fly-leaf there is written "Property of the Bethel Ship John Wesley Pier 11 North River New York" (in Hedstrom's handwriting, I believe). At the top of the first printed page the name of "Mrs. Caroline Hedstrom" is written in blue pencil.

had been accustomed in his younger years, at least not in the early period of his Mission, for Eric Norelius has recorded that at the service he attended on the Bethel Ship in the fall of 1850, "the Swedish Lutheran order of service was used to some extent."[1] To Nedstrom, however, liturgy remained very much a secondary and rather unimportant matter. When on his visit to Sweden in 1865 he was asked by a priest of the State Church to conduct the entire high mass he firmly refused to lead the congregation in the altar service, limiting himself to the sermon, which so gripped the priest in charge, according to report, that he in turn forgot to carry out the part of the service which was left to him.[2] In his spiritual nature Nedstrom no doubt retained some strands of the Lutheran tradition of his early years, but a far greater number were woven into the completed fabric by his experience and associations within the American Methodist Episcopal Church.

Rev. H. Olson, who assisted Nedstrom at the Bethel Ship in the early years, also taking part in the initial Methodist efforts in Brooklyn, has

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1. Johnson (trans. and ed.), op. cit., page 106.
2. Quoted by Witting, page 159.

left the following personal characterization of Nodstrom:

> "He had, to be sure, no academic learning, but he had learned much in the school of the Holy Spirit. He was endowed with great natural gifts, both as a preacher and a thinker. He had a good head and a warm heart. Although he was to a marked degree sincere and zealous in religious matters, it can not be said that he was fanatical. His warning words to the unconverted, his comforting words to the seeking, and his exhortation of seriousness to the believers were always given directly to the heart. Whether speaking publicly or privately, it was convincingly clear that personal experience lay back of what he spoke and he gave the clearest impression of being a sanctified character, a chosen servant of the Lord having a strong faith and simple trust in God, and completely dedicated to the work entrusted to his hands. He was a revivalist preacher and could appear bold as a lion; at the same time he was mild as a mother, humble and retiring as a child. . . After reading his text and before beginning to preach he was wont to say: 'Every soul that has grace and life in God, knows what this means.' He considered that a conversion rendered an individual spiritual enlightenment to understand the Word aright in the matter of salvation, and that this is what is learned in the school of the Holy Spirit. This was his own personal experience. . . Concerning the manner of preaching he stated on one occasion: 'To preach in a monotone lulls the audience to sleep; they are kept awake and interested by serving occasional clashes of thunder and piercing flashes of lightning.' . . . Nodstrom was by no means phlegmatic, nor did he inject humor into his preaching, but smiles and tears could often be noticed among the hearers, because of the holy earnestness which ruled him, and the power of the word which he spoke, probing into the depths of soul to such an extent that it could be seen, heard and felt." 1

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1. S, April 18, 1895.

I. The Transfer to Brooklyn

The Bethel Ship Mission was to continue in New York City until 1875, and although Hedstrom practically dominated the church scene among the Swedish element in the great metropolis during the greater part of three decades, he did not hold the field entirely alone. There was destined to grow up in Brooklyn a congregation which, although it had its roots directly in the Bethel Ship enterprise, at the first may have been eyed by Hedstrom with a trace of suspicion. But of greater importance were the efforts on the part of other religious leaders to establish work among the Swedish populace. To these two matters we now turn our attention.

With the evidence which is at hand it is impossible to state with accuracy just when the Swedish Methodist work in Brooklyn, under the auspices of the Bethel Ship, was initiated. Witting writes that the first of two Bethel Ship classes consisted chiefly of sailors and had its headquarters at the boat; the second class was made up of individuals residing in Brooklyn, and with Johan Alfred Borgner as the class leader, had meetings as early as

1846. During several years the meetings were held on Tuesday evenings in the Fleet Street Methodist Church. The same writer adds that Hedstrom considered this group as "the apple of the eye of the Bethel Ship".[1] That these meetings were in progress in the early fifties is gathered from a reference to the same in Newman's autobiography.[2] Other sources, which on this point are very likely less reliable, give 1866 as the date for the first efforts in Brooklyn.[3] There can be no doubt that the class in Brooklyn (and the congregation which developed out of it) was an organic part of the Bethel Ship enterprise and as much to be designated by the title "The First North River Bethel Society" as the group which congregated at the Ship's Mission, and which with its cessation in 1878 lost official standing. That the two projects must be considered as a unit is also attested by the wording in a report (of 1871) of the Missionary Society:

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1. Witting, pp. 406-407.
2. Newman, op. cit., p. 88.
3. LWW, p. 342. Cf., also, the article by "An Old Christian Veteran", previously referred to.

"The Bethel Ship has, in addition to her open doors every day, a church (45 x 75') nearly ready for dedication in the city of Brooklyn, which is to cost, when completed, $35,000.00 It is a model of neatness and beauty."[1]

At all events, in 1866, the Brooklyn contingent, under the leadership of Olof Holland, an assistant to Hedstrom, held services in a rented hall at Atlantic and Fifth Avenues. Later, a plot of ground on Pacific Street, near Fifth Avenue, was purchased in the name of "The First North River Bethel Society". Dedication of this first church home took place March 29, 1868. When this building proved too small, a new property, on Dean Street near Fifth Avenue (the present location of the Immanuel Swedish Methodist Episcopal Church), was secured, again in the name of the Society as given above, and the new temple was dedicated May 19, 1872. Though Hedstrom may have been lukewarm in his attitude toward the Brooklyn undertaking at the first, his view of the matter must certainly have changed, for he enlisted with much enthusiasm in the work of gathering funds for both of these church buildings.[2]

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1. ARMS, 1871, pp. 122-125.
2. A Book of Remembrance, p. 11; Wallenius and Olson, op. cit., pp. 14-15.

On January 18, 1933, an application was made to change the name of the church from "The First North River Bethel Society" to "Immanuel Swedish Methodist Episcopal Church." The application for change of name contained the following statement:

> "That at the time the Society worshipped in a 'Bethel', altered from a sailing vessel, which was moored at a pier in the City of New York, and its efforts were directed toward the religious instruction of Scandinavian seamen arriving at the Port of New York, that such work continued for many years, that in consequence of the settlement of many Swedes in this vicinity the said Society purchased lots in the City of Brooklyn, and erected a church building thereon for the use and benefit of said Swedish residents, and divine service has ever since been conducted there.
>
> "That said place is now the only place in which religious worship is conducted under the auspices of this Society, the religious service in a Bethel in the City and Harbour of New York having been discontinued by this Society.
>
> "That in consequence thereof the name of this Society has ceased to be appropriate or suggestive and is inconvenient."[1]

The application was signed by John A. Ringholm, secretary, and an order was made by the Supreme Court on February 6, 1933, ordering a change of name in accordance with the application. Accordingly, the present Immanuel Swedish Methodist Episcopal Church, in Brooklyn, stands in direct succes-

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1. New York County Clerk's Records. S, December 4, 1930. Copies of deeds, etc., are filed in the archives of the Immanuel Church.

sion with the original congregation of the Bethel Ship, and has every right to its claim of being the oldest religious organization of Swedish origin in the country.[1]

J. Early Competitors of Hedstrom

Although Hedstrom, with his Bethel Ship Mission, took the lead in the religious work among the Swedish element in New York from 1845 and on through the greater part of three decades, he did not hold the field without competition. As early as 1849 he received his first rival, in the person of Carl Petter Agrelius, a former curate in Polarne, Småland. In a letter to the editor of Östgöta Correspondenten, dated April 14, 1849, Agrelius told of how he came to New York from Boston the previous October, intending to go to Wisconsin to begin pastoral work among the Scandinavians of that state. The situation in New York caused some change in his plans. The letter stated:

> "When I arrived in New York I learned of a man by the name of Hedstrom, formerly a tailor, who preached in the Swedish language and in his confession of faith was a Methodist. He lacked preparatory training and was intolerant, and for that reason the more enlightened among the Scandinavians were not satisfied. Desires were ex-

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1. I.e., of churches born out of the nineteenth century immigration.

> pressed that an ordained priest might settle in New York, to preach in accordance with the Lutheran confessions. This gave me occasion to remain, and last November I began to preach in a small hall belonging to Mr. Sundström, at Carlisle Street, in December going to a larger hall in the Bowery, where services have since been held. This Sundström, a sail-maker, a prosperous and honorable man, can be considered the founder of the Scandinavian congregation, for he has untiringly gathered paying members. The number of contributors has now reached sixty. Each subscriber has promised to pay 12½ cents, or an English shilling, per week. . . The annual dues are accordingly 6½ dollars. The money thus gathered is sufficient to pay the rental of the church hall. Captains of ships from the Scandinavian lands have begun to make free-will gifts to the Scandinavian Church in order that the seamen may attend the services."

Agrelius was rather boastful in his letter concerning the bright prospects he entertained for his church: organization had been effected, the $75.00 organ was played by a member of the nobility named Funchjelm, an emigrant committee had been named, funds for a church building were expected from the Americans, and the speaking and the singing society was expected to further the spirit of enlightenment and humanity.[1] The effort of Agrelius, however, was far from successful, and within a short time he

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1. Östgötha Correspondenten, July 4, 1840.

made approaches to the very individual whom he had previously sought to belittle, and joined him as his assistant,[1] later, in 1850, becoming a colaborer with Jonas Hedstrom in Illinois, and experiencing some of the trials of frontier life.[2]

In Jacob Bredberg, Hedstrom had an assistant who proved none too stable, as his later career showed, and having come to America from Sweden as an ordained Lutheran priest he might easily have become a competitor of Hedstrom, had the New York situation been different. That Bredberg was not entirely in sympathy with the work of his employer, or in accord with his views, is gathered from letters which he wrote to Eric Norelius, the young Lutheran who at the time was preparing himself for ordination, and whom he had met in New York when the latter was there on a visit. Under date of February 9, 1854, Bredberg wrote:

> "I have recently completed a translation of Smith's 'Reason for Becoming a Methodist'. . . Now I am busy with Nelson's Journal. Moreover I have translated several tracts (10 or 12), and sermons of Wesley, so Hedstrom believes me to be very industrious. Between times I read proofs from the printer,

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1. Witting, pp. 205-209.
2. Norrlands Posten, June 27, 1850.

> and am thus working much for the Methodist Church, for they have difficulty in finding those who can do these things. . . Methodism here sails under a Lutheran flag. I have spoken to many who don't believe otherwise, and who are much opposed to change their teaching in the least. A good Lutheran preacher would win delight among the Swedes here." 1

Toward the close of the year Bredberg wrote again:

> ". . . I would be happy in doing this translating here were it not so one-sidedly Methodistic. . . Our countrymen need instruction, for they are very ignorant . . . Here things are about the same - much disputing between the Lutherans and Methodists, but I fear that they battle over trifles. . . I have withdrawn with my family, but go to the Bethel Ship to take care of correspondence." 2

It is doubtful if the Swedish Lutherans ever experienced greater difficulty in founding a congregation than they did in New York City. The group of pastors in the west who were organized into the Mississippi Conference mentioned the great metropolis as early as 1858 as one of the fields to which attention should be directed and appointed Erland Carlsson and Eric Norelius the committee to consider

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1. Bredberg to Norelius, New York, February 9, 1854; Swedish Historical Society Yearbook, 1923-1924.
2. Bredberg to Norelius, Jersey City, November 16, 1854; Swedish Historical Society Yearbook, 1923-1924.

the problem.[1] The next year the committee could report that through correspondence they had learned that there were those in New York who believed a Lutheran congregation could be formed "if a suitable teacher were sent".[2] S. G. Larson sought to gather the Swedes in New York who had Lutheran sympathies when he was stationed there during part of 1859, but he sensed the difficulties of the work with an active missionary of another denomination on the field far ahead of him. To his confreres in the west Larson wrote telling of the necessity of having a Lutheran emigrant missionary and pastor in New York. It was plain to him that Hedstrom directed the newcomers to his own friends in the west that they might come under their influence, and no one but the Bethel Ship pastor could have been meant with the following words:

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1. Protokoll, Mississippi Conference, December 6-8, 1858, Tidskrift, p. 103. The Mississippi Conference comprised a group of Swedish Lutheran pastors in Illinois, organized in January, 1853. This group, together with the Chicago Conference, led to the formation of the Augustana Synod in 1860.
2. Ibid., June 1-4, 1859, p. 109.

> "They also know how to preach with a certain fiery zeal, in order that they may stir up the emotions of the hearers; and many are doubtlessly simple enough to believe that these are better preachers and better Christians than others, and consequently led to believe that their teaching is the best and purest."[1]

When J. G. Pehrson, a luckless individual who organized the Swedish Lutheran St. Petri Church in New York, early in the fifties (only to have it die), sought permission from the Commissioner of Emigrants to serve as immigrant missionary, he learned that there were already two (a Swede and a Norwegian) employed [evidently Hedstrom and Petersen], that they were salaried, and apparently didn't want others to interfere. He found that the Methodists were old and well known there and that they had always had permission to visit their countrymen.[2] Although there were early Lutheran defections from the fold of Hedstrom,

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1. Article on the need of having a Scandinavian Lutheran teacher in New York, signed by S. G. L[arson], Hemlandet, February 15, 1859. L. P. Esbjorn had visited New York in 1851, and T. N. Hasselquist in 1854. Cf., Norelius, I, p. 522.
2. Unsigned letter to Hasselquist, New York, July 8, 1862. "Pastor Pehrson, N. Y." has been written in the margin. It is quite likely that Pehrson was at first associated with Hedstrom, and then broke away to conduct services of his own. At least there is an allusion to this by Esbjorn in his letter to Carlsson, Andover, Illinois, July 11, 1854. Tidskrift, 1899, 4, p. 265.

which caused the Bethel Ship missionary grave concern, the Lutheran efforts were lacking in permanency, largely because of the want of good leadership.[1]

T. N. Hasselquist officially called the attention of the Augustana Synod to the importance of doing missionary work in New York City when that body met at Vasa, Minnesota, in June, 1862.[2] Great difficulty was experienced in getting anyone to take up the work on the field. The several who spent time in New York City before the first regular pastor was stationed there[3] came to see that the Methodists had a great advantage in having been the first to conduct work in this most strategic place. There was evidently in New York, however, a group who did not

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1. Palmqvist to Wiberg, New York, January 13, 1855; SMB, II, p. 275.
2. Augustana Synod Minutes, 1862, p. 6. Andreen, The Early Missionary Work of the Augustana Synod in New York City, 1855-1866, AHSP, II, pp. 1-26.
3. Rev. Axel Waetter, who came to the Gustavus Adolphus Church in 1863, is considered the first regularly called resident pastor. Rev. K. Karlen had served the church previously for a while, but the connection was soon severed, because of the preaching of false doctrine. Karlen later returned to Sweden, entering the Catholic Church. Cf., Brofdufvan, 1865-1915.

at all favor Hedstrom's revivalistic methods and who were also distant to any läsare spirit displayed by the preachers sent them by the Augustana Synod leaders.[1] A. Andreen found that the sects "were swarming" in New York.[2] In the same letter which reflects that he is heavy-hearted in the work mention is made of a visit to the Bethel Ship; it is quite likely that this visit made Andreen sense the more the handicap which faced the Lutherans.[3] It became clear to Andreen that the Methodists enjoyed an advantage in having a city colporteur; Bergner, who had died the previous

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1. Lindgren to Hasselquist, New York, December 24, 1865. Lindgren was plainly an "old Lutheran" of a strictly confessional type. Lagerstrom to Hasselquist, New York, December 20, 1866; January 4, August 5, 1867. In the second of these letters Lagerstrom complained of the worldliness of the Lutheran group in New York, saying they detested everything which savored of "läseri". To succeed in New York the leader "must be priestly". C. O. Ehltgren to Hasselquist, New York, October 29, 1866. Lagerstrom learned that it was best to omit the Sunday evening and Thursday evening services, inasmuch as it was only "the churches of the läsare, such as the Bethel Ship, which had services in the evenings." Lagerstrom to Hasselquist, New York, May 14, 1867.
2. Andreen to Hasselquist, New York, September 16, 1865.
3. Andreen to Hasselquist, New York, August 6, 1866.

summer after seventeen years spent in this form of labor, "perhaps. . . has done more than Hedstrom to gather people around the Bethel Ship."[1] Negotiations were made with the City Mission to employ a Lutheran for like work and Andreen suggested J. C. Lagerstrom for the position. Erland Carlsson and Hasselquist were slow in acting on the suggestion, however, and Lagerstrom finally arrived only to learn that the Methodists and Baptists, hearing of the Lutheran activity, had come with five applications to the City Mission, with the result that no one from any denomination was appointed.[2] Lagerstrom, in taking up the work after Andreen, also experienced the difficulties attendant upon competition; he had heard it said that "Hedstrom had given a warning from the pulpit not to go to the Swedish Lutheran Church and by all means not to contribute to it,

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1. Andreen to Hasselquist, New York, October 3, 1866.
2. Ibid. Also, Andreen to Hasselquist, New York, October 13, 1866; C. O. Hultgren to Hasselquist, New York, November 14, 1866; J. C. Lagerstrom to Hasselquist, New York, December 10, 13, 18, 20, 1866.

for such would be guilt money and would go down to hell."[1] J. W. Kindberg found that because of the fact that the church which had been built by the Lutherans was so far uptown, and that there was no missionary to advise the newcomers of its location, the natural result was that "the Methodists and the Baptists lead all to their churches and make them ill-disposed toward our Synod.[2]

The state of affairs in New York proved most aggravating to the Lutherans. Although the Gustavus Adolphus Church (Lutheran) later came to have the commanding position among the Swedish element in the metropolis, certainly in the early period Hedstrom and the Bethel Ship exerted the greater influence. There was a good measure of truth in the words penned in a Lutheran periodical:

> "The Methodists have taken care of them [the Swedish immigrants in New York] while the Lutherans were sleeping. . . Having become Methodists they are beyond the influence of a Lutheran organization."[3]

The first Swedish Baptist preacher to labor in New York also found Hedstrom firmly entrenched in

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1. Lagerstrom to Hasselquist, New York, February 27, 1867.
2. Kindberg to Hasselquist, Philadelphia, November 15, 1869.
3. Quoted in ARMS, 1862, pp. 77-79.

his work. The foundations of the Swedish Baptist church organisation were laid in Illinois in 1852 and 1853, with Gustaf Palmquist at the head. Anders Wiberg, another outstanding leader of this communion, also came to America in 1852, and joined the First Baptist Mariners' Church in New York City, October 15, 1852.[1] In this city he carried on the work of a colporteur and gathered those of like belief with him together for the first Swedish Baptist services in the city. However, he too found that the field was already occupied:

> "I continue with my Wednesday evening gatherings, although I have but few hearers. The greatest group, as you know, is already taken up in the Bethel Ship congregation. However, at times I have a few auditors from the Methodists."[2]

A fourth religious movement among the Swedish people began in the late seventies. This was of a hyper-evangelical nature and the adherents became known as Mission Friends. This development grew out of a Lutheran setting and was furthered by the Läsare. By the time the movement was crystallising, however, the Bethel Ship Mission had been brought to a close.

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1. SBB, pp. 60 ff.
2. Wiberg to Palmquist, New York, March 18, 1853, SBB, pp. 324-326.

K. The Close of the Bethel Ship Mission

Hodstrom's days of activity were drawing to a close. Dano-Norwegian work had been initiated in Brooklyn and the General Conference of 1876 legislated (?) that the Dano-Norwegian mission should take over the work among the seamen, and with it the Bethel Ship.[1] In August (11 or 12), of that year, the Bethel Ship was removed to Brooklyn, and harbored at the foot of Harrison Street. Here it remained until 1879 when it was secured for a mission church for the "Canal Boatmen", in Jersey City, New Jersey, the $300.00 received for it going to the Dano-Norwegian congregation.[2]

The final destiny of the old ship is made

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1. Statements to this effect have been made by the Dano-Norwegian writers listed below. A search in JGC, 1876, however, fails to reveal any references that the General Conference passed legislation in regard to the same.
2. Haagensen, Den Norsk-Danske Methodismes Historie, pp. 193-194; Seaman, op. cit., pp. 398-399; Eltsholtz, Livsbilleder af Pastor C. P. Petersen, p. 251; Johansen (ed.), Bethelskib Norske Methodistmenighed, Femti Aars Jubilaeet, p. 8. Hodstrom, it seems, was not entirely in sympathy with the course which was taken in the division of the work. He has been made the object of mild criticism on the part of the Norwegian writers.

known in a New York daily:

> "The old Bethel Ship, John Wesley, which for many years had been used for mission work at Fifteenth st., and was patronized by boatmen principally, was sold yesterday at auction for $205.15. This included the altar, bell, pews and the old blue Bethel flag."[1]

If the following words, penned by Hedstrom in 1863, expressed the Bethel Ship missionary's estimate of his work at that time, they could with increased meaningfulness be applied when the Mission was brought to its close some years later:

> "I can see how wonderfully God has led His work. Little did I think when God and the Church called me to the holy office of the ministry, twenty-nine years ago, that after ten years of preaching in English to Americans, He should send

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1. New York Tribune, October 31, 1880. In a letter written by Andrew G. Johnson, New York, April, 1884, and preserved in the office of the Christian Advocate, the following is stated: "Our blessed church. . . did a great mistake when she took the Bethel Ship from us Swedes in New York City without giving us something equivalent and when she sent away to Chicago Rev. D. S. Sorlin, the only Swede missionary in this city after Hedstrom's death and left the Swedes to themselves for six long years until I was sent in September, 1881, from the Northwest Swedish Conference by Bishop Cyrus D. Foss." It may also be of interest to mention that C. S. Smith, in a letter to the Christian Advocate, March 29, 1920, states that the old Bethel Ship Mission inspired him to begin activities among merchant seamen, which, in turn, led to the creation of the Bethel-Ship Seamen's Mission. For a time the work was carried on under the auspices of the Bethel Ship Norwegian Methodist Church, in Brooklyn. In 1918 it was taken over by the Y.M.C.A. of Brooklyn, and developed into the first Seamen's Y.M.C.A. in the world. Smith's father had been converted on the Bethel Ship and later served as a pastor in the Swedish Methodist Church.

me to New York to preach to my countrymen, and in Swedish, which I at that time had not used for twenty years. But that was the will and the way of the Lord with me. He has always come to my help, and in greatest humility I thank and praise Him that the work has not been in vain. Hundreds have received the Word, and sought and found the Lord; and time and again the Lord has called and prepared one messenger after another, so that we can now rejoice with thousands of living souls in America, Denmark, Sweden and Norway, who no longer walk in the paths of sin, but as living Christians. Praised be the Lord. Amen."[1]

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1. S, December 1, 1863.

CHAPTER VI

MISSIONARY EFFORTS AND INFLUENCE

MISSIONARY EFFORTS AND INFLUENCE

A. Introduction

Although the Bethel Ship Mission in its spiritual and social phases must be considered the chief work in the life of Olof Gustaf Hedstrom, no account of him would be complete which did not survey and evaluate his efforts in the direction of the establishment and promotion of mission work, both in this country and across the seas. His influence in the advancement of the missionary cause among the Methodists is far greater than one would consider possible for an individual who for the most part of his career was definitely stationed at a ship mission by a New York pier, serving as the friendly helper of thousands of his countrymen.

B. Influence in Directing Immigration Westward

As we have noted previously, Jonas Hedstrom came to this country in 1833, in the company of his brother, and after spending a few years in the east journeyed to Illinois in 1837, settling first at

Farmington, Fulton County, and later at Victoria, Knox County,[1] where with a few friends he formed the nucleus of a rather large Swedish colony established in that locality in 1846 and the years following.[2] In 1845 Olof Olson came to America as the advance agent of the ill-fated religious fanatic Eric Janson, who was to establish a communistic colony at Bishop Hill, Illinois, and with wife and children was cared for by Nedstrom on the Bethel Ship. Under Nedstrom's influence Olson joined the Methodist communion. He proceeded to Illinois to begin his prospecting tour in behalf of the Jansonists, and there he was hospitably received by Jonas Nedstrom.[3] Evidently, however, he didn't help to strengthen the Methodist plans of the younger Nedstrom, for he is reputed to have rejoined the Jannonist ranks when the leader arrived at Victoria, infuriated to know of his former disciple's apostasy.[4] However, large numbers of

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1. LWW, p. 166; Witting, p. 174.
2. Flom, The Early Swedish Immigration to Iowa, Iowa Journal of History and Politics, October, 1905.
3. Mikkelsen, op. cit., pp. 26-27; Johnson and Peterson, Svenskarna i Illinois, Historiska Anteckningar, p. 27; Witting, pp. 104-105.
4. Witting, pp. 176-177, fn.

immigrants from Sweden were directed by Olof Gustaf Hedstrom at New York to make their way to Victoria, Illinois, and so it was through his influence that such a large share of Swedish settlers sought the western territory in the later forties, a factor which gave direction to Swedish migration for a decade more.[1]

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1. Flen, op. cit., p. 591. It is of course impossible to determine with exactitude the influence of Hedstrom in directing Swedish immigration westward, but it is certain that his advice was heeded in a large number of instances, both in relation to individuals and families. Mention may be made that Hedstrom directed Christian Jönson to visit Knox County, Illinois, when the latter made a "scouting expedition" to America in 1848. Emigration from his home province in Sweden began in numbers three years later. Norelius, I, pp. 49-50. Eric Shogren, coming to America in 1849, was attracted to Hedstrom, and was easily persuaded to go on to Victoria, Illinois; there he affiliated with the Swedish Methodists, later becoming one of their foremost preachers. Olson, History of the Swedes in Illinois, I, p. 368. When Eric Sandman came to America in 1850 he was advised by the Bethel Ship missionary to go to Illinois or Iowa. This he did, was converted to the Methodist faith, and in writing home to his friends urged them to make the acquaintance of Hedstrom when coming to New York. Hudikswalls Weckoblad, June 1, September 21, 1850. For further details on Hedstrom's influence on the westward course of immigration see AHSS, 1946, pp. 94-96; 1950, pp. 76-79.

Jonas Hedstrom had been named an exhorter and a local preacher in the Methodist church soon after his arrival in Illinois, and when he learned from his brother of the establishment of the Bethel Ship Mission and of the anticipated heavy immigration from Sweden, he hastened to prepare himself for Swedish preaching. December 15, 1846, marks the date of his initial Swedish sermon and also of the organization of the Swedish Methodist Church at Victoria.[1] representing a missionary effort in which the elder Hedstrom had certainly played a very definite part.

C. Missionary Journeys, 1851-1853

A brief missionary journey was made by the elder Hedstrom in June, 1851, to Jamestown, New York, and Sugar Grove and Chandlers Valley, Pennsylvania, in which section Swedes were then settling and where a very influential colony was destined to grow. In Jamestown Hedstrom preached in the home of Samuel Sjöstrand, on Barrows Street, to an audience of twelve. Sjöstrand was converted at this service, became a member of the American Methodist church,

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1. Witting, pp. 174-176, 178; ARMS, 1850, pp. 76-79.

was named an exhorter, and, assisted by Andrew Peterson and John Larson, began to conduct services for his countrymen. At Sugar Grove Hedstrom is reputed to have organized a congregation on the same missionary journey, and land for the future church was donated by Gerrard Johnson.[1]

Hedstrom conducted a more extended missionary journey toward the close of 1852 and early in 1853, continuing westward to Chicago. This trip was made following an appointment of Hedstrom by Bishop Waugh to make a visit to the Swedes, Norwegians and Danes which were settling in the west and the northwest.[2] He left New York on October 27, and his plans included a visit to his brother

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1. Minnesalbum, Första Svenska Metodist Kyrkan, Jamestown, New York (one published at the fiftieth anniversary and one at the seventy-fifth); Minnesalbum, Första Lutherska Församlingen, Jamestown, New York, p. 13; LWW, pp. 297, 299; Witting, pp. 405-406. Hedstrom refers to his 1851 visit to this section in CAJ, December 7, 1852. Both LWW and Witting state that the church subsequently built at Sugar Grove through some error or misunderstanding fell into the hands of the Lutherans.
2. CAJ, November 25, 1852.

at Victoria, Illinois.[1]

The first stop on this journey was made at Jamestown, New York, where Hedstrom spent several days in profitable work. J. E. Chapin, pastor of the American Methodist church there, addressed a letter (November fourth) to the corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society in which he stated that the first night the newcomer had been attracted to a Swede's home (that of one converted on the previous visit) by singing, and that he had preached to the group with powerful result. Chapin requested that one hundred Bibles (Swedish and English) be sent for the continuation of the work.[2] Hedstrom himself sent an account of the visit to his denominational paper at New York, telling how Mr. Chapin had previously "actually tried to preach to them through an interpreter," and adding, "I have formed a class of twenty-nine members."[3] At a later date (November sixteenth) he wrote of the work both at Sugar Grove

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1. LSW, p. 203; Wigting, p. 349.
2. CAJ, November 25, 1852.
3. CAJ, December 2, 1852.

and Jamestown, of his preaching and the administration of the sacraments, and of two classes totaling fifty-two probationers.[1] T. D. Blin and G. W. Chesbrough advised the readers of the Christian Advocate and Journal (letter of November eighteenth) that when Hedstrom visited Sugar Grove, Swedes came to hear him from all quarters.[2]

The Swedish Methodist Church at Jamestown, accordingly, definitely dates its organization from this visit of Hedstrom. June twenty-second of the following year the congregation was visited by Olof Hanrin, who had come as a seaman to New York in 1849 and had been definitely influenced by Hedstrom on the Bethel Ship. Before his visit to Jamestown Hanrin had preached for a group of countrymen at Buffalo. June twenty-seventh he conducted a service for the Swedish element at Jamestown and by mutual agreement was made leader of the congregation. On August twentieth he was licensed as a local preacher, the first Bethel Ship seaman to be thus commissioned, was admitted on trial at the meeting of the Erie Conference,

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1. CAJ, December 16, 30, 1852.
2. CAJ, December 2, 1852.

at Cleveland, June 20, 1854, but fell victim of cholera and died two days later. Jacob Bredberg and S. B. Newman, both of whom had served with Hedstrom on the Bethel Ship, followed as pastors of the church, the former serving from 1854-1859, and the latter from 1859-1866. B. A. Clarkson succeeded S. B. Newman, and in March, 1869, James Iverson, who for the year past had been associated with Hedstrom as an assistant, assumed leadership of the fold. The congregation at Jamestown -- in the early history of which Hedstrom and the Bethel Ship played so definite a part -- was destined to become one of the strongest in the Swedish Methodist communion.[1]

As has been mentioned above, on this missionary journey organization was also effected at Sugar Grove, which congregation came to be served by the pastors who were stationed at Jamestown. No great growth was marked in this outlying district, although the Methodist activities were

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1. Minnesalbum, Jamestown, pp. 3-4; LWW, pp. 290-291; Witting, pp. 266-268; Newman, op. cit., pp. 175-178. Reports of Bredberg's work at Jamestown and Sugar Grove are published in GAJ, April 12, July 12, 1855, February 11, December 23, 1855.

viewed with alarm by Lutherans living there,[1] and caused grave concern to Rev. Jonas Swensson, who arrived in July, 1856, the pioneer Lutheran pastor in the section.[2]

Leaving the Chautauqua region, Hedstrom journeyed on to visit his brother Jonas at Victoria, Illinois, and also to survey the situation in Chicago. Writing from Victoria to his denominational headquarters, he told of the difficulties of travel, but, above all, of the ex-

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1. Andrew Peter Hållin to Erland Carlsson, undated, but obviously of 1854 or 1855; translation in Lawson, Some Jonas Swensson Items, Augustana Quarterly, April, 1935. In this letter Hållin implores Carlsson to make a visit to Sugar Grove, "... for the sake of God and the souls of men, come to us, for we must seek the lost and guide those who have strayed away, for with the battle over the teaching and religion many here have fallen away to the Methodist sect. But the reason for it all is that we have not had a good shepherd; the blind can not lead the blind." Also, Anders Petter Björk to T. N. Hasselquist, Salem X Road, May 21, 1856; translation in Lawson, Tastes Differed Then, Too, Augustana Quarterly, April, 1936. The letter is exceedingly interesting in showing the reaction of a stubborn high-churchman, very rare even among Lutherans of that period, to the free-churchly extravagances of Eredberg. My translation of lines from Charnquist, presented in the same article, gives the Methodist view of worship, also an interesting sidelight on the Swedish Methodist activities in Jamestown of that period.
2. In addition to my articles listed above, cf., J. Olson Anders, Select Letters to Jonas Swensson, 1856-1858, Swedish-American Historical Bulletin, June, 1928. Erland Carlsson, the pioneer Swedish Lutheran pastor in Chicago, who was in regular correspondence with Swensson, advised him that "the Methodist storm usually passes quickly when left alone."

tent of his preaching mission: he had delivered forty-five sermons in as many days since leaving New York.[1] The closing days of 1852 and the early part of 1853 Hedstrom spent on the field in Chicago, presumably with his brother Jonas in company. Under date of December twenty-seventh he wrote that he had then preached fifty-nine sermons in the sixty-one days he had been absent from New York, and that there in Chicago he had "preached in the church of Mr. Anderson -- a Lutheran or Episcopalian clergyman," (December twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh) to a crowded house. He added: ". . . so powerfully was the word applied by the spirit, that the greater part were melted down before the Lord. . . At one point out here, where there had been most unjustifiable opposition made to our society, nineteen souls have been united in a society." He decried proselyting among his converts, and concluded with the expression of a fond hope: "I trust that the good work which has been commenced

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1. CAJ, January 6, 1853.

among my countrymen in this land will not cease until its influence shall have further awakened and converted all in the fatherland.[1] Andersen hardly shared Hedstrom's sentiments. He viewed the visiting New Yorker with suspicion and wrote to his friend Hasselquist that the Methodists were carrying on like "half-galne fanatiker" (half-crazy fanatics).[2]

The church situation among the Scandinavian element in Chicago was from the beginning in a rather confused state. A Gustaf Smith, who came to the colony in the fall of 1847, organized a Lutheran congregation and initiated a building program on Superior Street, proved to be an arch swindler. Paul Andersen, trained a Presbyterian, became the leader of the Norwegian element in the winter of 1848, at the same time allying himself with the Franckean Synod (New York), and he and his followers took over the building left by Smith. With this turn of

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1. Ibid., January 20, 1853. The "Mr. Anderson" referred to was Rev. Paul Andersen, pioneer Lutheran pastor among the Norwegians in Chicago.
2. Andersen to Hasselquist, Chicago, December 27, 1852.

events a Swedish element turned to Gustaf Unonius, who had been ordained a priest in the Protestant Episcopal church; under his guidance a Scandinavian congregation (Kyrkoförsamling) was organized in March, 1849, given the name St. Ansgarius, and was under Episcopal jurisdiction. With a group of immigrants who came to Chicago in the summer of 1852 was found the nucleus for a renewed attempt to establish a Swedish Lutheran church and under the leadership of Hasselquist, who had but recently come from Sweden, organisation was effected in January, 1853, although the group had to wait until August of that year before the arrival of Erland Carlsson to serve as permanent pastor.[1] It is quite evident that both Unonius and Rodstrom were in Hasselquist's mind when the latter on his visit of January, 1853, to the Swedish nucleus preached on the text

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1. Svenska Evang. Lutherska Emmaus Församlingen i Chicago, Ill., Korsbanerot, 1881, pp. 75 ff. The history of this church was continued in the issues of 1882 and 1883. A graphic picture of the conditions during this early period in Chicago is given in Andersen's reports to the American Home Missionary Society. These reports, found in the Augustana College archives, have been published in AHSP, V, pp. 35 ff.

of Jeremiah 6.16, and warned them to observe "Christian caution in regard to foreign religious groups."[1] Definite reference was made to Hedstrom in a letter Hasselquist wrote home to his wife: "Hedstrom with others have been on this place for some time and have even organised a Methodist congregation; how large it is, I do not know. The Swedish Lutheran Church, being without a pastor, is in grave danger.[2] In St. Charles, also, Hasselquist found that the Methodists had launched very definite efforts in the direction of church organisation.[3]

The Swedish Methodist Church in Chicago considers that its origin dates back to the visit of Hedstrom in that city, in December, 1852.

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1. Hasselquist to P. Fjellstedt, Chicago, January 17, 1853, quoted in Norelius, I, pp. 370-371.
2. Hasselquist to Mrs. Hasselquist, Chicago, January 18, 1853, quoted in Norelius, I, pp. 371-372.
3. Hasselquist to Mrs. Hasselquist, Chicago, January 29, 1853, quoted in Norelius, I, p. 372. Cf., also, Witting, pp. 226-226. In May of the same year Hasselquist was again in Chicago and then received a letter from D. G. P. Bergenlund, serving the Lutheran Church at Sugar Grove, urging him to journey there soon, inasmuch as Hedstrom from New York was expected on that field again. Hasselquist to Mrs. Hasselquist, Chicago, May 25, 1853, quoted in Norelius, I, pp. 372-373; also, Norelius, T. N. Hasselquist, pp. 41-44.

When Andersson's church was closed to the missionary from New York he conducted services at the Seamen's Bethel Chapel on Wells Street and when he returned to New York in January his brother James remained in Chicago for a brief while to supervise the work. About seventy-five individuals had seen fit to ally themselves with Hedstrom's project in December, though there were no doubt many defections from the ranks when the leader returned to his work in the east. It was Hedstrom's plan, however, to place his Bethel Ship assistant in charge of the newly established work, and S. D. Newman arrived in the mid-western city January 21, 1853, and preached to the group for the first time two days later.[1] Newman not only served the congregation in Chicago but also engaged in home missionary work in the surrounding region. The brothers Hedstrom visited the Chicago mission in September, 1853, which at that time counted 153 members on trial. Services were conducted in the Bethel Chapel until the congregation was able to erect its own church in 1854, and Olof Gustaf Hedstrom was called to come from New York

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1. Nylin, The History of Swedish Methodism in Chicago, (M.A. thesis); Minnesalbum, Första Svenska Metodist Kyrkan i Chicago, Ill., pp. 709; LWW, pp. 208 ff.; Witting, pp. 349 ff.

to give the address at the dedication service on the last Sunday in September of the church founded directly through his own missionary labors.[1]

Eric Shogren assumed leadership of the church in 1855, and served four years, when Jacob Bredberg, of whom we have heard before, was named pastor. He did not remain in this position long, however, for in 1861 he went over to the Episcopal fold and became rector of the St. Ansgarius Church in Chicago.[2] Although the congregation suffered a temporary setback because of Bredberg's action, it gained in solidarity and influence under succeeding pastors.[3]

Leaders of the American Methodist church could not help being favorably impressed by the progress of the missions among the Swedish people and saw in the growing settlements attractive areas for their work. The Swedish immigrants were nominally Lutherans -- and by far the majority remained faithful to that communion -- yet they were considered by the Methodist leaders as a fertile and legitimate field for missionary endeavors, a work made difficult, however, "on account of the deep-rooted

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1. Newman, op. cit., pp. 113-164. OAJ, November 30, 1854.
2. Wordsworth, The National Church of Sweden, pp. 402 ff., Stephenson, op. cit., p. 213.
3. Minnesalbum, pp. 9-10.

formalities of the old dead State Church of Sweden,"[1] which in the eyes of the Methodists seemed still to afflict the newcomers. John Chandler, superintendent of Swedish missions in the Rock River Conference (Illinois) stated that ten missionaries could profitably be used in that area.[2] T. M. Fullerton of the Wisconsin Conference wrote enthusiastically of the recent arrivals: "May it not be that God is scattering them all over the fertile plains as a substance peculiarly susceptible of the divine leaven, and by this means may he not be intending to renovate the American church?"[3] Denominational headquarters advised the Swedish missionaries that Porter's "Compendium of Methodism", Wesley's "Christian Perfection" and other Methodist classics were available in Swedish versions.[4] In addition to what has already been stated of Nordstrom's relations to the missionary efforts in the

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1. Statement quoted in ARMS, 1852, pp. 62-65.
2. John Chandler to J. P. Durbin, CAJ, August 10, 1853.
3. T. M. Fullerton to Willerup, CAJ, June 9, 1853.
4. CAJ, April 22, 1853.

west -- and he undertook another missionary journey in 1858[1] -- it must be borne in mind that he exerted a decided influence through the medium of those who gained some practice of leadership with him on the Bethel Ship as well as by the avenue of the thousands with whom he came into contact as immigrant missionary. With the Bethel Ship in New York, and a growing congregation in Chicago, the Methodists occupied two strategic points. The fruits of the missionary's labors were felt westward even to distant St. Paul, for the Scandinavian contingent made very active contributions to the religious revival in the First Methodist Episcopal Church in that city, and "directly or indirectly the conversion of the leaders of this contingent was due to the influence of Olof Gustaf Hedstrom." "Holy Peter" (Ole P. Peterson) was one of the flaming torches in this movement.[2]

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1. CAJ, December 8, 23, 1858. Of the results of Hedstrom's first missionary journey to the West Bishop Waugh stated: "His visit was followed by an enlargement of the work, and by arrangements for its more systematic prosecution." AHSS, 1864, pp. 67-71.
2. Anders, The Origin and History of Swedish Religious Organizations in Minnesota, 1853-1905, p. 11. Thomas M. Fullerton, Sketch of Scandinavian Missions (MS). Hobart, History of Methodism in Minnesota, pp. 116-119, 199-210.

D. Missionary Work in the East

Conclusively, then, Hedstrom was a very definite and vital power in relation to the home missionary work in the west; the settling of the Swedish immigrants along the Atlantic seaboard, on the other hand, came at too late a date to be directly influenced by the Bethel Ship missionary. This is seen from the fact that at the time of Hedstrom's death there were in the east, besides the Jamestown and Sugar Grove stations, and the Bethel Ship congregation of which he was the founder, with its Brooklyn descendant, only the churches in Dover, New Jersey (1873), and Quinsigamond, Massachusetts (1877), with the former alone traceable to the initiative of Hedstrom and the Bethel Ship.[1] However, Hedstrom did make journeys to Massachusetts, although he did

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1. Witting, pp. 498-501; LMM, pp. 350-352, 363-367. AHMS, 1873, pp. 164-167. F. Agren, the first pastor at Dover, had served on the Bethel Ship as an assistant.

not found any permanent congregations there. He was the first to conduct a Swedish religious service in North Bridgewater (now Brockton), Massachusetts, journeying there from New York in the autumn of 1853,[1] and the following year, having attended the missionary demonstration which was held in Boston, he organized two societies there, one in the city and one in the neighborhood.[2] In Boston, "according to his own statement, he awakened joy among many and consternation among many. The latter plan to initiate Lutheran worship."[3]

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1. Article, Daniel F. Lawson Was Pioneer of Swedish Residents Here, in Brockton Daily Enterprise, April 18, 1933; Norelius, I, p. 772; Lawson, Christina Nilsson's Visit to Brockton, Mass., in November, 1870, Pages from the Early History of the Oldest Swedish Lutheran Church in New England, p. 2.
2. ARMS, 1855, p. 113; Witting, p. 495.
3. Bredberg to Norelius, New York, February 9, 1854, Swedish Historical Society Yearbook, 1923-1924, pp. 93-94.

E. Relations to Dano-Norwegian Methodism

Hedstrom's missionary influence went beyond America, reaching even to Scandinavia and Finland. In our account of the Bethel Ship Mission we have had occasion to mention Ole P. Petersen, who served as assistant to Hedstrom in 1850, and as director of the mission in 1860-1865, during Hedstrom's illness. Hedstrom exerted an unmistakable spiritual influence over this zealous son of Norway; as he did also upon great numbers of Norwegian seamen who frequented the Bethel Ship. Petersen left New York for Norway in May, 1849, and engaged in preaching there until a year later, when upon returning to New York he was made Hedstrom's assistant, and then was appointed missionary to the Norwegians in Iowa. At a meeting of the Foreign German Committee of the Mission Board, held March 16, 1853, Hedstrom called attention to the religious revival in Norway, the fruit of Petersen's visit. A committee was named to bring the subject before the bishops having charge of foreign missions, and on June eighth, Bishop Waugh addressed a letter to Petersen, recalling him from

Iowa, and directing him to report to the corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society as missionary to Norway. There he remained until his return to be in charge of the Bethel Ship, and after 1863 he served Norwegian Methodist groups in various conferences. In May, 1874, the Dano-Norwegian Methodist Church in Brooklyn was organized, with Petersen in charge, and money was appropriated for the work by the Missionary Society, and as we have seen, the Bethel Ship was moved to Brooklyn in August of 1876 to be used in connection with this work. Thus it is apparent that Nedstrom and the Bethel Ship Mission were important factors in the furtherance of Methodist missions both in Norway and among the Dano-Norwegian element in America.[1]

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1. Cf., the works of Hagemann, Eitzholtz, and Johansen, to which reference has previously been made. Eitzholtz, writing on the topic "A Semi-centennial Jubilee", in CA, August 15, 1901, opposes calling Nedstrom the founder of Scandinavian Methodism on the grounds that Petersen was converted on March 2, 1846, while on an ocean journey, and that Willerup was converted in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1844. Although the whole debate concerns itself with an insignificant detail it appears to me that it is with very ample reason that Nedstrom is designated as he is.

F. Influence in Sweden

Methodism made its entry into Sweden as early as 1771, with the establishment of the Societas Svecana pro fide et Christianismo, sponsored by Dr. C. G. Wrangel, who was a personal friend of John Wesley. Samuel Owen, an English engineer, with definite Methodist sympathies, came to Sweden in 1804 and through his offices Joseph Rayner Stephens was appointed pastor for the little flock in 1825. With his return to England in 1829, George Scott, who, as previously noted, endeavored to get Nodstrom to Sweden in 1841, established himself at Stockholm. He left Sweden under pressure in 1842.

The third, and permanent "founding" of Methodism in Sweden can be directly attributed to the Bethel Ship Mission and to Olof Gustaf Nodstrom. The structure was not built by his hands but by men who had heard the gospel preached from his lips so effectively that they had dedicated their lives to the cause he represented. It is not our purpose in this connection to give any detailed account of the rise of Methodism in Sweden, but only to trace Nodstrom's part in the same, through the labors of those whose lives he had influenced

on the Bethel Ship, as well as through his own second and last visit to his home country in 1863.

By the very nature of the case it is quite impossible to trace accurately the influence exerted in the fatherland by returned seamen who "had found new life" on the Bethel Ship. In several reports given in the Christian Advocate and Journal and in Minutes of the Missionary Society Nedstrom refers to letters received from these sailors and early immigrants and one has ample reason to believe that in these lives are found the seeds from which the Methodist church in Sweden eventually grew. Private gatherings were called by these in the manner of the pietists, for prayer, singing, spiritual conversations and mutual edification. Among these early seamen, who from a Bethel Ship experience returned to Sweden to play a part in the formative period of Swedish Methodism, may be mentioned the following: Jonas Ostlund, August Olson, Bengt Björjeson, C. Lovander, John Lindquist, A. M. Graenön and B. A. Carlson.[1] Mention should be made also of

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1. Eriksson, Metodismen i Sverige; Thunström, op. cit., pp. 39-41, 66; Witting, pp. 415, 425, 445, 515 ff.; Stephenson, op. cit., pp. 116-133. Immigrant letters were no doubt an important channel through which free-churchly ideas were carried to Sweden. Alarik Kleifbeck, in his volume on Etiska Idéer i Svensk Frikyrklig Väckelsereligiositet, pp. 41-42, states that the ethical emphases common to free-churchly groups of Anglo-American origin, found their way into Sweden through disciples such as these.

J. P. Larson, converted at the Bethel Ship in 1851, who upon Hedstrom's suggestion was appointed by the Missionary Board as the first missionary to be sent by the Society to his native land, as well as S. M. Svenson, one of the class leaders at the Ship, who during a visit to Sweden in 1855, met with Larson and at once fell into evangelistic efforts.[1]

The labors of these men, however, were for the most part wanting in permanency, though they did stimulate growing interest in the Methodist cause. Methodist converts in Sweden, as well as Hedstrom himself, had turned to Willerup, then in Denmark as superintendent of all Scandinavian missions, with a plea for preachers, and letters were also doubtlessly directed to the Missionary Society headquarters in New York urging that something be done to profit from the growing enthusiasm for Methodism.[2] Two of the three men who were to play dominant roles in the next phase of Swedish Methodist history came out of Hedstrom's "training school", illustrating again that the influence of the Bethel Ship pastor in the direction of establishment of missions was one of dimensions.

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1. Reid, op. cit., pp. 205-206.
2. Eriksson, op. cit., p. 36.

Adolf Cederholm, who had come to America in 1849 and been under Nedstrom's spiritual tutelage, the very man whom he had heard was numbered among "the false prophets", was ordained by Bishop Janes on the Bethel Ship in 1858 as a missionary to Scandinavia, and after spending six years in Norway was appointed to the city of Visby, Gottland, in September, 1864, and served there until his death three years later.[1] Albert Ericson, who was sent to Sweden at the close of 1866 to prepare himself to be an instructor in the proposed Swedish Methodist training school, in America, can be called a direct fruit of Nedstrom's work; however, his enthusiastic labors in Sweden's capital during the early months of 1867 helped to prepare the way for the highly important work of Victor Witting. Witting was impressed by Nedstrom

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1. Autobiography of Rev. A. Cederholm. With a Sketch of his Labors among the Scandinavian Population of the United States and as First Missionary of the M. E. Church in Sweden. Translated from the Swedish and published by Caroline Cederholm. The manuscript of this autobiography is found in the Swedish Methodist Historical Library, at Evanston, Illinois. Reid, op. cit., p. 207; Trunström, op. cit., p. 68; Ericson, op. cit., pp. 36-38; Witting, p. 515.

and the Bethel Ship services when he first landed in New York, in October, 1847; he chanced to meet Nodstrom there again in 1854 at a time when he had suffered disappointments and financial embarrassments; he writes glowingly not only of the material help given him by the missionary in this hour of need, but also of the definite spiritual change marked in his life from this very period.[1] The following year he entered the Methodist ministry and was destined to have a brilliant career as pastor, organizer, editor and author. On a visit abroad in 1867 Witting was interviewed by Bishop Calvin Kingsley, who was on a missionary tour that included Stockholm, and was persuaded to accept the appointment as superintendent of all the Methodist missions in Sweden.[2] After returning to America to get his family, Witting entered upon his duties in Sweden in November, 1867, and continued to serve in the capacity of superintendent until 1876. Organization of the Swedish

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1. Witting, pp. 152, 161, ff.
2. For letter (April 14, 1868) of J. J. Durbin, secretary of the Missionary Society, appointing Witting, see Witting, pp. 536-537.

Methodist Missionary Society was effected in Stockholm September 17, 1868, the statistical table showing 7 organised congregations, 15 preaching stations, 424 members (the majority on trial), and in addition, 5 Sunday Schools, 34 teachers and 354 children.[1]

Of greatest interest in our present study is the fact that Methodist missions in Sweden received a very direct impetus to growth through the visit of Hedstrom to his fatherland in 1863. The Bethel Ship missionary has himself written a review of his preaching mission through the lines of which we can trace in some detail the early development of the Methodist movement in Sweden. He wrote the following to the editor of Sändebudet:

> "You know, my dear brother, that my health was threatened a few years ago, and that our good brother O. P. Petersen took my place at the Bethel Ship, where God has richly blest his activities. I

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1. Eriksen, op. cit., pp. 63 ff.; Witting, pp. 536 ff. Statistics from various periods in the Scandinavian work are printed in Reid, op. cit., pp. 429-432. That the missionary directors of the Methodist Church anticipated success in the Scandinavian countries is deduced from the following statement: "The form and spirit of religion which distinguish the Methodist Church seem to be exactly adapted to those Northern Europeans, and many of them cordially embrace religion." AMMS, 1850, pp. 37, 48-49.

cherished the thought, if God would grant me health again, of making another visit to the Scandinavian countries, visit the missions, and preach the Word. God gave me health anew, and now through His grace I have been able to complete the journey, and am now back in my beloved Bethel Ship again, where with God's help I will continue my mission, now that C. P. Petersen has been sent as presiding elder to our Norwegian missions in Wisconsin.

"I left America May 9 of this year and spent more than four months in Germany, Sweden, Norway and Denmark. During the journey I preached on the vessel, and God was with us. In the most cordial manner I was received by our Superintendent, Rev. C. Willerup, in Denmark, and preached in Copenhagen and Bilo, to the congregations which are under the care of brother Smith and Pastor Willerup. The people came in great masses so that all available places were filled, and they listened with greatest attentiveness, and with tears. I traveled about and preached in all our missions in Norway, where God added His blessing to the Word, and where our preaching brethren, as well as our congregations, received me with the greatest love; and to the glory of God I can say that God has worked great things there among the people, and that His work is progressing among them. Everywhere they prayed that we might send additional missionaries, for they were all of one accord, and eager to have living preachers among them. Some of the people journeyed 16 and 20 English miles to listen to a sermon. Our ministers there are faithful and energetic instruments of God, and everything is going forward. We now have five churches in Norway. Preparations are being made in Copenhagen to build a new church there this summer, at a cost of $20,000.00 In Sweden I visited Carlskrona, Lyckeby, Könneby, Carlshamn, Hörum and Gothenburg. I cannot describe the longing of the people to hear the Word of God. I marveled how short a time was needed

> to get a vast audience together, and they filled the house and the yards, and at times the streets round about, where I preached. We even opened all windows so that the people might hear. There they stood, packed together, and listened with greatest attention. Tears of repentance streamed from the eyes of many listeners. Many showed desire to speak to me concerning the state of their souls; I found some in despair, and the need was great. In Rönneby the mission house proved to be too small, and in order to satisfy the great mass of people we repaired to the home of a God-fearing farmer, who lived by the river. They removed the windows from the house, so there I stood and preached to the crowds standing outside. -- Everywhere I was heartily received, and all heard the Word with joy and thanksgiving. Souls, hungering for grace, crowded about me. Time allowed me to stay in Sweden only 26 days, and I preached there 21 times. Not once did I meet anyone who showed disrespect, and everywhere I was asked to remain longer and to preach, also receiving many invitations to cities which I had to decline. Along the whole coast I found fruits from our work in America. Indeed: the harvest is great, and the laborers are few.[1]

The time spent overseas had been brief, but much had been accomplished.[2] It was plain that the Methodist movement among the Scandinavian peoples was growing and developing. Nedstrom arrived home in America

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1. S, December 1, 1863.
2. Eriksen points out that classes were organized among the converts which later developed into congregations. He also published a description of a spirited service conducted by Nedstrom written by one of those in attendance. Eriksen, op. cit., pp. 60-61. Notes on Nedstrom's visit to Sweden are also found in CAJ, August 20, 1863, and in Witting, pp. 158-159.

September twenty-eighth, to resume his work on the Bethel Ship.[1]

In this connection we are not primarily concerned with the course of events which took place in Sweden as a result of the religious movements which were crystallising during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Suffice it to say that the foundations of the ancient religious structure of the Church of Sweden were shaken and it was but natural that opposition, strife and bitterness should ensue.[2] To quite a degree the leaders among the Swedish Lutheran clergy in America shared this feeling of resentment at what they considered Methodist "propaganda" in Sweden,[3] in addition to having ample cause for concern over the keen rivalry for converts displayed in their own adopted land.[4]

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1. CAJ, October 8, 1863.
2. For treatments of the situation in Sweden the reader is referred to the chapter "The Struggle for Religious Freedom," in Stephenson, pp. 135-146, and "The Dissenters in Sweden," in Jenson, pp. 197-221.
3. S, March 15,1865. In this issue a sharp criticism which had appeared in Hemlandet is quoted and an answer is made to the same, justifying the work of the Methodists in Sweden. Allied notes on the Methodist movement in Sweden are found in S, April 10, April 17, 1865; October 15, 1866; March 11, June 21, 1867; June 14, July 7, August 30, September 6, 1869; March 3, 1871; April 6, 1875.
4. Ander, op. cit., pp. 21-22.

In the pioneer work in which they were engaged they knew it was only natural that poor immigrants would be attracted toward churches which were given liberal support by the Americans, rather than to the church of their own faith, in which they would be called upon to contribute the full share of expenses.[1]

G. Relation to Denmark and Finland

The founding of Methodism in Denmark has no visible relation to Hedstrom, although J. P. Larsen, who was numbered among the Bethel Ship converts, served for a while as assistant to Willerup, who was stationed at Copenhagen.[2] The work in Finland, on the other hand, stands in direct relation to the "cradle" at New York, for August and William Bamlund, who were converted under the ministry of Hedstrom, returned to Finland, the land of their birth, and became founders

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1. Hemlandet, March 16, 1865.
2. Reid, op. cit., pp. 322 ff.

of Methodism in that land.[1]

Nedstrom may not have been overendowed with executive ability, but he did possess seemingly limitless energy and an enthusiastic and contagious personality. It brooks no gainsaying that the very foundation of the Methodist movement among the Scandinavians, here as well as abroad, is found in the very genuine religious experience through which he had passed, in his spiritual relations with others, and in the unique mission conducted at the Bethel Ship. This mission had certainly proved to be a "battery" sending out "evangelical shocks", and their radii had gone over the United States, and beyond, extending across the seas. Three decades after the inception of the work in New York City the structure of Scandinavian Methodism seemed stable and secure,

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1. Ibid., pp. 218 ff.; A. W. Rarulund to Ivar Pearson, Manitowoc, Wisconsin, August 15, 1955. Cf., Sentzke, Die Kirche Finnlands, p. 80. The author has in his possession transcripts of four letters (December 30, 1860; February 14, 1863; December 29,1867; May 6, 1870) written by Nedstrom, from New York City, to Gustaf Lervik, one of the pioneers of the Methodist movement in Finland. These have been furnished him by Rev. Yrja Järnberg, of Jakobstad, Finland, who also has a collection of letters from other early Swedish Methodist leaders in America to their co-religionists in Finland.

and showed a vitality which gave promise of further growth and development. In the rearing of that early structure no one had played a more important part than had Olof Gustaf Hedstrom.

H. The Close of Hedstrom's Life and Work

Hedstrom was superannuated in the year 1875, just a year before the removal of the Bethel Ship to Brooklyn, and lived in retirement at Cape May, New Jersey. On the way to a conference meeting in 1877 he was stricken with fatal illness and passed away on May fifth in the home of his good friend Mr. Albert Chilberg, having reached the age of seventy-three years, eleven months and twenty-four days. The funeral service was conducted from St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church, New York City, the eulogy being delivered by Rev. Lucius H. King, who also gave the memorial address at the annual session of the New York Conference held at St. Luke's Methodist Episcopal Church, New York City, April 8, 1878. The ardent pastor and missionary, Olof Gustaf Hedstrom, had given forty years of his life in service to the Methodist communion.[1]

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1. See notes, ut supra p. 63. The memorial address of Rev. King is printed in Minutes of the New York Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1878, pp. 43-44.

CHAPTER VII

THE LEADERS OF OTHER DENOMINATIONS IN THEIR RELATIONS TO EARLY SWEDISH METHODISM

THE LEADERS OF OTHER DENOMINATIONS IN THEIR RELATIONS TO EARLY SWEDISH METHODISM

A. Introduction

In the same year and the same month that Olof Gustaf Hedstrom began his work at the Bethel Ship in New York City, Gustaf Unonius, who with a small group had emigrated in 1841, settling at Pine Lake, Wisconsin, was ordained by the Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal church of that state and appointed to serve as missionary among the Scandinavians in Pine Lake and vicinity.[1] Bitter strife raged between Unonius and the early Swedish Lutheran pastors, and after seventeen years the high-churchly Unonius, having met with no signal success in this country, returned to Sweden. He was a staunch defender of apostolical succession and elaborate ritualism and considered the Lutheran pastors of the period all too free, pietistic and narrow; comparing him with Hedstrom, with the latter's very pronounced Methodist leanings and sympathies, we find the extreme polarities in types of piety and churchliness. The

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1. Unonius, op. cit., II, pp. 179 ff.

sources at hand do not indicate that these two early religious leaders among the Swedish element in the United States ever crossed paths.[1] However, by reason of the location of the Bethel Ship Mission in the city which was the very gateway to the new world, Hedstrom was destined to meet among the thousands of immigrants with whom he came into contact quite a number (some already ordained into the ministry, others to take orders here) who were to become religious leaders among their people. We may well imagine that the presence of the ardent Methodist missionary in New York City raised many questions in the minds of these. In the reactions which they felt, to which a number gave written expression, we find suggestions indicative of the vast amount of rivalry, bitterness and ill-will which was to characterize the early history of these immigrant churches. The opinions concerning Hedstrom as expressed by leaders of other groups who met him must be considered in the light of the conditions and the spirit of the time. The

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1. Unonius did, however, come into contact with the work of Jonas Hedstrom, in Illinois. He characterized him as a man who at times bordered onto fanaticism, withal possessing a warm and sympathetic heart toward the immigrants in their need. Unonius, op. cit., p. 375.

religious arena of that period was indeed strife-torn.

B. Lars Paul Esbjorn

Rev. Lars Paul Esbjorn, who with a company of emigrants came from Hälsingland, Swedon, in 1849, laid the first foundation stones of the Lutheran church among the Swedish element in America. Stephenson has characterized him as a man whose life is rich in the lessons of vicissitudes, "veered to this opinion and that by change of environment, shunted from liberalism to orthodoxy, alternately the defender and the opponent of religious freedom, at one time manifesting a strong sympathy for Methodism and 'unionism' and later harboring bitter animosity."[1] We are in this connection primarily interested in picturing Esbjorn's relations to the Methodist movement, both in Sweden and in this country.

Esbjorn's free-church tendencies during his period as pastor in Sweden are revealed plainly in his contacts with George Scott, the Wesleyan Methodist laboring in Stockholm, and Peter Wieselgren, the leader of the temperance movement. Esbjorn

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1. Stephenson, op. cit., p. 149.

could not help noticing the contrast between the spontaneity of Scott's type of religious work and the formalism of the State Church, and when Scott's mission at Stockholm was suddenly terminated Esbjorn wrote imploring him not to desert his poverty-ridden fatherland.[1] While in Sweden, before emigrating, Esbjorn had learned something of the activities of the Hedstrom brothers in America and had been in touch with a third brother in Lyckeby, who had asked him to ascertain something of their spiritual condition in the country of their adoption.[2] It is of further interest to note the correspondence between Jonas J. Hedstrom and Esbjorn, before the latter emigrated, and the part that it played in leading him to the decision to leave his native land, especially in view of the radical change that later took place in their relationships. One is strongly tempted to question what might have been the course of events if Esbjorn in America had

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1. Westin, op. cit., I, pp. 453, 467, 471, 513, 660; II, pp. 360-362.
2. Esbjorn to Wieselgren, Andover, Illinois, May 25, 1850; EK, pp. 42-45.

continued to display the Methodist trend that was so obvious in his early ministry.[1] The stage was being set for Esbjorn's departure for the new world: he was not too popular in his own diocese;[2] the news of his contemplated journey had incurred the displeasure of the Archbishop;[3] his associations in his home country were chiefly among the free-churchly and in the land that lay in the west he counted friends in the Methodist fold; letters were being received from earlier emigrants begging him to cast his lot with them and to become their spiritual leader; he was tired of conditions in the established church and longed for freedom.[4] In view of Esbjorn's wavering Lutheranism in this period, and his own leanings toward the freer tendencies, it is a little difficult to reconcile his own statement, made years later,

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1. Esbjorn freely admitted his early sympathy with Methodism in a letter to Norelius, Galesburg, Illinois, January 30, 1856; Tidskrift, pp. 234-235.
2. Stephenson, op. cit., p. 150.
3. C. F. Wingård to Esbjorn, Upsala, March 8, March 26, 1849; EK, pp. 37-39.
4. Cf., characterization of Esbjorn by J. Söderblom, in EK, pp. 575-577.

that he was drawn to America to give spiritual guidance to his friends "lest they should be snatched away by the more or less misguided sects."[1] To be sure, very soon after landing he was to adopt a policy of conservative Lutheranism, but up to the time of his sailing he certainly displayed a fraternal spirit toward the Methodists.

Sometime during the summer of 1848 Esbjorn wrote to Jonas Hedstrom, at Victoria, Illinois, to get information concerning the state of the religious work among the Swedish immigrants, at the same time requesting him to forward a petition to the Swedish Missionary Society (evidently for some manner of support for Esbjorn). The letter was received early in October, and Hedstrom, who seems to have forgotten much of his mother tongue, turned to O. Bäck for assistance in the writing. From all that can be gathered Bäck was also a Methodist and it is reasonable to assume that he would not have issued such a warm welcome to Esbjorn unless he was sure that the

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1. Esbjorn, De Svenska Lutherska Församlingarnas i N. Amerika Uppkomst, in Kyrkobanéret, 1865, pp. 33-51. This address was originally given before the Archdiocese of Upsala at its meeting June 14, 1865, and was published in Swedon. The Eric Jansonists were no doubt uppermost in Esbjorn's mind when he spoke of "misguided sects".

latter, too, had definite Methodist sympathies. Bäck learned later that Hedstrom had neglected to send the prepared materials to Sweden, and on December twenty-seventh sent a personal letter to Esbjorn. That Bäck was not too fond of his own Methodist spiritual adviser is implied in the way he expressed his joy at the thought of Esbjorn's coming and also by what he stated concerning the younger Hedstrom:

> "Hedstrom is not a learned man, but a locksmith. Here the Methodists receive any converted Christian into the ministry, and there is no question whether or not he is educated, and so the clergy are in accordance, when the devil leads them to the world again [?] . We are in so great need of a minister that words can not describe it. I have not partaken of the Lord's Supper since I was in New York, September 15, 1847, and so it happens that he [the devil] would dry up the spirit of the Lord in our souls."[1]

A month later Jonas Hedstrom answered Esbjorn's earlier request. He gave a dark picture of the trials which any immigrant pastor must suffer, suggesting that the settlers, very poor in this world's goods, could not contribute much to a pastor's

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1. Bäck to Esbjorn, Victoria, Illinois, December 12, 1848, printed in Norrlands-Posten, March 1, 1949. That Bäck was a Methodist is also gathered from an unsigned letter in Helsi, July 6, 1850.

salary, and that it would be well if Esbjorn could count on support from some source in Sweden. Hedstrom further expressed his joy at the thought of having a fellow laborer in the field, which was too large for a lone man, and added: "My brother who lives in New York will be notified that you are to arrive, so that he can meet and receive and welcome you."[1]

Esbjorn, together with a company of 146 emigrants, arrived on the ship "Cobden" in New York harbor, September 6, 1849, after a journey of 63 days.[2] Here the newly arrived pastor was met by Olof Gustaf Hedstrom. Esbjorn was faced with many perplexities. Perhaps he had anticipated receiving aid from the Methodist church, knowing that this was a strong denomination,[3] but he turned to another body also. His initial experiences in church relations in this country are graphically pictured in his own account, from which the follow-

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1. Jonas Hedstrom to Esbjorn, Victoria, Illinois, January 30, 1849; EK, pp. 33-37.
2. Esbjorn, Diary, AHSP, V, pp. 11-34. Andreen, op. cit. A brief note on the journey was sent by the ship's captain, N. Hedquist, to Norrlands-Posten, and published in the issue for October 9, 1849.
3. Norelius, Historiskm Anteckningar (HS).

ing excerpt is quoted:

> "I didn't feel that I could expect material support from my poor countrymen, nor were they able to contribute in that direction, and for that reason I appealed to the American Home Missionary Society, which supplies pastors to the poor congregations in the western states. This society, however, according to its rules, can not support a minister who is not associated with some American church, and especially to ascertain whether or not the Lutheran churches in America possessed the true life of faith in God, and furthered it with seriousness and power. The Swedish Episcopal Methodists in New York, in whose church, [this term evidently refers to the Bethel Ship] upon invitation, I preached twice and gave one temperance address, were solicitous that I should enter their communion; this, however, I considered it neither necessary nor right to do, inasmuch as their teaching in many matters is not in accord with what I am in a living way convinced that God has revealed in His Holy Word, and which the faithful fathers of the Lutheran church have formulated and passed on to us as a most precious heritage. Besides that, the Episcopal Methodist church has a tainted Christianity which its eleven hundred thousand members can not cleanse, until they delete the seventh chapter of the third part of their platform which permits slave-owners and slave-dealers (in those states where the laws allow slavery) to be members of their congregations. With such a church I could never unite. The rather would I travel to the distant west, to preach the eternal Word of Life to my poor countrymen, without mission aid."[1]

Thus, at the very beginning of his activities here, Esbjorn, previously sympathetic to Methodism, was

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1. Missions-Tidning, Stockholm, June, 1850.

radically changed in attitude, and displayed a spirit that was to grow into open hostility. Norelius (and other Lutheran historians after him) states that Esbjorn, faced with the proposition of receiving aid from the Methodists on condition that he ally himself with their clergy, was persuaded by his wife to remain loyal to the Lutheran church.[1] Though the latter detail does not have the soundest historical substantiation,[2] the matter of being invited into the Methodist fold is certainly suggested by Esbjorn himself, as seen in the above question.

The relations between Esbjorn and the Illinois Methodist, to whom he had written for information when contemplating to emigrate, were from the beginning anything but cordial. In his first written report to Sweden Esbjorn stated that the younger Hedstrom lured some of his company from Andover to Victoria under the pretext that to live in the former place endangered their health, and also added:

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1. Norelius, I, p. 38. Forsander, Lifsbilder, I, pp. 13-14; Andreen, op. cit., p. 13.
2. Stephenson, op. cit., p. 153, fn. 9.

> "He has both verbally and in writing stated that it is his aim to get us all into the Episcopal Methodist communion, and not successful in that, he works ceaselessly to attract the people there [Victoria], and receives them into his denomination without consideration as to repentance and conversion, which in most of the Christian Protestant churches in this country is the condition for reception and admittance to the Lord's Supper. . . I am not in favor of having spiritually dead people as members of God's congregation and partake of Holy Communion, before they through the hearing of the Word and the power of the Holy Spirit have come to know their condition and hunger for grace. This is new to many a Swede, and perhaps has given rise to defamatory writings in Sweden."[1]

In the same document Esbjorn related that he had turned to the Central Association of Illinois to be recommended for financial aid from the American Home Missionary Society Congregational — though this meant no denial of his Lutheran theology for he was "to preach the Gospel, and administer the sacraments, the offices, ceremonies and church discipline as an evangelical Lutheran servant of Christ" — and defended his action in the following statement:

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1. Missions-Tidning, June, 1850.

> "I have rather desired, without violating my confession, to make an association with a Christian church, which truly desires to promote a true and living Christianity among our people, and who believe that this is accomplished best, if the Lutherans in their confession remain what they have been, rather than to associate with a church which in a sectarian spirit chiefly seeks to increase its number of members and which in this country is known to be, next to the Catholics, the greatest of proselytizers."[1]

In his printed appeal to the Scandinavian immigrants, published in 1850, Esbjorn sought to distinguish between the spirit of the Lutheran church in America and the State Church of Sweden, and also issued a definite warning that the newcomers should avoid the wiles of the sects.[2] Writing to his friend Wieselgren the same year he flayed the preaching of "perfectionism" by Jonas Hedstrom, decried his questionable methods and maintained that he was totally different from Scott "who was a Wesleyan Methodist". He added a word concerning the elder Hedstrom of the Bethel Ship: "His brother in New York seems to possess more Christian seriousness, although somewhat tainted by sectarian one-sidedness."[3]

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1. Ibid. Norelius has sharply criticized this move of Esbjorn; See Norelius, I, p. 140.
2. Esbjorn, Välkomst helsning till den svenska, norska och danska emigranten, 1850.
3. Esbjorn to Wieselgren, Andover, Illinois, May 23, 1850; EK, pp. 42-45.

A most severe and excoriating denunciation of Jonas Hedstrom was given by Esbjorn in his address, years later, before the clergy of the Diocese of Upsala, in Sweden. In this portrayal he spared nothing to paint in the very blackest of colors the one whom he had anticipated having as an associate.[1] Esbjorn, the early Lutheran leader, once attracted to Methodism, passed through a radical change by virtue of what he met in American church life, broke with his unionistic tendencies, and developed into an uncompromising Lutheran of the strictly confessional type.

C. Eric Norelius

In the daybook of Eric Norelius we are given a vivid portrayal of the impression made by Hedstrom on the group of immigrants that arrived from Hälsingland, on board the "Odin", in the fall of 1850. Upon landing, October thirty-first, the group was met by Borgner, serving as "cantor" for Hedstrom, who showed an interest in their spiritual welfare

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1. Esbjorn, op. cit., pp. 34-35. Also, cf., Norelius, I, pp. 122-123, 144.

and invited them to the Bethel Ship and to confer with Hedstrom. Norelius states:

> "He [Hedstrom] was very friendly to us and gave us a great deal of advice, both as to temporal and spiritual matters. There was something in his religious conversation that seemed foreign to us. We were all strict Lutherans, and when we began to question him more closely as to his confessional viewpoint, he assured us that he was a Lutheran in the true sense of the Word. We could not quite make out his religious leanings."

Norelius was invited to attend a service on the Bethel Ship the next evening. He has characterised it as follows:

> "We went to this service and heard a sermon by Hedstrom. Most of the people in our group were there. Hedstrom spoke fluently, but it was a language we hardly understood. It was a mixture of Swedish and English, and even the Swedish was different from that which we had heard in our community. He gesticulated with his arms and his whole body when he spoke and carried on so frantically that we almost were frightened."

Two days later Norelius noted the following in his diary:

> "Sunday, November 3. - Most of those in our company attended services on the Bethel Ship. Hedstrom preached and shouted. There was no definiteness in his sermon. Law and gospel were confused. The Lord's Supper was cele-

> brated, and many of those in our group attended the Lord's table. I, for my part, did not feel that I could do so. The Swedish Lutheran order of service was used to some extent and the Swedish Psalm-Book was used for the singing.
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> "After the service I took courage to ask Hedstrom if he could give me advice as to how I might be able to continue my studies and prepare myself for the holy ministry. The only advice he could give me was that if I wanted to join the Methodists I could become a minister any time. Nothing was required except to be converted and fear God. After some further conversation with him in regard to doctrinal matters, I found that we were not in agreement, but he was friendly and courteous nevertheless."[1]

Three years later, during the summer vacation while Norelius was studying at Capitol University, he was again in the vicinity of New York City. Again we turn to the daybook to find an interesting entry:

> "Sunday, July 24. — In the afternoon I attended services on the 'Bethel Ship', where the Swedish Methodist Congregation met for worship. The sermon was in English, but I did not find out the name of the preacher. I did not speak to Hedstrom this time, but on the 20th I went to the Bethel Ship to speak to him about various matters regarding the care of immigrants here in New York, and to ask him if he knew of any groups of immigrants who were now on their way over. He was not there when I came, but I met a younger man by the name of Fernberg, who took care of the office, and who, I understand, was also planning to enter the ministry. We were

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1. Johnson (trans. and ed.), op. cit., pp. 104-106.

soon engaged in a lively discussion regarding doctrine. He attacked the Lutheran teaching and I defended it. Just as we were in the midst of our debate Hedstrom walked in, and I turned to him and greeted him. It was three years since we had met, but he remembered me. After a few preliminary remarks he asked me directly, 'Now that you have been in the country this long, how do you like the Methodists?' 'Well,' said I, 'as far as the people are concerned personally, there is a great deal of difference. I have met some American Methodists, who never in all their life have been anything but Methodists, and many of them I have found to be very pleasant, and I have been able to associate with them as fellow Christians. I wish I could say the same about my countrymen who have become Methodists after being at least nominally Lutherans. They talk and act as if there were no Christians among the Lutherans, and say that one must of necessity become a Methodist if one is to be saved and therefore they are always busy arguing and proselyting.' For a while he did not have much to say, but then we got into a discussion about doctrine again. Then we started talking about the immigrants, and he was of the opinion that they were in no danger in New York and that they could easily get along without an interpreter as they proceeded further on into the country. He said I did not need to stay here and wait for my relatives, for they would be able to take care of themselves. He did not speak well of Esbjorn. He said that Esbjorn had extended a welcome to the immigrants and at the same time told them to beware of the Methodists."[1]

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1. Ibid., pp. 203-204.

D. Tufve Nilsson Hasselquist

We have no evidence that Hasselquist ever visited the Bethel Ship in New York harbor or came into contact with Hedstrom when he landed at New York, in 1852. Early in the same year that he emigrated, while considering the call to America, he had learned something of the rivalry in the midwestern settlements between the Methodists and the Lutherans, being informed of the same in correspondence from Esbjorn. Another minister was at first being considered, but Hasselquist voiced his sentiments in agreement with Esbjorn that care should be exercised in selecting ministers for America to make sure that they were good Lutherans and able to withstand the lure of Methodism.[1]

Hasselquist had not been long at Galesburg, Illinois, however, before he sensed that there were those among the immigrants who were hostile to the Lutheran Church, and in sympathy with Methodism, as well as Congregationalism and other reformed sects.[2]

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1. Hasselquist to P. Wieselgren, Åkarp, January 24, February 12, March 26, 1852; HK, pp. 47-51. Hasselquist was called to America for a three year period, but remained in this country to become the leader of greatest influence in the early history of the Swedish Lutheran Church.
2. Norelius, Hasselquist, p. 30; Ander, Hasselquist, p. 13.

He also found that the Swedish settlements in the middle west were open fields for proselyting, and that the Episcopalians and Methodists worked diligently to make converts.[1] We have seen in an earlier part of our study that Hasselquist encountered the work of Hedstrom at Chicago and St. Charles, Illinois, when Hedstrom was engaged on a missionary journey in that region early in 1853.[2] He was also summoned by B. G. P. Bergenlund to visit the settlement at Sugar Grove, Pennsylvania, in May of the same year, for Hedstrom was expected to make a visit to that place and Hasselquist wanted to get there ahead of him.[3] The existing conditions fostered in Hasselquist a "belligerent Lutheranism" to which Baptists and Methodists objected, but Hasselquist replied that he stood for unity, the Swedes were Lutherans, and it was the non-Lutheran pastors who brought about disunion.[4]

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1. Norelius, Evangeliska Lutherska Augustana Synoden i Nord Amerika, pp. 14-15.
2. Ut supra, pp. 138 ff.
3. Hasselquist to Mrs. Hasselquist, January 22, May 25, 1853. Quoted in Norelius, Hasselquist, pp. 41, 43-44.
4. J. Engberg to Norelius, Galesburg, Illinois, May 4, 1856; Hemlandet, January 24, 1856. Ander, op. cit., p. 31.

If Hasselquist and Hedstrom never met in person, articles critical of Methodism written by Hasselquist in his paper Hemlandet, Det Gamla och Det Nya, led to a sharp tilt in the issue of January 24, 1866. This combat, like so many similar ones in the early period of the religious history of the Swedish-Americans, reflects credit on neither side. The Bethel Ship missionary took the Illinois editor sharply to task for statements he had made: he accused Hasselquist of speaking of Lutheranism as it is stated in the confessions of that church, but of the Methodists according to hearsay; the life in Germany and the State Church of Sweden was criticized; and he informed his opponent that the Methodist church had caused to be translated into Swedish three editions of its Catechism, and other books, including Parker's "Compendium", presenting the Methodist teaching and polity, and these should be used in judging the communion with which he was affiliated. Hasselquist, in reply, claimed that the Methodists lived on other denominations, and even went so far as to say that "Christendom sammanfaller icke med Methodismen" (Christianity and Methodism can't have anything in

common).[1] It must have proved galling to Hasselquist that so much aid was given his enemies by the Reformed churches. We must judge Hasselquist, however, by his belief that the Lutheran church possessed an exclusive right to do missionary work among the Swedes. Undoubtedly, though he thought the Lutheran church to be the only true one, he acknowledged that non-Lutherans could also be saved.[2]

E. Erland Carlsson

Erland Carlsson, called to be the pastor of the Swedish Lutheran Church in Chicago, arrived in New York, August 13, 1853, in a company of 176 immigrants.[3] The company visited the Bethel Ship and worshiped there, before proceeding westward.[4] Situated as Hedstrom and Carlsson were, in the two great immigration centers, they both had much to do in aiding the newcomers and were probably in quite frequent

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1. Hemlandet, January 24, 1856. A further defense of Lutheranism, reflected against a current Methodist-Baptist feud, was published in the issue of May 15, 1856.
2. Ander, op. cit., p. 172.
3. Korsbanerot, 1881, p. 82; Norelius, I, p. 374; Johnson (trans. and ed.), op. cit., p. 209. Cf., note by S. B. Newman in CAJ, September 15, 1853.
4. CAJ, August 25, 1853.

communication.[1]

Writing to Hedstrom Carlsson had expressed the hope that they might work together in peace and unity for the salvation of sinners through Jesus Christ; Hedstrom, in turn, intimated that if the salvation of sinners became their supreme desire, peace and unity would necessarily result. Hedstrom assured Carlsson of his humility, and also lack of jealousy, but took issue with the Chicago pastor's statement concerning the purity of the Lutheran doctrine, stating that the fruits in active life are the determining factor. He added a significant statement: "If the Lutheran church can point to a larger number of souls who through her activity have been led to Christ, than the Methodist church, then I will give her my preference; but until this happens I thank God for the church to which I belong."[2] Writing at a later date, Hedstrom again assured Carlsson of his sincerity, also adding that he held out no special

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1. Hedstrom to Carlsson, New York, November 2, 1854; John Patterson, Mt. Sterling (no state), May 24, 1854; S. B. Newman to Carlsson, New York, December 23, 1856. The work of Hedstrom was evidently known to emigration agents in Sweden. A. Lagerblad to Carlsson, Carlshamn, July 28, 1854; AHSP, V, p. 123. Ola Magnusson to Carlsson, November 8, 1853; G. P. Pehrsson to Carlsson, New York, July 28, 1855; Hedstrom to Carlsson, October 13, 1853.
2. Hedstrom to Carlsson, New York, July, 1854; EK, pp.77-78.

prospects to any of the immigrants to induce them to join his church. He also made known that a copy of Carlsson's pamphlet "Råd och Upplysningar till Utvandrare" (Advice and Information for Emigrants) had come into his hands, and admitted being slighted that Mr. Willeston of Boston and Mr. Aspelin of New York were accorded more favorable words than himself.[1] The explanation for the cordial tone in the relations of Hedstrom and Carlsson may lie in the fact that both were so busy caring for the social needs of the immigrants that the subjects for contention, with which so many were occupied, were largely left in the background.

F. Jonas Swensson

In 1856 two additional pastors, ordained in Sweden, arrived here to assist Esbjorn, Hasselquist and Carlsson in the work of the struggling Swedish Lutheran churches. They were O. C. T. Andrén and Jonas Swensson, the latter coming to take up the work at Jamestown, New York, and Sugar

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1. Hedstrom to Carlsson, New York, February 9, 1855; EK, pp. 79-81; AESP, V, pp. 129-151.

Grove, Pennsylvania, the first ordained Lutheran clergyman to be stationed among the Swedes in the eastern states. Later in life he was to become president of the Augustana Synod. Swensson makes brief mention of Hedstrom in an entry in his Day-book, as follows:

> "July 5. — In the evening we came into the harbor of New York, where we were met by a multitude of questionable people. — The 6th, Sunday. We visited a Methodist service on the Bethel Ship. There we felt rather poorly. Now I feel very heavily the difficulties of the sects, etc., in this country."[1]

Journeying on to Jamestown and Sugar Grove, Swensson was entertained, upon arrival, at the home of the Methodist minister Bredberg, "and felt fine there." However, he was soon filled with deep concern over the situation that had developed in the community, strife-torn by the factions of Lutherans and Methodists.[2] Swensson, in common with other early Lutheran leaders, was to find ecclesiastical life in America totally different from what he had known in the land of his birth, and may have often

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1. Lawson, Some Jonas Swensson Items, Augustana Quarterly, April, 1935, pp. 157-179.
2. Ibid.; Norelius, I, p. 523. CAJ, July 12, 1855.

doubted the wisdom of having embarked upon the venture in the new world.

G. S. F. A. Lindahl

No pastor mentioned has written more sharply in criticism of Hedstrom and the Bethel Ship Mission than S. F. A. Lindahl, who like Swensson became a president of the Augustana Synod. More than thirty years after coming to this country he wrote down his impressions of the Methodist missionary. According to Lindahl, Hedstrom's greeting consisted in the following: "Only the Methodist church is held in repute in this country. If you wish to win recognition and progress here then you ought to become Methodists, for the Lutheran church is not considered Christian." Lindahl has stated that the American sects tried every possible means to get the Lutheran emigrants to forsake their denomination, but the particular group to which Lindahl belonged saw in Hedstrom's words "a Pharisaical boasting and hypocrisy", and the proselyting failed completely.[1] The bitterness of Lindahl's words are a sad reminder of a sad state of affairs obtaining in the early period.

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1. Augustana, July 7, 1898.

H. Gustaf Palmquist

The advent of the Baptists made for a three-cornered struggle among the Swedish element in America during the fifties and sixties of the nineteenth century, and contributed further to the churchly chaos of the period. Gustaf Palmquist, Anders Wiberg and Fredrik Nilsson are names most intimately associated with the early work of the Baptists, both in America and Sweden. Palmquist had come to America some months after a company of one hundred emigrants, adherents to the Rodbergian movement, had left their native province of Hälsingland, bound for America, where they desired to found a "true" Lutheran church. The group had urged Wiberg to come to America to be their pastor, but being unable to accept the invitation, he suggested Gustaf Palmquist in his stead. Not long after his arrival Palmquist adopted the Baptist faith, being baptized in Galesburg, Illinois.[1]

Palmquist met Nedstrom when he landed in New York, in September, 1851, and even lived with him for a time. He met many believers among the Methodists, and was impressed by the great help which

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1. Cf., the historical introduction by Westin, in SBB, I.

Hedstrom lent to the Swedish immigrants.[1] After going over to the Baptists, in Galesburg, however, his opinion of the Methodists changed. He wrote to his friend Wiberg that he hoped and believed that the Methodists in New York were better than they were in the section where he was laboring, and stated that he considered the Methodist teaching of perfectionism deadening for the spiritual life. To the Bethel Ship missionary he wrote complaining of Jonas Hedstrom's questionable actions.[2] Although Palmquist had been attracted to Hedstrom during his early days in New York he later came to be very critical of him, and wrote to Wiberg: "It would be well if we had some other Swede than Hedstrom in New York to receive the immigrants from Sweden; he confuses many simple souls." He felt it was now urgent to have immigrant missionaries of the Baptist faith in Chicago and New York, otherwise those coming from Sweden with Baptist views might be ruined by Methodist and Lutheran pastors,[3]

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1. G. Palmquist to P. Palmquist, New York, September 11, 1851; SBB, I, pp. 75-81.
2. Palmquist to Wiberg, Rock Island, Illinois, August 24, November 1, December 8, 1852; SBB, I, pp. 145-146, 159-163, 165-169.
3. Palmquist to Wiberg, Rock Island, Illinois, January 4, April 7, 1854; SBB, II, pp. 101-105,154-159.

and he was convinced that Hedstrom was endangering the Baptist cause.[1]

I. Anders Wiberg, F. O. Nilsson

Wiberg was to have much the same type of experience with Hedstrom as did Palmquist, his cohort in the Baptist faith. From New York Wiberg wrote to Palmquist: "I have been in Hedstrom's home, heard him speak and pray in the congregation, conversed and debated with him. I consider him a man of God and believe he has been of great blessing to many. — But as far as his teaching of perfectionism is concerned I can not believe he is in the right."[2] More than a year later he wrote Palmquist to the effect that he hoped he would never have to have anything more to do with Hedstrom.[3] Of the church situation in New York he offered information to the effect that "a large number of Swedes have grown tired of Hedstrom and now hear

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1. Palmquist to Wiberg, New York, November 8, 1854, January 13, 1855; SBB, II, pp. 248-250, 271-273.
2. Wiberg to Palmquist, New York, September 23, 1852; SBB, I, pp. 146-151.
3. Wiberg to Palmquist, Philadelphia, December 19, 1853; SBB, II, pp. 98-101.

no one."[1]

Of F. O. Nilsson we only know that he paid a visit to the Bethel Ship and Nedstrom; however, he has left no characterizations such as did the other two early Baptist leaders.[2]

J. Conclusion

Although it is idle to engage in historical relativities, yet certain questions are raised following a study of the early history of the Swedish religious organizations in the United States. Had Esbjorn, strongly sympathetic to Methodism during his ministry in Sweden, been impressed in a different way when he first landed in New York the whole story of the church body of which he was one of the founders might have been quite different. But his sympathies were from the first radically changed and the contact with Methodism in his new land played a significant part in revamping him into a stern confessional Lutheran. Had Nedstrom been an educated person he would quite possibly have made an appeal to a

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1. Wiberg to Palmquist, Philadelphia, April 20, 1854; SBB, II, pp. 167-172.
2. Nilsson to Wiberg, New York, September 12, 1853; SBB, II, pp. 55-57.

larger circle in the Swedish colony in New York City, for the Lutherans were late in beginning work on this field, but many of these, as we have seen earlier, did not tolerate the methods of the revivalist at the Bethel Ship. The very presence of the Methodist movement stirred the early Lutheran leaders to greater action. From the start these learned that in America they could not rest in easy satisfaction; they were to experience that many contenders filled the church arena.

Through the medium of the quotations from the early leaders of other denominations working among the Swedish element in the United States, as given above, one is afforded an understanding of the intense competition and rivalry that characterized the church life at that period. The Baptists warred with Hedstrom on doctrinal points; the Lutherans not only thought of doctrine but evidently considered that they were entitled to a monopoly of the religious field among the Swedish immigrants. They came from a land where the Lutheran church held such a complete control and accordingly they viewed all other missionary attempts as nothing else than proselyting. It was natural that Hedstrom should endeavor to win as

many converts as possible, but an historical study of his relationship to the Methodist church -his genuine religious experience, his solicitude for the spiritual welfare of his family in the homeland, his early ministry in the Catskills, and his religious and human zeal displayed through the Bethel Ship Mission -- convinces the writer that his purposes were sincere and altruistic, and even though his ardor may have carried him away at times, the true picture of Hedstrom is not gained if one looks only to the utterances made by his critics. To these Hedstrom appeared as an arch heretic; but thousands of immigrants to whom he gave assistance in their hour of need and loneliness named him the Good Samaritan.

CHAPTER VIII

GROWTH OF CHURCHES -- ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A. The Chicago Conference of 1866

The prominent personal part that Olof Gustaf Hedstrom had played in the early years of Swedish Methodism in America must certainly have exerted an influence in the direction of maintaining bonds of unity among the pastors and the churches of that period, even though they were individually affiliated with the American Methodist conferences in which respective geographical territories they were located. Official expression of this unity, however, did not become a reality until two decades after the inception of the work in New York. When in 1866 the American Methodist church celebrated the centenary of its founding a call was issued for a general conference to be held by the group of Swedish pastors, in Chicago, of the same year. From the point of view of a growing Swedish Methodist consciousness this meeting was of far-reaching importance: the growth of the work had now called forth the suggestion for some form of unification on a nationalistic basis.

The Chicago conference of 1866 was opened October seventeenth, and Hedstrom was elected its first president, in the very church he had founded fourteen years earlier. Previous to this date, however, there were some evidences of the growing spirit of unity among the Swedish Methodists: the paper Sändebudet had been established in 1862 as the spokesman for the Swedish Methodist cause;[1] a group of Swedish pastors meeting in Kewanee, Illinois, in 1859, had launched the suggestion of establishing a Scandinavian professorship in connection with some one of the schools of higher learning conducted by the American Methodists; with the founding of a Korean Methodist Seminary in Berea, Ohio, an editorial appeared in Sändebudet renewing the matter and emphasizing the necessity of some course of action for the school matter in the near future; finally, a group of the pastors meeting in Berlin, Illinois, May 3-8, 1865, reached a definite decision concerning an initial ingathering of funds for the suggested project.[2]

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1. Sändebudet was first published at Rockford, Illinois, July 10, 1862, with Victor Witting as editor. In October, 1864, it was transferred to Chicago. Wallenius and Olson, op. cit., pp. 32, 55.
2. Witting, pp. 505 ff.; S, July 14, 1865. LSW, pp. 211 ff.

The matter of most immediate importance before the Chicago conference of 1866 was no doubt the school question. It is not our purpose in this presentation to give a detailed account of the course of events which followed. Suffice it to say that the plan of a joint Scandinavian project failed (the Norwegian and Danish Methodists were at the first joined with the Swedish brethren in the matter), and the final result was that the fund which had been raised was divided, and a Swedish academy and seminary was launched.[1]

But although the school question was the dominant one at the 1866 conference our chief interest in the present study is the beginning made toward the establishment of a distinctively Scandinavian (and more especially, Swedish) Methodist body, and to note Nedstrom's relation to the same. A survey of the names on the roll of those in attendance clearly reveals the extent of the influence that had been exerted by Nedstrom. Perhaps the majority of those present at the conference were there because of some previous relation to Nedstrom -- several had served as his assistants at the Bethel

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1. Stephenson, op. cit., pp. 260-261. Albert Ericson, "Det svenska teologiska seminariet i Evanston, Illinois," Vinterroser, 1903, pp. 56-62. S, March 25, 1878. Witting, Svenska teologiska skolan i Evanston, in Betlehems-Stjernan, 1880, pp. 28-29.

Ship and had thus been trained in his "theological seminary", some no doubt traced their conversion to his spiritual activity in their behalf, others had very likely been directed by him in the question of settling in the west -- and the election of the ardent missionary from the east to the presidency of the group was but the logical tribute to "the Father of Scandinavian Methodism". The resolution for the consolidation of the Scandinavian work, unanimously adopted, was stated as follows:

> "Whereas, the time now seems ripe that the mission cause among the Scandinavians in this country demands a Scandinavian Conference,
> "Therefore be it resolved, that we petition the next General Conference to organize all the Scandinavian mission work in the United States into an Annual Conference, or, if that is not granted, into one and the same American Conference."[1]

The resolution did not win favor with the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal church, meeting in Chicago, in May, 1868. A committee of seven on the Scandinavian work was ordered, but the petition received the following verdict:

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1. 8, November 5, 1866.

"That in our judgment, it is not expedient, at this time to recommend the formation of an annual or Mission Conference for the Scandinavian brethren."[1]

B. The Formation of the Swedish Northwest Conference and the Later History in the West

By 1875, Swedish Methodism, particularly in the western states, had grown to such proportions that the pastors were prompted to appeal once more to the General Conference for permission to organize into a separate conference.[2] Petitions were formulated by groups of Swedish pastors from the district of Iowa as well as from Rock Island, Illinois. A memorial against separate Scandinavian conferences, prompted by H. O. Westergreen and others, notwithstanding, the petition was granted.[3] On September sixth, the following year, Bishop Jesse T. Peck met with the Swedish pastors of the western states at Galesburg, Illi-

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1. JGC, 1868, pp. 35, 70, 228, 260-261, 576-577. The committee of seven on the Scandinavian work was also ordered at the following convention. JGC, 1872, pp. 87, 347-348. At this convention the needs for printed materials for the Swedish work were set forth.
2. Wallenius and Olson, op. cit., p. 53; Witting, pp. 502-504. See also the article by Hennchon, in S, January 25, 1876.
3. JGC, 1876, pp. 115, 135, 119, 379-380.

nois, and the Swedish Northwest Conference of the Methodist Episcopal church was organized. In his address the bishop made reference to Olof Gustaf Nodstrom, "the Father of Swedish Methodism, who recently -- May fifth of this year -- entered the triumphant conference," and also stated that the organization of this conference came about as the result of many prayers and strong faith."[1]

The Swedish Northwest Conference functioned for sixteen years. It embraced five districts -- Chicago, Burlington, Kansas, Nebraska and Superior -- and numbered, in 1893, 85 pastors and 9,800 members. The distances for travel made it appear expedient to divide the unwieldy Swedish Northwest Conference into three annual conferences -- the Central, the Western and the Northern -- a move which was effected at Galesburg, Illinois, in 1893.

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1. Protokoll öfver förhandlingarna vid Nordvestra Svenska Årskonferensens förste sammanträde hallet i Galesburg, d. 6-10 September, 1877. Something of the growth of the Swedish Methodist work in the west is garnered from the statistics: "From its inception the Conference embraced three districts, named Galesburg, Iowa and Minnesota, with a total of 36 ministers, 39 pastorates, 4,105 members, 44 church buildings, valued at $121,750, and 22 parsonages at $19,325." Wallenius and Olson, op. cit., p. 55.

After thirty-five years under this arrangement a movement was launched to return again to the original arrangement, and following an enabling act of the General Conference, in 1928, the three conferences were merged into one, with the same boundary lines as the initial unit. This federation was consummated (in the autumn of 1928) at the First Swedish Methodist Church in Minneapolis, and the reunited organization was named the Central Northwest Conference.[1] Swedish Methodist conferences, of much smaller size, were also organized on the Pacific Coast (1908) and in Texas (1912), but in both instances they merged at later dates with American bodies.[2]

C. Unification of the Work in the East

The churches in western Pennsylvania and New York were from the beginning affiliated with the Swedish Northwest Conference; the churches in the

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1. Wallenius and Olson, op. cit., p. 55. Hylin, op. cit. The proceedings of the various conferences are preserved in the library of Wesley Seminary, Evanston, Illinois. In 1928, the year of its organization, the Central Northwest Conference numbered 97 ministers and 12,269 members.
2. Wallenius and Olson, op. cit., pp. 53-54.

New York City area, on the other hand, presumably because of the distances for travel, were never incorporated into the western organization. The 1870 General Conference had voted a special resolution in regard to the eastern churches:

> "The Swedish and Norwegian work in the cities of New York and Brooklyn, and in the vicinity of those cities, shall belong to the New York East Conference."[1]

With the spread of the work in the east, however, there was furthered the same desire for a unification which was so marked in the west. At three successive quadrennial conventions the General Conference took cognizance of this and spread upon its Minutes the following resolutions:

(1892) "Bishops presiding at any regular session of the New England and New England South Annual Conferences are authorized, if they deem it best, to organize a Swedish Mission District in connection with the New England Conference and appoint a Swedish Presiding Elder to the same, in which district all the present Swedish work within New England and New England South Conferences shall be placed, and also all Swedish Missions which may hereafter be organized in the New England states, excepting that part of the State of Connecticut within the bounds of the New York East Conference."[2]

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1. JGC, 1870, p. 330. The decision is repeated in JGC, 1880, p. 393, and 1894, p. 414.
2. JGC, 1892, p. 416.

(1898) "The presiding Bishop or Bishops of the New England, New England South, New York, New York East, and Wilmington Conferences may, during the next four years, at any session of these respective Conferences, organize the Swedish members thereof as an Annual Conference, to be known as the Eastern Swedish Conference, to which shall belong all the Swedish missions and societies now organized, or that hereafter may be organized, in the six New England States, New Jersey and Delaware and territory in the New York, New York East and Philadelphia Conferences."[1]

(1900) "Whereas it may be important, during the next quadrennium, to organize the Swedish work in the East into an Annual Conference,

Resolved, That the enabling act, p. 441, section 6, of the Discipline be renewed."[2]

Organisation of the Eastern Swedish Conference was effected in 1901.[3] A call was issued to the Swedish pastors in the eastern area to meet on April twenty-fourth at the Immanuel Church in Brooklyn.[4]

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1. JGC, 1896, p. 349.
2. JGC, 1900, p. 160.
3. Statistics of the eastern churches, from the period 1885-1889, had been published by Witting, in Bethesda-Stjerman, 1890, p. 93. Cf., article, "Östra Svenska konferensen i fågelperspektiv," Vintersol, 1921, pp. 47-50. There were also those who opposed the union, e.g., C. G. Nelson, in S, April 30, 1891.
4. GA, March 7, 14, 1901.

The unification of the Swedish work in the east was the matter of chief importance. From the sociological point of view the event bears positive witness to the persistency of the spirit of nationalism which has so often defied a complete assimilation into an American pattern. For more than a half century the work had been carried on under the jurisdiction of the American Methodist church. By the turn of the century the Swedish loyalty had definitely asserted itself in the east, as it had done earlier in the west, and there was demonstrated the strength of the ties of race. It had evidently proved impossible perfectly to amalgamate a Swedish element into a typically American ecclesiastical structure. The Swedes were still Swedes; they had not been completely Americanized by the mere process of belonging to an American denomination. The other immigrant churches were to have experiences of a similar nature. The son of the northland still felt most at home among his own countrymen.[1]

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1. Cf., the statement of Stephenson: "The gospel message of the brotherhood of man was not powerful enough to erase rivalries and national characteristics glossed over by the designation 'Scandinavian,' whether in the Lutheran, Baptist, or Methodist households of faith. The American brethren never understood this, and numerous opportunities were lost as a result." Op. cit., p. 256.

The Immanuel Church in Brooklyn, the child of Hedstrom's own labors, and the mother church of Swedish Methodism, was the logical place for the organization meeting of 1901. Bishop Daniel A. Goodsell presided at the sessions. The purpose of the meeting was stated as follows:

> "Following permission granted by the General Conference in 1900, and in accordance with the agreement reached by the bishops, the Swedish members of the New York, New York East, New England, New England South and East Maine Conferences, at the call of bishop Daniel A. Goodsell, met in convention in the Swedish Immanuel M. E. Church, at 422 Dean Street, Brooklyn, New York, on the above-mentioned date [April 24, 1901] , for the purpose of organising the Eastern Swedish Conference."[1]

Twenty-eight parishes were represented at this first meeting, and the roll of the clergy showed twenty-seven names.[2] The oldest of these churches were a direct fruit of Hedstrom's early labors; these, in turn, had given birth to other congregations, and so the number had increased. One church (Quinsigamond, Massachusetts) had been founded by a group of Methodists who had immigrated from Degerfors, in the province of Värmland, where Methodism

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1. Protokoll förd vid Östra Svenska Konferensens Organisation och Första Sammanträde i Svenska Immanuel M. E. Kyrkan, Brooklyn, N. Y. City, Den 24 och 25 April 1901, p.15.
2. A review of this organization meeting was written by Olin Swanson and published in S, May 8, 1901. The list of the appointments, etc., is given in CA, May 9, 1901. The new conference numbered nearly 4,000 members.

in Sweden had maintained, since 1866, one of its strongest churches.[1] Swedish Methodism had made its way into Boston and Brockton, Massachusetts, places visited by Hedstrom in earlier years (though he himself founded no permanent work there),[2] and to other localities in industrial New England where the heightened immigration of the eighties and nineties had created Swedish settlements of size and importance. The Bethel Ship parish had issued into an organization (in the east) extending from Monson, Maine, to Wilmington, Delaware.

Although the labors of the indefatigable Bethel Ship missionary had been consummated a quarter of a century earlier, surely no one in the group that day could be unmindful of the fact that the foundations of the newly born Eastern Swedish Conference, as well as those of the larger structure of Scandinavian Methodism, had been laid by Olof Gustaf Hedstrom.

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1. Wallenius and Olson, op. cit., p. 18.
2. Ut supra, pp. 144-145.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

It is easy to be unduly critical of the churches born out of the nineteenth century immigration. The membership of these churches was for the most part recruited from the poorer classes who had sought America to improve their economic condition; these individuals had neither social position nor high cultural attainments, and it is but natural that the churches they founded should bear the marks of the social stratum of which they were a part. The church scene, in the early period which we have been studying, was characterized ~~with~~ by much rivalry and ill-will, and yet, in spite of these gloomy aspects, one is firmly convinced that the church organizations represent the highest and finest cultural efforts and contributions on the part of the vast numbers who in that period came to the new world to establish themselves. Although the economic problems which faced them were pressing and perplexing, the fact that churches were founded bears

positive evidence that these newcomers believed that man does not live by bread alone. To measure their cultural contribution is not an easy matter, but it is imperative to recognize that each group which has been taken up into our nation has such a contribution to make. This is true in regard to general culture as well as religious life. The writer refers to a significant statement of President Roosevelt: "We in the United States are amazingly rich in the elements from which to weave a culture. We have the best of man's past on which to draw, brought to us by our native folk and folk from all parts of the world. In binding these elements into a national fabric of beauty and strength, let us keep the original fibres so intact that the fineness of each will show in the completed handiwork."

This dissertation has been concerned with one of the church bodies which came into being among the Swedish element. Swedish Methodism marks its origin, as we have set forth, in a very vital religious experience in the life of Olof Gustaf Hedstrom, an humble tailor. We have seen how Swedish Methodism developed, through the

Bethel Ship Mission conducted with Hedstrom as the director, for a period of thirty years, and by the medium of the missionary efforts of that ardent soul, who, though in early life nurtured in the established church of Sweden, came to find his real spiritual home in a typical Anglo-American denomination. The writer has sought to show how Swedish Methodism is related to the entire field of the religious organizations of Swedish origin in the United States. It has been advanced that there were certain parallels between the läsare movement in Sweden and the spirit of Methodism, a fact which attracted many of the immigrants who had associated with pietist groups before they left their homeland. The author has also contended that Swedish Methodism affords a splendid area of inquiry for the study of cross fertilization of religious cultures.[1]

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1. In this connection the author has been interested in a study of "Swedish Methodist Hymns and Songs" prepared by Rev. Henry C. Whyman. Whyman's presentation shows clearly that it was not the highest in American hymnology from a cultural point of view which found its way into Swedish Methodism, but rather that which was crude and mediocre. In this respect Swedish Methodism showed the influence of the American frontier.

Olof Gustaf Hedstrom was eminently well qualified to perform a commendable work during the frontier period which saw the founding of Swedish Methodism. Although he was a man of very humble origin, lacking formal education and cultural refinement, and probably not overendowed with executive ability, yet he did possess abundant enthusiasm, a zeal and hunger for work and a passion for souls born out of a living experience, qualities and endowments which made him a natural religious leader and especially well qualified to serve during the pioneer days. This dissertation has shown how his spiritual influence radiated in many directions and how vital his relation was to the whole early structure of Scandinavian Methodism. The life of Olof Gustaf Hedstrom is a glorious testimony to what can be accomplished by an individual, who, though having humble attainments, is completely dedicated to the Kingdom of God.

The Swedish Methodist Church in the United States, although it was the first group to establish permanent work among the Swedish element, never grew to great proportions. At the present time the organization numbers approximately 22,000

members, and 200 pastors.[1] It has been stated that the meager figures may be attributed to the unfortunate reliance on American assistance and the failure to have a wholly independent status.[2] However, it is conversely true that the state of dependency has been continued because of the failure of this church to grow numerically.

Leaders of the Swedish Methodist church of today are alive to the fact that this body is faced with peculiar problems. This is brought out in an informative way in a report presented to the Eastern Swedish Conference, January 23, 1936, by the Commission on Boundaries (subcommittee on evangelism).[3] This committee sought to study the effect of possible merger, with the American body, upon the religious and evangelistic spirit of the Swedish Methodist churches. The findings of the committee may be summarized briefly as follows:

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1. Computed from the Minutes (1936) of the Central Northwest Conference and the Minutes of the Eastern Swedish Conference, with consideration also given to the fact that there are a number of Swedish Methodists both in Texas and on the Pacific Coast in churches now allied with the American body.
2. Cf., the article on Swedish Methodism, in Svenskarna i Amerika (edited by Hildenbrand and Fredenholm, II, p. 143.
3. This report was prepared by Rev. O. W. Hjerpe and Rev. Henry C. Whyman. Through the courtesy of the latter the present writer has had an opportunity of making a study of the same.

1. There is a certain theological and spiritual difference between Swedish Methodism and American Methodism. The Swedish immigrants in the United States had a religious foundation quite lacking among the people of their adopted country, resulting chiefly from the catechetical instruction and compulsory preparation for confirmation which they received in their homeland. They possessed a sound knowledge of the fundamentals of the Christian faith, a knowledge which took on new life under the influence of warm, evangelical preaching.

2. The sect tradition is strong among the non-conformist Swedes. Those who from a Lutheran State Church background, with its inclusivism, adopted the Methodist faith in their new land, became conscious that the sect held to a higher standard of life and Christian experience and required a higher profession than that made by the majority. This volitional act on the part of the Swede made him even more conscious of the sect tradition than was the case with most of the Americans.

3. There is a certain innate seriousness in the Swede not often found in American life, and any attitude of flippancy or frivolity in relation to religion is quite incomprehensible to him.

4. A warmer evangelical spirit is found in Swedish Methodism than generally obtains in American Methodism. Whereas American Methodism has often been secularised, Swedish Methodism has not accommodated itself to the spirit of the times. The spirit of revivalism, however, is not typically Swedish, but has rather come through Anglo-American influences, as the religious history of Sweden will show. It may very well be true that the farther Methodism in Sweden is removed from English and American influences, the more high-church it becomes.

5. American Methodism has placed great emphasis upon the social implications of the Gospel whereas Swedish Methodism has firmly resisted this as an unwarranted intrusion of a non-essential. In this we see illus-

> trated that a State Church background is not dissolved merely in a generation or two. Luther's conception of church and state, as two members of one and the same social organism, still characterizes the mind of the Swedish Methodist, even after long association with those who are zealous to usher in the Kingdom of God on earth.

The report of the committee, after considering the above distinctive features of Swedish Methodism, deals with the effect which a possible merger would have. It is brought out that if the Swedish Methodist churches remain intact and if they continue to have men of Swedish blood to serve as pastors and leaders, then a merger would have little effect on the churches, one way or another. In the spiritual quality of the leadership, therefore, is found the key to the situation. It is also pointed out that with their own seminary no longer functioning the Swedish Methodists are faced with a grave problem in providing trained pastors for their churches. The report also advances the suggestion that a number of the young people have been affected in their religious lives by the distinctive qualities of

Swedish Methodism, but it stands to reason that with cessation of immigration these distinctions will grow fainter, for the young people will inevitably succumb to the influence of the predominant cultural and religious environment, which is American. Finally, the report sounds a warning that decided losses would be incurred if at the present time American and Swedish pastors were shifted promiscuously, due to the presence of differences previously described.

The present author ventures no prediction in regard to the future of Swedish Methodism in the United States. The purpose of the present dissertation has been historical, but the writer feels that an historical and foundational study such as this thesis presents is of value in rightly appreciating the true nature and genius of the body with which it is concerned, thus preparing the way for a clearer vision for future days. It is of more than common interest to know that at the same time this historical inquiry has been pursued, another author has concerned himself with a project quite complementary in nature, namely, to study the conflict and adjustment of

two religious cultures, American Methodism and that branch of Methodism which came into being through the life and labors of Olof Gustaf Hedstrom.[1]

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1. Whyman, The Conflict and Adjustment of Two Religious Cultures, the Swedish and the American, as Found in the Swede's Relation to American Methodism. (Ph.D. thesis, New York University, 1937.) The author feels indebted to Rev. Whyman for encouragement and guidance received through many conversations on the subject of Swedish Methodism in the United States.

APPENDIX

A JOURNAL

Written by Olof Gustaf Hedstrom during his visit to Sweden in 1933

This Journal forms the major portion of a volume (Hedstrom, Diary) presented to the Immanuel Swedish Methodist Church, Brooklyn, New York, by Mr. Adolph Carlson, a member of the congregation from the early period. One section of the book is given over to a report on the distribution of the funds from the Jenny Lind concert in November, 1850; another to the record of marriages performed on the Bethel Ship. The author is deeply indebted to the Rev. Mr. Ivar F. Pearson, pastor of the Immanuel Church, for assistance in making the transcription. No effort has been made to improve the English used by Hedstrom, although some corrections in spelling have been made. A Swedish translation of this travelogue, made by the Rev. Dr. C. G. Wallenius, has been published in Sändebudet, beginning with the issue of December 21, 1936. Permission to include the Journal in this dissertation has graciously been given by the Rev. Mr. Pearson.

New York, Monday, May 27, 1833.

This day has been a solemn day to me. This morning I was very much affected in my family worship. Previous to prayer I was thinking of the solemn moment before me -- I was thinking of a kind companion that I was about to leave, the many Christian friends that visited me, and the blessed means of grace, that I should be deprived of and the probability of never again enjoying any of these blessings. I was in some measure overcome in my feelings. I endeavored to suppress my feelings as far as I could before my wife. I was very much blessed while in prayer.

About 9 o'clock in the forenoon we got a man to take my things on board. Mr. Johns, a young man of excellent principle and, I believe, a Christian, who occupied my store, asked me if we should not have a word of prayer before I left. We called our friends together and sang a verse or two and I prayed. I felt the Lord very precious and was melted in tears and tenderness. Then Mr. Johns prayed and we felt truly that the Lord was with us. How my

departure was at hand. I took farewell of my wife and the rest in as short a manner as possible. I see a smile on her countenance mixed with grief. I went out of the house as soon as possible for fear that my feelings should overcome me. May the Lord bless and be with her and reward her for all her kindness and affection that she has exhibited towards me since our union together. And if the Lord shall take me home before I return to my family, may we meet where partings and sorrows shall never come.

I went down to the vessel with the car man. I preached Jesus to him all the way. He shook hands with me in a very affectionate manner. His countenance indicated emotion and he wished me a very pleasant journey. We hauled out our vessel on the stream and calculate to sail for Bremen early tomorrow morning. I am treated with respect and they seem to be a very clever people but no mark of Jesus about them. I hear them swear and see them drink and they very politely offer me to drink with them, and always drink my health when they drink. I in a solemn manner have told them that I do not drink any liquor, for conscience sake. I see here is something for me to do. The Lord give me

grace and may I be as wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.

New York, Tuesday 30, 1833.

We expected to sail today. The pilot came on board at 5 o'clock. The wind was not favorable. it rained very hard and the pilot thought best not to lift anchor but to wait till tomorrow morning. The captain and me commenced a discussion concerning the weather and various other things. He was in a good humor. I then commenced my discussion about spirituous liquors and tobacco. I told him that liquor was unnatural -- that it was not adapted to the nature of man. I told him for instance that when a youth first drinks liquor it does not taste inviting but he rather frowns at the taste. So it is with tobacco. I also said that after getting used to liquor the appetite for it increased and continued to increase till at last it became a master of a most cruel kind. I then showed the great consequence of the evil, how many miserable and destitute families there are; how many murders and thefts, fits, riots, time spent and character lost, etc. etc. etc. The Captain agreed with me that it was wrong

and a little after he told me he did not calculate to take liquor on board. He then told me that I was well off because I could command my appetite and not partake of these things, and said he wished he could. I then told him where my strength lieth. I told him it is the grace of God that can enable us; that grace will not be imparted without prayer. He told me his wife had been religious but was not now. I told it was a pity. He seemed to give assent to the truth. If the wind is favorable we expect to sail in the morning, the Lord willing.

May 29 -

The wind is still contrary and weather cloudy; we could not sail. The Captain treats me well. The Captain drinks but very little; also the mate. They seem to be more guarded in their conversation. I told the Captain yesterday that it hurt my feelings when I hear a man swear. I have not heard the Captain swear since. At dinner the Captain smiled when taking a small glass. He looked at me and said the Bible allows drinking. I told him I had not seen a single passage that recommended the use of ardent spirits. He said he thought he could find

some. He got his Bible but he could find none. I then pointed him to the following passages: Prov. 20:1; 21:17; 23:30; 31; Isa.5:11, 12; 28:7; and after he had read these passages he smiled and told me that I was right. I have felt the Lord precious this day, though in the forenoon I felt somewhat despondent that we could not sail. I have left the "Christian Advocate" up on deck in order that the people may read. There is a cut representing the flatheaded Indians. It seems to attract their attention. There is a long paragraph concerning these savages coming about three thousand miles to inquire about the true God and the right religion. The Captain and the Mate read this with close attention.

Friday, June 21 -

The Lord has seen good to lay his afflicting hand upon me in consequence of which I have not able to keep my journal since the 29th of May. I have had blessed seasons while being alone and contemplating on the goodness of the Lord towards me. I thought of the time I had spent, which was about eight years, since I was providentially carried over this mighty ocean. The 30th of May we lifted anchor and sailed from New York. The wind was fair. It was a beautiful morning; the scenery

was very pretty; interesting sights was to be seen on every hand. Looking down toward Sandy Hook I saw the beautiful banks on the side of the river, which was adorned with forts, mansion houses, gardens and green fields etc.; and looking over the water the large number of vessels of almost every size, some sailing up and some sailing down the river; then I saw the various flags blowing in the breese and the feeling all these objects produced in me was that they harmonised with the beautiful scenery. While standing almost lost in thoughts concerning the great variety of objects and their various relations I turned around and fixed my eyes towards the city and beholding the towering steeples and splendid houses; the Castle Garden with its green trees; and looking up along the docks the vast number of ships and vessels and flags of almost every nation, and so far as my eye could see up the North River it appeared like an extensive forest; and now and then Steam boats passing majestically up and down the rivers in every direction round this the greatest metropolis in American.

Saturday, June 22, 1833.

Our wind not so good and blows very fresh. We are some considerable distance in the English Channel but

we have had no particular sight of land so that we can possibly know where we are. I have prayed that the Lord will protect us against accident. My health is better for which I feel truly to thank the Lord.

Sunday, June 23.

Last night the wind freshed up and continued to increase until it blowed almost a hurricane. The Captain seemed to be very uneasy on account of the uncertainty of the distance from land. It was very dark and in such narrow waters we were in danger of running foul of vessels. About 11 o'clock in the evening we discovered a vessel close to us and we were just able to lay off for one another. We sailed at the rate of eight miles an hour so if we had run foul of the other there would have been no way escape. Praise the Lord for his care over us. At 6:30 this morning my eyes were gratified in beholding land distinctly for the first time since I left happy America. I made a sketch of the land that could be seen; also of a beautiful mountain which is called, the first part of it The Seven Cliffs, and the later part is called Beth Ned where is a Light House and telegraph. The third sketch is at the Narrows of the English Channel, the English and the French coast. It has been an extraordinary short passage thus far. We

are now going into the North Sea. I praise the Lord for his goodness towards me; he had heard and answered my prayer thus far and I will trust in him for time to come.

Monday 24-

I have not felt well today but the Lord still favors us with favorable wind. We are in hopes to reach Bremen tomorrow or next day. I labor under great disadvantage on account of our viteals - principally salt beef or pork. I hope to reach land so I can have a change of food and gain some strength in order to be able to prosecute my journey. I have had sweet peace this day. Though my body is feeble I am strong in faith. It is now 10 o'clock in the evening; we are close by Trial Light -- it lies on the Holland coast in the North Sea.

Tuesday, June 25th, 1833 -

About 10 o'clock this morning the wind became contrary and we were close in to the shore; the wind died away and it became a total calm - it was a little below (writing illegible) light house under the German shores in in the North Sea. The current was very strong towards the shore so we continued to drift in for some length of time. We prepared our anchor to let it go in; but if we had and

it had blowed up a storm toward the land there would have been great difficulty for us to get out and perhaps been obliged to run her ashore, while in this situation, driving in with the current, I prayed to the Lord to regard us in mercy and give us wind and I should consider it as a new token that I was called of the Lord to go to Europe, and after I had prayed I felt sweet assurance and visible proof within my mind that my prayer was granted -- though I was for a moment severly tempted that I was trifling with God and that I considered myself some great one and expected God to do miracles. While for a moment listening to the tempter a passage came to my mind I think it reads thus -- "Call upon me in the time of trouble and I will deliver thee -- I thought, assuredly this is a time of trouble and we poor creatures are not able to say successfully to the wind to stand still or to say blow! While contemplating this a fine breeze sprang up and we were able to go out to sea. The temptation left me and I praised the Lord -- gave Him thanks He heard my weak prayers, and felt to say "O to grace how great a debtor." As we were going out the Bremen pilot boat came to us and we took the pilot on board. I feel better in body today for which I as to praise the Lord.

Kopenhavn, July 3, 1853 -

On the 26th of June the wind still continued esty and we bit up all day but were not able to reach the harbor before dark. It became cloudy and in a little while there appeared two rainbows little distance from the other. In a few minutes it began to rain and all of a sudden a hurricane sprang up. We saw it a minute before it struck our vessel so we had time to close up some of our sails. It struck the vessel in such awful manner that I expected every spar would go over board. The Captain commanded the top sails to be lowered down as there was no time for reeving. The hurricane passed over in about fifteen minutes but it stormed and rained very hard the whole night with awful thunder and lightning. The 27th through the help of the Lord we got to (writing illegible) where the city of Bremen has built a dock for the vessels. The place is about 36 miles from the city of Bremen. I felt thankful to the Lord that had spared me to put my foot on the ground once more.

On the 28th we, the Captain and me, hired a cart and set out for Bremen. The country looked beautiful, the land is very level. Here we behold the old world with a variety of antiquity; the peasantry is

dressed still in the old cloth and their houses are singularly built. They are very large and the roof very slanting; the walls on the sides are very low. We came on towards the city and it became more interesting. The road was good and before we came in we had a very long lane of beautiful trees to pass through. All this country is called Hanover and is under English authority but the city of Bremen is free. This city is extraordinary remarkable for its ancient buildings. The houses are generally built with the gable facing the street and the roof exceedingly steep. As the roof progresses upwards there are several little offsets built out on the gable end and then are carved figures or little steeples. The fronts are adorned with carved work, generally of stone. I see by the dates on some of the dwellings that they are two hundred years old. The Town Hours, a wonderful building for its curious looks; the whole outside is covered with carved figures of men and beasts; it was built in the year 1500, better than three hundred years old. The most interesting building I saw was a church built of grey stone and very large. It is called the Dom Church and was built in the year 1091. The first service held in it was conducted by Archibishop Adelbert. It had two steeples and in the

year 1656 one of the steeples burned down; the one standing is said to be the highest in Germany. Under the immense building is a very extensive vault wherein are deposited the bodies of the nobles from different kingdoms that have died in those parts. Though some have been deposited several hundred years ago they remain in a perfect state. I received the true record of this building from the American Consul. The Consul treated me with kindness and respect. He charged nothing for my pass-port. He had been Consul nearly forty years and had been appointed by Gurl Washington. He showed me his commission. It was signed with Gurl Washingtons' own hand. The people seem very respectable. I bless the Lord that I have a room here where I can offer up prayer and praise to the Lord for his kindness toward me.

Five o'clock in the afternoon of the 30th I left Bremen for Hamburg. We travelled all night and we arrived there 9:30 A. M. Sunday, 30th. This place is built something like Bremen but its buildings not so ancient but a great place for capital and wealth. I calculated to go to church in the afternoon but on enquiry I found that they had but one service, at 11 o'clock in the forenoon, the rest part of the day was

spent in dancing. They invited me to the theater in the evening as it would be very interesting; the King of Denmark and the King of Holstein would be there. I told them no, the Lord have mercy on their souls. Between eight and nine o'clock the two kings with a great number of generals and officers and regiments of Lancers of great pomp and splendor rode by the Hotel where I stopped. The King of Denmark is an old man, gray headed and rather small in size.

On Monday I hired, in company with a Swedish gentleman and his lady and Dutch Baron, a cart and left in the evening for Lubeck. While traveling through the night we talked. My countryman was a man who could use different languages and almost every subject either home or abroad he understood but on the subject of vital religion he was a stranger. After I had talked a little while I told him my principle that we must be born again; that there is such a thing as to know for ourselves that the Lord has pardoned our sins. I know by our previous conversation the different kinds of evil they were addicted to and I shaped my conversation so as to strike at what they called innocent amusement. I proved from the word of God the wickedness of these things and insisted on the holy requirement of the Gospel; both he and his

lady endeavored to find some passage to justify themselves but could not. After this they did not ask any more questions. Both appeared rather distant. May the Lord have mercy on them.

Last night we started from Lubeck in the steam boat 5 o'clock for Copenhagen. We had fine weather and good conditions. This morning for the first time in eight years I saw the shores of my native country — it was very pleasing, but as the boat did not touch on Swedish shores I had to go to Copenhagen. We have arrived safely and I have all things rushed to go 8 o'clock tomorrow morning to Malmo in the Packet 12 o'clock in the evening.

July 4th -

After many ceremonies and expense I had to go to the police with my pass and thence to the Swedish Consul for pass stating that I had no calare and thence to the Commander of the Guard and to the second and from thence to the Fort that is called Three Crowns Battery, and then I was allowed to sail for Sweden. On account of contrary wind we did not reach Landskrona (a city of Sweden) before 1 o'clock in the night. There as well as in Denmark I could not remove my trunks out of the boat and

I could not go up into the city before my trunks were examined and my pass signed. All this difficulty made clear to me the bondage and yoke my native country labor under and I appreciate more than ever the political and religious liberty that prevail in the happy land of America.

At 8 o'clock on the 5th of July I was according to the laws of Sweden ready to proceed on my journey from this the first city and place where I was permitted through the goodness and sparing mercies of God to set my foot on my native soil. While waiting here for the officers to come and examine my baggage etc., I rested a little, about these hours, in a little tavern in which I was introduced by the Commanding Officer of the garrison. I was treated with great respect. It was noon day light and as I did not feel myself secure here on account of apprehension that I might be robbed for wherever I looked I saw everything bespeak of poverty and distress. The house had no support to depend upon but from the soldiers as this place was little distance from the city so there were no inhabitants but soldiers to guard the harbor. I see by the actions of the inmates of the house that it was a place of ill fame. This gave me much

anxiety for my person and property. I then thought and considered whether it was best for me to remain or to go out and walk within the harbor till daylight, but considering that I would there be exposed to be robbed by the soldiers I resolved to remain in the house until daylight. They prepared my bed on a sofa and as they talked to me I answered very short and with staring countenance they left my room and I retired but dare not sleep as above mentioned. Daylight soon came and I left this habitation, praise the Lord, unhurt. As I was walking this beautiful morning on the banks of the harbor waiting for to see the Commander -- as I could not pass before he seen my passport -- many thoughts run across my mind. As I looked around and saw the trees, etc., peculiar to my native soil my heart was uplifted to heaven in gratefulness for the innumerable mercies God had bestowed on me in the years since I left this my native land. I love it, and it seems to animate my feelings to walk once more on its green banks. While walking I held, as it were, conversation with myself what God had done for me, and especially what he had done for my soul. He had with his spirit striven with me and with his providence led me amongest his

people that taught the pure word of God, and by these blessed means I was brought to the knowledge of truth and could say, that God for Christ's sake had forgiven my sins. I feel to say with the Hebrew children -- Let heaven and earth praise Him! And as I have not had the rational doubt on my mind but that it was my duty to go and see my relations and with the help of the Lord do what I could for God and their immortal souls. I felt to proceed on my journey as soon as I could. As here are no stages as there are in America I had right as a traveller to order horse and carriage to go with me to the next house appointed for this purpose which was about five miles apart. Soon I came to Lund a city in the state of Skane, a celebrated place for colleges and literature. Here I had to wait for fresh horse and carriage. In the hotel where I stayed were several gentlemen. They very politely addressed themselves in their conversation to me. Observing I was a foreigner they asked me what part I belonged from. I told them I came from North America. They asked me several polite questions. I discovered from their dress that one was a Lutheran preacher. They asked me if Genl. Jackson was President yet, etc., and concerning our religion. I told them that though our civil

laws were made according to Christianity they had no connection with the church government, so church and state are not united and those of different sects of Christians have united themselves voluntarily to these Christian Churches without any compulsive measures of civil or religious laws and that the civil laws can not and do not say how much we shall or ought to pay our preachers, etc. I told them that so long as people swore and lived a wicked life they cannot belong as members of our Christian societies. These gentlemen swore almost in every word and the Lutheran preachers were in their company though I did not hear them swear, but they partook with the rest and laughed and did not reprove them. One of them politely took his leave of us and as I had told them our Christians endeavored to live a holy life they seemed to be very silent and one of them came to me and said he should like to speak to me. He told me he was a Lutheran Preacher and an agent of the Temperance Society of Sweden he said they had increased till a great number. He wanted to know if we were many. I told him that almost all Christians in America belong. I asked him if he knew how many Readers there were in Sweden. He said, "I think six thousand." I ask-

ed him what he thought of them. His conversation rather bordered on ridicule but when I told I loved these people and that I was one of the same he changed his conversation and said he thought they were a good people. He said that though he was a Lutheran Minister he often attended their meetings. I had notion to converse any longer as my convictions was calm. He told me that he had come from Stockholm to see the Archbishop of Lund if he could give him a church. Poor man, he did not reprove them for their swearing, etc., but on the contrary partook very heartily in what they said but I did not hear him swear. He asked me very politely if I would not take a little wine and water with him which I did and bade him adieu.

I traveled nearly night and day and with uplifted heart to the Lord to direct my journey so that I may find my oldest brother Carl Petter who lived fifty miles from where my father lived when I left Sweden. As he had found the Lord before I left I hoped he had proved faithful and it would be double joy to see each other. As a Christian he would give me all the information necessary for to lay plans for my further journey in what way to do the most good. Nothing particular happened

till I came to Netra by, four miles from where I expected to see my dear brother. I had a letter from a young man I have had in my employ for four years, which had found the Lord in happy America. It was to his parents though some distance out of my way. I thought it would be a joy on the part of the parents to hear from the son that had been away from them eight years, and if the good Lord spare my life to see America to tell him that I had seen his parents, etc. Though the driver knew where J.P.G. parents lived it was with great difficulty I could get him to go so much out of our way as to see them. But when we came perhaps half way to the place there were two roads and as we see a man and a woman come we stopped to ask the right road to Granat's. He said that it was his name. They came near to the wagon and I asked them if they had any children in North America. They told me yes. I told them I had a letter from one of their sons. I also told them I had seen him six weeks ago in America. I can never forget with what heartfelt emotion these parents expressed themselves. As I take leave of them their eyes were full with tears of thankfulness for my kindness and for joy that they could hear from their son that had been absent eight years. I left them with the hope that I

would see my beloved brother within one hour. But as I did not know but that he might have moved or perhaps died since I left Sweden I lifted up my heart to the Lord that he would make some way for me so I might find him or some right intelligence of him. As I approached near Lyckeby where he was when I left Sweden, I met two young lads. I asked them if they knew Charles Hedstrom. They stopped and looked on me with amazement and for a moment did not answer and then said to me, "Lord God, here is his brother." I asked them if they knew him. They said they did and told me where he lived and said that he had a bakery, but my brother did not understand baking when I left Sweden I thought perhaps this is not my brother. As this was Sunday, July 7th, I commenced this day's journey 2 o'clock in the morning in order that I should come to Lyckeby early in the forenoon but I was obliged to wait for my conveyance so I did not come there before 11 o'clock in the forenoon. When I came to the house where I expected to see my brother, a servant girl came to the door and I asked if he was at home. She said no, he and his lady are to church but she expected them home immediately. I asked her if I could wait here until they came

home. She said as she was a servant she had no right to give me liberty. Then I told her I was his brother. She with astonishment opened the door and let me in. As I came in an old lady opened the door in the adjoining room and bid me step in. She told me she was my brother's Mother-in-law. She pointed her finger to a little girl about eight months old and said this is his little daughter. I looked around the house and everything bespeaks of neatness and comfort. I felt to thank the Lord on his behalf. I told the old lady that I should like to see if he knew me, so the servant girl took my things and carried them upstairs and I wait in another room to take by surprise. But the servant girl had told a person and this person told my brother as she met him a little from the house that his brother had come from North America. I waited to see him with great sensation and as he and his wife came into the house he came upstairs and sprang into my room and with joyful tears we hastened to each others embraces and gave praise to the Lord together for his preserving care and that we were spared once more to see one another in this vale of tears. This was an interesting moment as might be expected. We had

much to say to ask about. I felt most anxious to know if he had the blessed evidence as he had eight years ago that the Lord was precious to his soul. He answered me, yes. We spent the remaining part of the day in telling of the wonders of the Lord and the various trials he had delivered us from. His wife and his mother-in-law who lived with them also knew the reality of religion. This blessed family lived here and worshipped God in sincerity amids religious superstition and formality. I heard among other solemn truths my brother told me that my dear sister Johanna died in the year 1828, and one of my youngest brothers died previous, namely Johannes. My grandmother died in that year and my stepmother also had died. All this had taken place since I left my native land. Many of these that sleep in the tomb I expected to see, but they are gone. O God, what land calls to me and all the living to prepare for that solemn hour as the evening comes. We bow our knees to the most high God and give him praise for his love and goodness to us. I was melted to tenderness before the Lord as my dear brother addressed the throne of grace in his way though he made use of prayers that he had

learned out of the Lutheran prayer book, but he prayed from the sincerity of his heart and I was very much blessed.

Monday, July 8th -

This morning I was very much refreshed after sleeping in a good bed after so lond and tiresome a journey. I was very sore after so much riding though the roads are as good as can be found in the world. Their carts are so roughly made and the most part of the country is very mountainous. Those things make it very tiresome travelling. But my soul was happy in the Lord whilst walking about in my brother's orchard and beholding how bountifully the Lord clothed that spot with his blessing, and I also as I went in and outside the houses it showed it had the blessing of heaven and an industrious husbandman. His business went on with regularity and numerous people gave him the preference on account of his honesty in his dealings; and in how much better condition I found him than I expected in every respect, both in spiritual and temporal things. When considering the persecution and scorn of all men, but most from the

preachers toward these people that have through repentance and faith found the Saviour, it would seem impossible to a person that does not take into account the care God has over the righteous, that the few scattered pilgrims through this beautiful land can stand. But glory to God. He hath not forgotten his people -- My dear brother has with his industry and with the blessing of God gained enough to secure for himself and his little family a comfortable place of some considerable value even in this scant country. So I see the promise fullfilled: Seek ye the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and all the rest shall be added unto you.

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Note: The author is deeply indebted to the Royal Library at Stockholm for assistance in furnishing photostatic copies of the above articles. Transcripts of many others were also procured but I have listed only those which were directly used. The aid of Dr. George M. Stephenson, of the University of Minnesota, is also gratefully acknowledged.

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