

Luther's Hymns in our Hymnals

By M. Fr. Wiese

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Markus Frederik Wiese (1842—1934) was one of the most important leaders of the Old Norwegian Synod. He played a key role in the formation of the Synod's first hymnbook, the *Synodens Psalmeog* (1874) and also in the formation of the *Lutheran Hymnary* (1913).

He was born in Falster, Denmark, in 1842. There he was privately tutored and educated at a teachers' seminary at Jelling before emigrating to America in 1863. Soon after that he studied at St. Louis Seminary, and graduated in 1869. He served various parishes for the Old Norwegian Synod and joined the reorganized Synod shortly after the 1917 merger.

Wiese was the last surviving pastor of those who wrote and published the first Dano-Norwegian works in America. He wrote extensively for the *Evangelisk Luthersk Kirketidende*, the reorganized Synod's predecessor journal before the current *Lutheran Sentinel*.

Wiese's specialty was hymnody. He was well respected for his vast knowledge of hymnody. The Rev. J. A. Moldstad, a fellow Norwegian Synod pastor, wrote of him: "Wiese was a gifted poet, a diligent student, especially of the old theologians, a learned man, a prolific writer and a hymnologist of note."

I.

“A new song here shall be begun –
The Lord God help our singing!
Of what our God himself hath done,
Praise, honour to him bringing.
At Brussels in the Netherlands
By two boys, martyrs youthful
He showed the wonders of his hands
Whom he with favour truthful
So richly hath adorned.”

This glorious, cheerful, and joyous hymn (of twelve verses) is Luther’s first hymn. It was the first fresh work by the “Wittenberg Nightingale”. Luther sang it when he heard that two young Augustinian Monks, Henrik Voes and Johan Esh, were burned by the papal inquisitor Hogstraaten in Brussels on June 30th, 1523, for the sake of their evangelical confession. It first came out in a small collection of hymns (“The Erfurt Enchiridion”) in 1524 under the title: “A Song about the two Martyrs of Christ, who were burned in Brussels by the Sophists from Louvaine”. But here are included yet the ninth and tenth verse: (“the deed now burns them in their mind” and “now the ashes cannot lie silent”). They are in Johan Walther’s Hymnbook, which came out later that same year, and perhaps was only afterward reworked by Luther. This, Luther’s Martyr-song, made a mighty and indescribable impression, and claimed its place in the hymnbooks at the time of the Reformation. Since it is not really a church hymn, it later disappeared from our church hymnbooks and was only taken up in such collections that were not directly going to be used for singing in the church. It has contributed much to the spreading of evangelical doctrine, and thus for its part powerfully helped to accomplish what the writer says in the tenth verse:

“Their ashes ne’er shall cease to swell;
They fly to ev’ry nation.
No stream, hole, ditch, or grave can quell
Or hide th’ abomination.
He who did seek with murd’rous hand
To silence them while living
Now in their death through ev’ry land
Must hear men praises giving
And singing right joyfully.”

This precious, priceless spiritual song, which should be well known among us, was translated early on into Danish, first by Hans Tausen, and afterward by Hans Thomisson. More recently it has been translated at least four times, namely by Stener Johan Stenersen in 1819, M. B. Landstad in 1855, F. L. Mynster in 1863, and Rector Hans Rasmussen in 1890. In English there are at least four to five translations from the last [19th] century.

“The summer is hard by the door,
And winter starts to shun it,

The tender flow'rs now bloom once more,
And He who hath begun it
Will surely complete His work.
Amen.”

With these joyful words Luther ends his Martyr-song from 1523. This rich first fruit provided good admonition; it became *one of the most important things* for the development of the singing of evangelical *songs in the church*. And more *hymns* followed *soon after this*. Thus there were printed, already by the year 1524, together with the previously-mentioned hymn, in all, 24 hymns by Luther, and, among these, several of our most priceless and dearest hymns, which we would not give up for any price. In addition, in the following 20 years, until 1543, when Luther wrote his last two hymns, 11 more hymns came. And when we include “The Litany,” which Luther reworked in 1529 for use in the evangelical Divine Service, the total number of spiritual songs that we have from him comes to 37, which at the time of the Reformation, of course, got their place in all German, evangelical hymnbooks, which came out in great number all around. And these hymns, which were diligently used, had, both at the public Divine Service and elsewhere, obtained such an extremely great significance for the spread of the gospel and strengthening in the hearts, that it often is said, and indeed rightly, that hardly anything has contributed so much to the Reformation’s gaining entrance and foothold, just as they *did*. The Papists themselves declared, but *of course* with outrage, that “The people sing themselves into the Lutheran doctrine”.

Many of Luther’s hymns were already at that time translated into other languages; and among these, particularly into English – that language, which in the future will also become *quite important* for the Lutheran Church, such as the case now is here in America. And all of them, with only about one exception, were translated fairly early and repeatedly into Danish, and here in their “new clothing”, which often was humble enough, they received just as eager and joyful a [welcome], yes, a truly blessed welcome, *as* was awarded to them in their Fatherland. It seems that only one of them, namely Luther’s allegorical (and, for many, incomprehensible) hymn about the Holy Christian Church according to the 12th chapter of the Revelation of St. John, was not transferred into our language until 300 years later. (The oldest Danish adaption which we know of is an fortunate rendering by that pious friend of hymns, Pastor B. R. Lund, d. 1809, who translated 18 of Luther’s hymns; but since then it has been translated more often.) Indeed, almost because of its obscurity it also disappeared early on from most of the German hymnbooks.

And as a proof or testament to the love Luther’s hymns were embraced with in his own time in the Danish church, to what importance and value at that time they were attributed with, it can also be important, that they, all, with about only the one exception mentioned, thus 36, got their place in the first common German and Norwegian church hymnbook, which Pastor Hans Thomisson by official decree collected and published in 1569. And so, here they were in force as church hymns up until the end of the following century, until 1699, when Kingo’s hymnbook reduced the number thereby, so that 5 of Luther’s hymns were excluded. That “Now We Will Sing a New Song” went out—nothing can be said—since it indeed is no true church hymn; not according to our standards, at any rate. It would, however, not hurt, if one such Martyr-hymn as this one by Luther, were still in our hymnbooks; yes, it would surely be of greater benefit, than many a one of those which are there now. And still less would it have hurt, if the other four of Luther’s hymns, which were omitted, had been allowed to stand, especially if one had had usable translations of them—but there was a somewhat lack of those. But quite certainly would it

benefit us, if we once could make ourselves better acquainted with Luther's hymns and obtain greater confidence in them, than is the case now; then we could perhaps be convinced, not only that we have only one Luther, but also, that we have only one hymn-singer like Luther, and that he therefore must have a quite different prominent position in our hymnbooks, than any other of our otherwise most excellent hymn poets have.

In the meantime it was still otherwise true, that 35 of Luther's Hymns (the Litany included) still had a place in all good Lutheran hymnbooks. Only after the pietistic school of thought came into power, did Luther's hymns become gradually fewer and fewer in the hymn books. Still, the familiar, large, Halle or Freylinghausen's Hymnbook (G. A. Francke's Edition from 1741) retained 34 of his hymns; the one which is omitted here, surprisingly enough, is: "Blessed is the man, who in God's fear stands." But this hymnbook is also the one which began, early on, the modern-liberal change (which was later altered in various ways) of the 2nd line in Luther's most renowned hymn of confession, "Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Thy Word, Restrain the murderous Pope and Turk". [The words] "Pope and Turk" were allowed to remain, but above these words were printed: "The enemies of Christ", and thereby they were suggested to be sung in a rather general sense as "Restrain the murder of the enemies of Christ." Each person by "the enemies of Christ" could think of whomsoever he wished, though one might be free, lastly, to think about and pray against Christendom's two immortal enemies: the Pope and the Turk. "For the Pietists", says Stip, "the enemies of Christ were obviously the Lutheran pastors and theologians, who *did not go along* with pietism." Although it must be added, that Pontoppidan in his hymnbook from 1740 (which includes 31 hymns of Luther) did not take it upon himself to change Luther's hymns and did not imagine to keep the congregation from singing: "And stay the murder of the Pope and Turk."

Now in the following *pages* it will be our assignment to provide as precise information, as is possible for us, about how many and which of Luther's hymns—which from Thomissøn's hymnbook on and until this day—have gotten a place in each one of all Danish and Norwegian authorized hymnbooks for ordinary use. This can be instructive in more than just an historical respect. In this way, one will be able to see from this, among other things, how important or unimportant at various times in the past three and a half centuries one has held it: *either to have* or to do without more or fewer of Luther's hymns in his hymnbook, and thus to let him abundantly or poorly or basically not at all have his say in the assembly of the congregation. This dare also serve well in some respects, which are of great importance, as a roughly reliable measuring stick for what esteem, especially in leading circles within the church, one has had and has for the reformer of the church, whom God specifically determined, and his testimony, and what weight one placed and places on letting precisely him with his testimony through his hymns to really have his say in the congregation and then here, particularly in its public Divine Service, to be able to present to the congregation and train it in what the Lutheran faith, doctrine, and confession are.

Now someone will immediately object about as follows: Naturally, Luther was a great man, a great theologian, especially for his time; he has quite certainly written some excellent hymns, and for that we also esteem him; but there are also other excellent hymn-writers, particularly even from our time; so we must also let them have their say; so in this way Luther must step back a bit here, so that the others also can sing in this way for the congregation, etc. We answer this objection briefly in this way: Yes, we have many hymn writers, both great and small, both good and bad, both from past and present; nor have we at this moment any lack of such people who think they are spiritual poets, when they, either with a certain natural skill, or

only after much struggling, are able to set some pious thoughts into a rhyme. Even now, where it applies to someone working on a hymnbook, if one would look completely aside from all such rhyme-smiths and be content to stick with the truly good hymns of great and good hymn writers, preferably to such hymns, which are well known and recognized from older times, and especially now, when one still has such a rich supply of core hymns to select from, if one would finally refrain from encumbering the hymnbooks with a bunch of mediocrity and even worse – then one might be satisfied and give thanks. But, and let no one try to overlook and forget this: we have only one Reformer, called and endowed for the same by God and confirmed by him, only one Luther; and he was, by God’s grace, a hymn writer whom few, yes, the kind of hymn writer that, rightly viewed, none of our familiar, great hymn writers reach up to, namely, provided that, one is not content simply to count the hymns and go by their number or get caught up in their poetical beauty and listen to their moving sound, but that one also, above all, will weigh their contents carefully, weigh it on “the Scales of Justice”, and not according to time’s shifting fashion or an individual’s taste or pleasure, which, as is known, is very different and often mutually contradictory. Also, Luther bears the prize here; and his undaunted work in this connection became extremely important. He is the father of the evangelical church hymn and congregational singing; we really have to give thanks to Luther that we, in our Divine Service, can be glad to have both of those, and that the congregation can take a lively part in the singing of hymns. Certainly one has grown accustomed to speaking well, yes, even boasting about his hymns (actually this applies only to few of them); but what does one do then, by the way? One allows them to lie unused and unknown. It should not be this way; we should finally learn to think highly about them, to think more highly about them than we usually do; they should have precedence, especially in the public Divine Service (where we similarly, as the case was with our fathers and still is with other Lutherans, should have more hymns than we have had since Rationalism’s day), and even otherwise they should be diligently sung in the congregation. But this shall happen when they also may be offered in a worthy and in a singable form for the people of our time; otherwise, at any rate, the younger generation is compelled to let them lie unused.¹ However, it is now found most wise to offer Luther’s hymns, either in their old,

¹ The fact that among us in the most places the congregation’s participation in the singing of hymns is bad, especially when it has to do with certain old hymns, the blame for this lies not in a little part in the rigid, monotonous, unvaried and lifeless, but unfortunately accustomed form of the chorale, in which also all the hymns, regardless of their content, are sung in our church. This way of singing is non-Lutheran, or, to say it more correctly, it was not the way one sang either in the churchly divine service or otherwise in the 16th century and far into the following era. This way of singing, which is the common way among us, is also a part of the legacy, in which a poorly asserted conservatism hides, from the Rationalistic era on. And it does not improve the case, but is even reprehensible that, in order to advise remedy here and there, one has gotten used to singing our traditional chorales with considerable speed, not to mention haste. Had congregational singing in Luther’s time been the way that is still prevalent with our Divine Service, then, quite certainly, what truly happened, according to the witness of both friends and foes, would not have happened: “that the people sang themselves into the Lutheran doctrine”; rather the opposite would have been the case. And we may surely beware, that we not, by holding too strictly to our accustomed, rigid, and unvaried form of the chorale, make it necessary for the younger generation that likes to sing, that it get an aversion to such an unnatural way of singing, so eventually a desire to sing is strangled, and one becomes silent (and for a large part of those concerned this has already become the case), or one even takes his refuge in the “easy” melodies of certain American sects, which are especially in fashion, the result of which probably only too soon will be that one sings himself out of the Lutheran hymns and thereby also out of the Lutheran doctrine and into all sorts of sects. This is surely a matter, which deserves much more serious deliberation than will be achieved, as truly we then want to avoid an imminent danger. That one in several places has choirs which almost alone must attend to all the singing at the Divine Service, is so far from being adequate, that it, on the

honorable form or in newer reworking, yet in this way they must never be offered, and be used even less in such a reworking, which Luther himself, if he were alive, would not acknowledge, yes, in fact he would protest against them, because they have become “overwhelmed” and “falsified”. But concerning such changed, “overwhelmed” and “falsified”, yes, pathetic, shabby hymns, both of his and others, unfortunately there are found simply too many in several of the hymnbooks, which will be discussed below.

Now it would indeed exactly be here extremely enlightening, if right away it could be more precisely demonstrated, how the various hymnbooks’ editors, especially from Guldberg onward, have handled and often mishandled the hymns of Luther and others, which they have taken up; but this would take us much too far; we must here be content with holding ourselves to the assignment we have set for ourselves. Perhaps later it may be useful to come back to this again.

There are 12 different hymn books we have here to take into consideration; and for the sake of brevity, each of them will be designated below with one particular letter, where it refers to them containing the hymns of Luther, namely in this way:

1. Hans Thomisson’s hymnbook from 1569 is designated with “T”. 2. Kingo’s hymnbook from 1699 with “K”. 3. Pontoppidan’s hymnbook from 1740 with “P.” 4. Guldberg’s hymnbook from 1778 with “G.” 5. Evangelical Christian hymnbook from 1798 with “E.” 6. Pontoppidan’s hymnbook reworked by Meyer and Boesen from 1844 with “M.” 7. The Danish so-called Roskilde Convent’s hymnbook from 1856 with “R.” 8. Landstad’s hymnbook from 1869 with “L.” 9. A. Hauge’s hymnbook from 1873 with “H.” 10. The Norwegian Synod’s hymnbook from 1874 with “S.” 11. The new North-Slesvig hymnbook from 1889 with “N.” 12. The new Danish hymnbook from 1898 with “D.”

Since it can well be of interest to several people, for the sake of comparison we will also take along the latest Swedish hymnbooks, which correspond with the period from Kingo’s hymnbook on and until this day; they are only 2, namely Swedberg’s from 1695, here designated with “Sw.,” and Wallin’s from 1819, with “W.”

One will have easiest access to find Luther’s hymns in the original language in the Missouri Synod’s Kirchen-Gesangbuch, which contains all of his actual church hymns; it is marked below with “Original”. The same number of hymns, only with exception of the litany not being listed among the hymns, but among “General Prayers”, where it stands first of all, are found also in the Missouri Synod’s edition of the “Evangelical Lutheran Hymnbook” (Baltimore, 1892), which is referred to below under the label “English”.

Where a number is added below at the right side of the cited letters, this marks the hymn’s number in the pertinent hymnbook. Besides the number in “Original” and “English”, however, the only number listed here is in the hymn books one has most immediate access to for comparison, namely L., S., and D.

contrary, is a witness to the ingratitude with which the congregations regard one of the most important goods of the Reformation granted to the church; and that is precisely congregational hymn-singing. But if our church singing shall be assisted in a beneficial and proper way (and there is a very great need for this), then it will not be able to be done by letting oneself be led by the art of music of the last two centuries (for in reality it has hurt congregational singing) or by such collections of melodies (choral-books, etc.), which basically are a kind of compromise between the un-churchly, or, more correctly, unnatural chorale form on the one hand and one or more modern musical flavors on the other. No, what matters here also is thoroughly to study the congregational singing, as it was at the time of the Reformation (and precisely that is quite unknown enough among us), and then to search to revive it and introduce it, as far as may be done in a respectful manner.

Luther's hymns are listed below with the beginning line they have in Hans Thomisson's hymnbook, in part because this is the oldest of the hymnbooks we are concerned with here, in part because it, as explained above, contains all Luther's hymns with the exception of one, and in part, finally, because these hymns with few exceptions almost right up until our time and partly even in newer hymnbooks (as far as they are included here) have been and are known according to these names. Then the hymns here will be listed in the chronological order, in which Luther published them; the first number added to indicate a year signifies therefore when the original first was printed, and the other number (or numbers) indicating a year represents when the first (or the improved) translation, so far as it is known by us, came out in print in Denmark. Concerning who translated the individual hymns, and which other and older translations there may be otherwise, we dare not get involved in more precisely. The one who certainly was active earliest here and translated the most, is probably Klaus Mortenson; later Hans Thomisson is the most known; but earlier than he, one can name Hans Tausen, Christiern Peterson, etc.; it is likely declared, that the last one named translated "A Mighty Fortress is Our God". Nor can we here get involved with listing the various redactions, wherein each of Luther's hymns appears in the various hymnbooks from the 19th century. This would lead us too far afield, since in this regard there is such disunity, that many times the various hymnbooks each has its own redaction.

Luther's hymns are following:

1. A New Song shall now be begun. 1524. Danish: 1553. 1659. In "T."
2. Dear Christians, one and all rejoice. Also with the following beginning's verse: God Father and Son and Holy Ghost. 1524. Danish: 1529. 1533. In: T. K. P. L. 9. H. S. 286. N. D. 325. Sw. W. Original: 243. English: 209.
3. Out of the depths (From depths of woe). 1524. Danish: 1529, 1569. In: T. K. P. G. E. M. R. L. 273. H. S. 157. N. D. 446. Original: 214. English: 200.
4. Savior of the Nations, Come. 1524. Danish: 1529. 1569. In: T. K. P. L. 141. H. N. Sw. Original: 36. English: 36.
5. Now Praise We Christ, the Holy One (From East to West, Sedulius). 1524. Danish: 1529. In: T. K. P. L. 295. H. S. 192. Sw. Original: 15. English: 31.
6. Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest. 1524. Danish: 1529. In: T. K. P. G. M. L. 209. H. S. 279. N. Sw. W. Original: 132. English: 109.
7. Jesus Christ, our Blessed Savior. 1524. Danish: 1529. In: T. K. P. L. 308. H. S. 26. N. D. 376. W. Original: 205. English: 183.
8. O Jesus Christ, All Praise to Thee. Danish: 1529. In: T. K. P. R. L. 133. H. S. 79. N. D. 130. Sw. W. Original: 31. English: 18.
9. Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord. 1524. Danish: 1529. In: T. K. P. R. L. 429. H. S. 277. N. D. 289. Sw. W. Original: 134. English: 111.
10. We Now Implore God the Holy Ghost. 1524. Danish: 1529. In: T. K. P. G. E. M. R. L. 3. H. S. 4. N. D. 277. Sw. W. Original: 136. English: 120.
11. God the Father Be Our Stay. 1524. Danish: 1529. In: T. K. P. S. 183. N. Sw. W. Original: 145. English: 127.
12. O Lord, We Praise Thee, Bless Thee and Adore Thee. 1524. Danish: 1528. In: T. K. P. L. 69. S. 30. N. Sw. W. Original: 195. English: 186.
13. In the Midst of Earthly Life. 1524. Danish: 1529. In: T. L. 223. S. 142. N. Sw. W. Original: 416. English: 384.

14. O Lord, Look Down from Heaven, Behold. 1524. Danish: 1529. In: T. K. P. M. R. L. 497. H. S. 325. N. D. 340. Sw. original: 166. English: 163.
15. The Mouth of Fools May Well Confess [Psalm 14]. 1524. Danish: 1529. In: T. K. P. Sw. Original: 170. English: 165.
16. May God Bestow on Us His Grace. 1524. Danish: 1529. In: T. K. P. G. L. 28. H. S. 34. N. Sw. W. Original: 171. English: 160.
17. Happy the Man Who Feareth God. 1524. Danish: 1533. In: T. Sw. W. Original: 328. English: 250.
18. If God Had Not Been on Our Side. 1524. Danish: 1529. In: T. K. P. L. 555. H. S. 384. N. Original: 162. English: 136.
19. These are the Holy Ten Commands. 1524. Danish: 1533. 1569. In: T. L. 228. H. S. 144. N. Sw. W. Original: 180. English: 172.
20. Who Would Live a Christian Life. 1524. Danish: 1533. In: T. K. P. Original: 181. English: 173.
21. We All Believe in One True God. 1524. Danish: 1529. In: T. K. P. G. E. M. R. L. 12. H. S. 2. N. D. 1. Sw. W. Original: 183. English: 175.
22. Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands. 1524. Danish: 1529. In: T. K. P. R. L. 342. H. S. 215. N. D. 236. Sw. Original: 99. English: 93.
23. Jesus Christ, Our Savior Who Conquered Death. 1524. Danish: 1529. In: T. K. P. N. Sw. original: 110. English: 95.
24. In Peace and Joy I Now Depart. 1524. Danish: 1529. In: T. K. P. L. 162. H. S. 98. N. Sw. W.
25. Isaiah, Mighty Seer. 1526. Danish: 1533. In: T. Sw. W. Original: 147. English: 130.
26. Grant Peace, We Pray. 1529. Danish: 1533. In: T. K. P. N. Sw. W. Original: 177. English: 152.
27. We Sing Thy Praise, O God. 1529. Danish: 1529. In: T. K. P. G. E. M. R. L. 10. H. S. 1. N. D. 2. Sw. W. Original: 337. English: 318.
28. The Litany. Kyrie Eleison. 1529. Danish: 1533. In: T. K. P. G. L. 33. H. S. 244. N. In Sw. W. and English the Litany is not listed among the hymns, but among "the prayers of the church". Original: 360.
29. A Mighty Fortress Is Our God. 1529. Danish: 1533. In: T. K. P. G. E. M. R. L. 266. H. S. 171. N. D. 263. Sw. W. Original: 158. English: 135.
30. She Is Dear to Me, the Precious Maid (that is, the Church). 1535. It is not in any of our hymnbooks.
31. From Heaven Above to Earth I Come. 1535. Danish: 1553. 1569. In: T. K. P. R. L. 129. H. S. 74. N. D. 125. Sw. W. Original: 41. English: 22.
32. Our Father, Thou in Heaven Above. 1539. Danish: 1553. In: T. K. P. G. L. 14. H. S. 256. N. Sw. Original: 185. English: 176.
33. Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Thy Word. 1541. Danish: 1556. In: T. K. P. N. R. L. 29. H. S. 148. N. D. 316. Sw. Original: 159. English: 138.
34. The Star Proclaims the King is Here. 1541. Danish: 169. In: T. K. P. Original: 60. English: 52.
35. To Jordan Came our Lord the Christ. 1541. Danish: 1569. In; T. K. P. M. L. 260. H. S. 166. N. Sw. Original: 186. English: 179.
36. O Trinity, Most Blessed Light. 1543. Danish: 1569. In: T. K. P. G. L. 85. H. S. 37. N. Original: 143. English: 131.

37. To Shepherds as They Watched by Night. 1543. Danish: 1553. In: T. K. P. M. L. 145. H. S. 82. N. Original: 42. English: 39.

For the sake of completeness it can yet be added, that the final verse of the familiar burial hymn “Now Lay We Calmly in the Grave” is by Luther.

When Landstad in his hymnbook refers to the hymn “In Peace and Joy I Now Depart” to Luther, he is certainly justified in this, though it not is a hymn by Luther which he has reproduced here. The matter fits together in this way. In the year 1542 Luther wrote four different little verses, which were independent of each other; his thought thereby was that, one, if he so desired, could use them as epitaphs. And now Landstad has taken 2 of these and rewritten them as one hymn.

Some hymns have constantly been assigned to Luther which he, however, is not the author of. Thus it is also in our recent hymnbooks. As examples, here shall be mentioned, that L. ascribed Luther “If You in This World’s Little While”;² S. ascribes to him, “Jesus, May Thy Noble Peace”³; N. ascribes to him “With Festive Cheer,” and D. ascribes to him “Come, Holy Ghost, with Love now Fill.” But none of these hymns stem from Luther. Finally it has also been stated among us as a settled matter, that “Now Will We Drive Out the Pope”—an extremely polemical hymn, “ is by Luther. However, this is only a repetition of an old, unfounded assertion. All that can be proved regarding Luther’s involvement with this “hymn”, is this, that when his friend Johann Mathesius in the year 1545 delivered the hymn to him, Luther endorsed it and let it go out into print. Incidentally, this is not a hymn.

When one finally found in Denmark and Norway that the “Evangelical-Christian Hymnbook” was both too non-evangelical and non-Christian, in both places [Denmark and Norway] one was able to prepare a couple small “appendices”; and in them both a few hymns by Luther were included. In this way in the Danish “Appendix” from 1845, “From Heaven Above to Earth I Come” (see above, Nr. 31) was allowed to be sung; and then a new and good translation of “A Mighty Fortress is Our God” was given, which was in a tragic, tattered form in the hymnbook. And in the Norwegian “Appendix” from 1853, one became “most graciously allowed” to use “The Litany” in the Divine Service in one of the churches in Christiania [Oslo], secondly the aforementioned Christmas song (in its own redaction) and “A Mighty Fortress is Our God” in a new translation, and finally the last 3 verses of “To Jordan Came Our Lord the Christ” (see above, Nr. 35).

In the year 1855, a little “Christian Hymnbook” came out, “Collected and decreed, according to the highest royal command, for use for the Danish congregations in Schleswig”. The book is a rationalist botch. Of Luther’s hymns, it only has “We Now Implore”, with some alterations for the sake of taste according to the infamous E. Even “A Mighty Fortress is Our God”, which the Rationalists elsewhere used to take along in one way or another, is rejected here. Instead one has attempted well a recasting of David’s 46th psalm, which indeed is the basis for Luther’s famous hymn; it is specifically to be sung “in wartime”; though one has not had use for Luther’s glorious melody here.

Since in Denmark a strong aversion against, or dissatisfaction with, Roskilde Convent’s hymnbook prevailed, and private “Appendices” and the like were published all around, then at last one eventually got an authorized “Appendix” from 1873 for hymnbook and of significant

² Prof. DeGarmeaux has completed a draft translation of this hymn.

³ Prof. DeGarmeaux has also completed a draft translation of this hymn.

extent. In it, one hymn of Luther is included, namely, “Jesus Christ, Our Blessed Savior” (See above, Nr. 7). But since one was still not satisfied, then one got in 1890 an official “New Appendix” to what one had before, so one now had a hymnbook with a total of 992 hymns. In the new Appendix the number of Luther’s hymns was increased by 4, namely, “Dear Christians, One and All Rejoice” (see above, Nr. 2), “In Peace and Joy I Now Depart (see above Nr. 24), “To Jordan Came Our Lord, the Christ” (see above, Nr. 35) and “To Shepherds as They Watched By Night” (see above, Nr. 37). Finally, it can be added, that two hymns have been made from “From Heaven Above to Earth I Come”, but according to Grundtvig’s radical recasting of the old hymn.

Concerning the American edition of Landstad’s hymnbook (1895), prepared by the “United Church” and the “Hauge Synod”, with 96 “added hymns”, it should simply be noted here, that among these “added hymns,” none is found by Luther.

(Conclusion.)

And now when we in conclusion in a more summarizing way will answer the question of how many of Luther’s hymns are contained in each of the common hymnbooks, which have been used and are still used since the Reformation both in Denmark and Norway and also by the Danish and Norwegian Lutheran church bodies here in America, and finally, in which proportion Luther’s hymns are in the pertinent hymnbooks, then the result is as follows.

Of Luther’s total of 37 hymns and spiritual songs, including the Litany, the following 12 hymnbooks each in particular has the following number:

1. Hans Thomisson’s hymnbook from 1569, with 261 Danish and 8 Latin hymns, includes them all except for one, consequently 36; the one that is missing is Luther’s allegorical hymn about the church. Luther’s hymns therefore make up over an eighth of the hymns in this book.

2. Kingo’s hymnbook from 1699 has 305 hymns, 31 of which are by Luther; those that are missing are numbers 13, 17, 19, and 25 (along with 1 and 30); Luther’s hymns therefore make up over a tenth of the hymns in this hymnbook. It is remarkable that the four aforementioned numbers are omitted; this especially applies to Luther’s longer hymn on the 10 commandments (it has the short one); but then it has Klaus Mortenson’s excellent hymn about them, from 1529. Here there can perhaps be a question about whether one considered this one basically to be a reworking, although somewhat free [reworking], of Luther’s [hymn], and therefore on this basis it was included, even more since the other old translation was weak. Though perhaps here it can be a question, if one has not held this before basically to be one, albeit a somewhat free reworking of Luther’s and therefore also for that reason took it up, so many more, when the other translations were fragile. On the other hand, ten years later (1709) by private action a rich and valuable hymnbook (the so-called “1010-Book”) came out, which later was reprinted multiple times until far into the last [19th] century and gained very significant dissemination in Denmark and Norway (in fact, a considerable number of copies of it exist here in this country); and in this hymnbook is not only Luther’s hymn on the 10 Commandments, but all his hymns, which are found in Hans Thomisson’s book (partly also in newer translations) except numbers 1 and 30, thus 35 [of Luther’s hymns].

3. Pontoppidan’s hymnbook from 1740 has included all hymns in Kingo’s hymnbook except 8 insignificant hymns, and it has just the same 31 hymns by Luther, as Kingo’s book, not

more. It contains 552 hymns, so that Luther's hymns make up around an eighteenth of the hymns in this book.

4. Guldberg's hymnbook from 1778 has very little leftover for Luther's hymns; it gives only 10 of them, and of one of these, "May God Bestow on Us His Grace", it gives only 1 verse; moreover, it has given an utterly unnecessary and poor reworking of the last verse in "A Mighty Fortress is Our God." But over 21 of Luther's hymns, that for over 200 years had been familiar from Thomisson's and Kingo's hymnbooks, are here cast out at once! The book contains 438 hymns, so that therefore Luther's hymns here do not comprise even one forty-fourth of the number of hymns. The included hymns are as follows, from the aforementioned list: Nr. 3, 6, 10, 16 (only one verse), 21, 27, 28, 29, 32, and 36. In this hymnbook begins the infamous "enlightening" of that time with its desire to "overwhelm" and "improve" others' works so minutely as to make itself valid; but this beginning was productive, terribly productive.

5. The "Evangelical-Christian Hymnbook", that soon followed after, from 1798, followed the track indicated in Guldberg thus, so that it took the step fully, in that it showed that it had room neither in heart nor home for Luther's hymns. It certainly reproduces 5 of them (namely numbers 3, 10, 21, 27, and 29), but nearly all in such a rationalistic, tattered form, that it is both a mockery and a shame; thus it retains only the beginning line of "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," while all the rest is utterly corrupted. The book includes 560 hymns, of which Luther's hymns would comprise a one hundred and twelfth part, if the cited 5 numbers could be considered by him. In the two small "Appendices" to it, are a total of 4 hymns by Luther, including the Litany (this, however, only in the Norwegian "Appendix"), and, moreover, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" is rendered in a Christian way in them both, but in a different reworking.

6. Meyer's and Boesen's Hymnbook from 1844 is a reworking of Pontoppidan's; and though it is not a Rationalistic book, thus, just as Guldberg's hymnbook, it promotes the kind of theological school of thought that does not have any particular use for Luther's hymns; for of Pontoppidan's 31 hymns by Luther it has only the 10 (reworked with regard to the form), the rest were rejected. It includes 715 hymns, of which, accordingly, Luther's represents around a one seventy-second. It was this book's Christian stamp that gave occasion for some Rationalists in Slesvig preparing that little rationalistic hymnbook from 1855 with 1 hymn by Luther.

7. Roskilde Convent's Hymnbook from 1856 is a compromise-hymnbook, which wanted to satisfy both friends and non-friends of the "Evang.-Christian Hymnbook"; it reproduces only the following 11 hymns by Luther: numbers 3, 8, 9, 10, 14, 21, 22, 27, 29, 31, and 33. It includes 571 hymns, of which Luther's comprise one fifty-second. In both of its "Appendices", 5 more hymns by Luther are added. The total number of hymns was now 992, of which the hymns by Luther comprise a 62nd part.

8. Landstad's hymnbook from 1869 has 27 hymns by Luther (the book itself actually indicated two more, but neither of these are hymns by Luther); the missing ones are: numbers 11, 15, 17, 20, 23, 25, 26, and 34 (along with 1 and 30). The book has 634 hymns, of which Luther's comprise around a 33rd.

9. A. Hauge's hymnbook from 1873 has 25 hymns by Luther; the missing ones are the same as with Landstad and numbers 12 and 13 besides. The book has 633 hymns, of which Luther's comprise around a 35th.

10. The Norwegian-Synod's hymnbook from 1874 has 27 hymns by Luther; the missing ones are numbers 4 and otherwise the same as with Landstad with the exception of number 11. The book has 492 hymns, of which Luther's comprise around an 18th.

11. The new and, all things considered, good North-Schlesvig hymnbook from 1889 has 29 hymns by Luther; the missing ones are numbers 5 and otherwise the same as with Landstad with the exception of numbers 11, 23, and 26. The book has 624 hymns, of which Luther's comprise around a 21st.

12. But the new Danish hymnbook from 1898, far from not showing some desire to let Luther abundantly have his say in the congregation's assembly, like the previously named 4 hymnbooks; on the contrary, it has muzzled him even more than its predecessor; for while it [the predecessor], the Roskilde Convent's hymnbook, still had 16, this new hymnbook has only 13 hymns by Luther since it struck numbers 24, 35, and 37. Here is therefore a decline. For it does not improve anything, that one has divided one of Luther's hymns and made two out of it and that under Luther's name (which one, however, dared not do in the hymnbook's "proposal" from 1885) one has taken up Grundtvig's radical recasting ("The Happy Christmas Comes Once More") of Luther's glorious and child-like: "From Heaven Above to Earth I come", in which things are both taken out and added; one has thereby only achieved getting to mention Luther's name a couple of times more often than one should have the right to do. (Indeed, in the last "Appendix" one had also divided this Christmas hymn and made two out of it, namely of Grundtvig's recastings; though this has been rejected in the new hymnbook). But the thing is this, that it is Grundtvig who will be the dominant lead singer in this book; therefore one has then also taken up from him alone not fewer than around 170 hymns, of which around a quarter are translations or unnecessary reworkings of other translations, and original hymns. Thus Grundtvig's hymns comprise around a fourth of the book's 676 hymns, while Luther's only compose a 52nd of the hymns in this book! Secondly, it should still be added here, that the Danish hymnbooks from the last [19th] century neither have Luther's hymns on the Our Father or the Litany. On the other hand, the "Appendix" from 1873, and now the new hymnbook (1898) have a quite different, freshly made, and very short litany, indeed, the latter book even has it in a double redaction. But the old, honorable litany, which from Luther's time on all Lutheran hymnbooks have constantly followed—it is cast out and has utterly disappeared from the hymnbooks, counting from the "Evang. Christian Hymnbook" on, have been authorized for church use in Denmark. But while one thus removed the litany from the hymnbook for church use in Denmark, then it was taken up in two English hymnbooks, which are used in the Danish West-Indies and were printed in Copenhagen in 1850 and 1880.

Of the Swedish hymnbooks from the two previous centuries, Swedberg's (1695) has 28, and Wallin's (1819) has, which is worth noting, 21 hymns by Luther. But it is remarkable that the latter hymnbook does not have Luther's hymns on the Our Father; instead it gives its own, one from Wallin, that is far below Luther's. The Swedish hymnbooks put the Litany not in the actual hymn section, but later among the "Church Prayers". But Wallin's book has taken up a priceless reworking of the litany in the verse form by S. L. Ødmann; and we also have a translation of it by W. A. Wexels in our hymnbook under number 247. By the way, Hans Thomisson already has also, alongside the Litany, a rendering of it in 17 verses to the melody "Our Father in Heav'n Above".

Just as in Germany and other places, so we too have separate editions of Luther's hymns. From the last century there is one Norwegian and two Danish independent, new translations of all of Luther's hymns in separate hymnbooks, which can be acquired for an inexpensive price, namely: 1) Martin Luther's Spiritual Songs, translated and accompanied with annotations by M. B. Landstad. Christiania. 1855. 2) Luther's Hymns. With F. L. Mynster. Copenhagen. 1863. 3) Dr. Martin Luther: Hymns and Spiritual Songs. Translated by (Rector) Hans Rasmussen.

Copenhagen and Christiania. 1890. The edition mentioned first is the best, as it is also the most copious, since it includes not only historical annotations for each of the hymns, but also Luther's priceless prefaces and several more valuable things; but all three editions deserve all the dissemination they can get. There are separate editions given in Norwegian also of the original melodies for Luther's hymns, with the addition of historical information, from Joh. D. Behrens and Ludvig M. Lindeman; both editions are from 1859.

More or fewer of Luther's hymns have been translated into many, in fact, considerably more than 25 foreign languages. But like anything, that surely will amaze several people and at any rate that deserves to be noted, it should be remembered about, that there is no country outside of Germany, where precisely his hymns have been so diligently translated and disseminated in separate editions, as in Reformed England (this applies partly also to America). Of "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" alone there are at least 30 English translations available (not including here the various re-editings that are found in a whole group of hymnbooks); and some of the translators belong to the most famous names in English literature. The skillful English hymnologist Rev. James Mearns, who has engaged himself with the Lutheran church's treasury of hymns with extraordinary diligence, writes the following about the English translations of Luther's hymns. First he gives more precise information about the fact that at least 22 hymns of Luther were translated into English, some early and then repeatedly in the 16th century. Then he continues: "I have not found English translations from the 17th century of Luther's hymns. In the 18th century there are some of them, though mostly in a bad form, in *Lyra Davidica* 1708, J. C. Jacobi's *Psalmodia Germanica* 1722-1732, and in the United Brethren [Moravian] Hymnbooks from 1742 on. Luther's hymns first received their full place of honor in the English hymnbooks in the 19th century. The complete translations by J. Anderson in 1846, J. Hunt in 1853, R. Massie in 1854, and B. Macdonald in 1867, as well as the valuable adaptations by Miss C. Winkworth, Miss F. C. Cox, A. T. Russel, H. Mills, and many others, delivered the material for that." (He now enumerates a whole series of Luther's hymns, that most commonly are found included in English hymnbooks, whereof it appears, that these Reformed Books even include more of Luther's hymns than are found in many of our newer Lutheran hymnbooks.) "A complete edition of Luther's hymns with added translations by various authors came out in 1884 in New York and London under the title: *The Hymns of Martin Luther. Set to their original Melodies, with an English version.* Edited by Leonard Woolsey Bacon, assisted by Nathan H. Allen." So far Rev. Mearns. The last one mentioned is a very beautiful and valuable edition. A less significant edition of all of Luther's hymns, without music and without the addition of the original, but with some historical information for each of the hymns, is: *Luther as a Hymnist.* By Bernhard Pick. Philadelphia. 1875.