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CENTRAL OFFICE, YORK, PA.  
 MEETINGS—Third Tuesday of each month.

REV. S. B. BARNITZ, Western Secretary,  
 Correspondent Lutheran Observer, Philadelphia, Pa.  
 " Lutheran Evangelist, Springfield, O.  
 " Lutheran Kirchenfreund, Chicago, Ill.

BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS

— OF THE —

Evangelical \* Lutheran \* Church,

(GENERAL SYNOD.)

DEPARTMENT OF THE WEST, NORTHWEST AND SOUTHWEST.

Office of Western Secretary

Des Moines, Iowa, Septem. 13<sup>th</sup> 1883.

SUBJECT, Freeport, Illinois, &c.

To the Board of Home Missions,

General Synod. Evan. Lutheran Church in U.S.

Dear Brethren:

According to instructions by letter of Dr. Hamma, I visited Freeport, Illinois from Chicago. My observations and investigations lead me to report the following:

1. No truth in the reports of impurity, drinking &c. concerning the Missionary.

Wherever I made inquiry in the city concerning Rev. Mr. Neeser, the answer was: "He is a fine man and if he had a church many would go to it." I made inquiry as a stranger in the city, wanting to find Mr. Neeser &c. I said nothing of the one reports, nor our suspicions. Excepting to the missionary himself and one member of the church council. So have gone around asking: "Did you ever hear so and so, about Rev. Neeser?" would only have been to create suspicion where none existed and

set the gossip and cynics in motion to blight and blast. I account for the evil reports in two ways. A. An unfortunate Marriage. So soon as I met Mrs. Neeser, I was convinced of her being a weak, nervous and jealous woman, full of visions and imaginations. She has evidently told Miss Emma Parry her suspicions - and her suspicions arise from jealousy - and Miss Parry was not sufficiently guarded in giving circulation to these reports. Why, no Minister could remain in a town of 10,000 inhabitants three months, if such reports were a hundredth part true. The fact is the report seems to know nothing of any such report. I talked with a member of the Council - a physician - and asked him what he thought of my theory, as to the origin of the report as to "impurity". He agreed as to my estimate of Mrs. Neeser, though he declared, as God was his judge, that my conversation with him was the very first intimation he had ever had of any such report, or any such suspicion. He believes that the Mission has enemies, and very bitter ones.

2,

arising from B. The Opposition of Some of the  
fanatical temperance people. Bro. Neiser, though  
pronounced on temperance, and having on several  
occasions preached decided and emphatic  
temperance discourses, has refused, very sensibly,  
to omit his regular services at the beck and de-  
mand of perambulating lecturers, Women's tem-  
perance Unions &c. &c. &c., and has therefore been  
put down by this class as opposed to temperance,  
and by this class also reported as drinking. As  
he has a number of German children in the Sunday  
School, and expects to draw from our Germans  
(forming one third of the report's population) he has  
been prudent in this regard. Providence, however,  
does not suit fanatics, and some of these temperance  
people, being the most intemperate of all people,  
and having no principle but opposition to drink,  
and no religion but opposition to drink, do not  
hesitate to circulate all manner of reports a-  
gainst those who differ from them, and visit  
condemnation upon their heads.

The President of the Synod of N. Illinois -  
Rev. A. C. Haithcof - was in the report on Monday

Before my arrival, having had a report of our  
Missionary's drinking. He left satisfied that  
the reports were not true.

### III. The Building

Should be pushed at once. No progress can  
be made by any one without a Church-Building  
in Theport. I mean by any Missionary. The order  
should be issued to build without a day's delay.  
We surely have a field in Theport. Though  
it has fourteen Church Organizations and only  
10,000 to 11,000 people, some of these organiza-  
-tions (Sects) have no field and will never have  
success. These are nearly 4000 Germans, Most  
of the United Synod of the West but they will not  
worship in Temperance-Hall <sup>especially when it is</sup> so hot in summer  
it cannot be used, and so cold in winter it can-  
not be made comfortably warm - with wood firing  
on under it during all the hours of service - Chinese  
Laundry, Jewish Clothing-house, Beer Saloon &c. &c.

I would order the Building pushed by Board of  
Church H. or Ladies Com. through B. L. C. and get  
it under roof this Fall. The work should be pushed  
to completion. and then if the Missionary is not  
"the right man in the right place", let him be

changed. The membership. Unless those I met do not tell the truth - are united and harmonious with the missionary and say there is no complaint and no lack of harmony. I did not meet Mr. McIntee - one of the principal ones, as he was absent. He seems to be very prominent and popular with them, and is I judge, the man of largest means.

III. Notwithstanding the foregoing, & many other favorable things which might be said, I cannot but feel that Bro. Neeser is not actly the man for the report or any other mission.

He is too heavy, has not quite enough "snap" or vim. There is nothing about him that draws or attracts to him. That is no personal magnetism.

I do not think he could change now, though I told him that if these reports gained general circulation - true or untrue - his course was plain & that was to resign and accept a call, if he could get one, to some old established church or congregation. He strikes me as having no "inventive power" - i. e. no power to make defeat appear victory or change defeat into victory. I say I do not think it would be wise to change now, but to have "an eye to this" in the future. Neither do I

think it necessary that the Missionary at Beeport - i.e. Bro. Neeser needs \$1000. per annum. He has no children and a good many country members. If they kept house much of their provision would be furnished. These observations are of course - only for you and the Board.

Now, I have given you the result of my visit to Beeport - a visit which troubled me very much. I trust I have made no mistake in my judgment as to the questions involved.

Having never been favorably impressed with Mr. Neeser, I went to B. if anything, a little prejudiced against him, but praying that I might be able to find the <sup>one</sup> reports untrue. I believe he is entirely innocent of them, and that they have come from one who ought to be a "help-meet". If such reports were true, of these was any ground for them, a wife of good sound sense would not parade them to one she met for the first time. Is not this a reasonable conclusion? The visit to B. was the most trying and perplexing and unpleasant of any work to which duty has yet called me, - the visit to Lincoln was no comparison to it - and I pray our Heavenly Father that it may have been for His glory.

Yrs. very truly,  
Saml. D. Darnitz  
Western Secy.

Dec 1843  
Glasgow