that he felt unable to discharge his duties under the then existing conditions. The charge was not divided. Consequently he tendered his resignation to the congregation on July 18th, 1881, and preached his farewell sermon on the 11th of September of the same year. He returned from Stoughton once a month the balance of the year, preaching to the congregations thruout the week days.

CHAPTER XIV.
Rev. Peter Isberg.


Rev. Isberg’s pastorate is the turbulent one in our history. The principal causes of agitation were “Naade-valg-striden,” the dissolution of the charge, and the forming of another. No dis-
cord should however, be attributed to the minister's personality, which was pleasing enough. The years of his pastorate happened to be a time in our history when many mooted questions were ripe for final and definite disposal, and clamored for action. Such times are always and of necessity, turbulent, and the leaders of them must bear the brunt of the battles.

When Rev. Bredeson had resigned, the congregation decided to "Staa paa Smit's side I Naadevalg-striden," which controversy had then begun to assume large proportions in the Synod, and to express that no minister should be called who was not of the same mind.

The first call to Rev. Isberg was issued by East Blue Mounds, Springdale, and Perry. He accepted early in 1882, and preached his first sermon in Perry on Palm Sunday, April 2nd, 1882. He served as minister in these congregations until August 19th, 1883, when he returned the "Kalds-brev" as a formality to give them a chance to dissolve the charge. Springdale and East Blue Mounds for the third time appealed to Perry to be permitted to withdraw from the charge. This was now granted, and the intimate congregational relations which had bound these three older congregations together for almost thirty, years, were no more.

At a special meeting August 28th, 1883, Perry issued a second call to Rev. Isberg, giving him 48 votes out of 50, and then making it unanimous. The same meeting decided that Perry request one-half of the services, besides granting the minister the use of the parsonage, paying $350.00 of the salary and an offering on each of the three high festivals of the church year, and finally to pay for ministerial services according to each one's
desire and ability. The trustees were authorized to issue the call together with York and Primrose, provided these congregations also make their call to the same minister. As for Adamsville, she was left to make her own private arrangements with our minister for his services, and to agree with him on the question of compensation.

East Blue Mounds, Springdale, and Vermont now organized a charge and issued a call to a theological candidate, Mr. O. P. Syfestad, a Perry boy who was then ordained to the ministry. He accepted this charge, and also served West Blue Mounds for about six and one-half years. Rev. O. P. Syfestad’s day as a minister was comparatively short, being called by death to a “Better Land” on February 27th, 1890. The pastorate has since been filled continuously by Rev. S. Gunderson.

Perry Church in the distance.
Confirmation class in the eighties.

York congregation has since maintained “Kaldsfor-bindelse” with Perry and Primrose. West Blue Mounds and Adamsville (later Hollandale) have also at different times been served by the Perry pastor.
From the time of the calling of Rev. Isberg in 1881 until the withdrawal from the Synod in 1887, every one of the congregation’s meetings bear the marks of being touched by “Naade-valg-striden.” During the second year of Rev. Isberg’s pastorate the congregation entertained the “Synode-möde” at their annual meeting in June of that year, an event which is remembered with pride by all our elderly people.

On December 29th, 1882, a special meeting was called to discuss the question of election. Numerous neighboring people and also some theological students from Madison were present. Rev. Rasmussen’s “Opraab til Synodens Mennigheder” was used as an outline for the discussion, and the different points were adopted by a vote of sixty-three, nine not voting.

At this meeting Ole A. Ruste resigned his position as secretary of the congregation and Mr. Homme, a candidate for the ministry, was appointed temporary secretary. When at the following meeting Mr. Ruste, after urgent requests, declined to reconsider his resignation, Gunder Paulson was elected to take his place, and a unanimous rising vote of thanks was tendered the retiring secretary for his long and faithful performance of duties. He had served the congregation as secretary for more than a quarter of a century. The following year, when Mr. Ruste’s tenth successive three-year term as trustee expired, he also declined re-election to that office.

The record of these things make us admire the cool sense of fairness and justice in the fathers, when in the heat of a controversy that touched the depths of their Christian lives and experience, they expressed a unanimous recognition of the worth of a retiring officer’s service, even when it was fully
understood that his resignation was intended to be a protest against the position in the controversy which a large majority held. Too often an organization’s intolerance and want of self-control has made martyrs of men under similar circumstances.

A special meeting was held on March 9th, 1885. The records of this meeting show that the discussions cover 20 pages of the Protocol. The discussions on predestination appears to have reigned in Perry, after the withdrawal of the congregation from the Synod on July 9th, 1887. The vote for withdrawal being sixty-one for, four against, and six not voting.

During the summer of 1886 Rev. Isberg made a visit to Norway to see his aged father, and a Divinity student, Mr. Larson, preached in his place.

On January 15th, 1887, Rev. Isberg handed to the congregation a communication, deploring the then existing condition of things and suggested that if the congregation thought it advisable he would resign. The congregation gave Rev. Isberg a confidence vote of fifty-four for, and thirteen against, after which he decided to stay another year.

Rev. Isberg tendered his resignation to Perry on September 24th, 1887, to take effect April 1st, 1888. He preached his farewell sermon here on March 25th, 1888.