

# THE ROLE OF AN IMMIGRANT EDUCATOR

by

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“Fifty Years in Politics” [a series of articles in *The Viking*] promises to be a treat, especially to all men of progress, all lovers of reform, all idealistically inclined minds. Political parties are shifting, each trying to get as much wind into its sails as possible. A person who stands by his principles and convictions will therefore unawares find himself in different parties ... The uncritical mind knows only the name of the party.

—S. M. Hill in *The Viking* (June 2, 1906).

THERE were times when the epithet, the “simple Sam,” seemed appropriate to the life and character of S. M. Hill. He had once used the sobriquet in comparing himself with the illustrious *Prästa Kalle*.<sup>1</sup> In many ways, however, Carl Swensson was a less complex personality than the enigmatic “simple Sam.” A man of action like Swensson is perhaps easier to comprehend than a man of reflection. Swensson laid rough and ready hands upon destiny, determined to shape it to his purposes. On the other hand, despite Pastor Swanberg’s assertion that Hill “was always master of his fortune,” he held the helm with uncertain hands. His life is a series of question marks.

For fifteen years the exact nature of Hill’s position at Luther remained undefined. When Noyd left Wahoo at the beginning of 1887, Hill became acting rector of the school. The board and the conference called several pastors to replace Noyd, but no one was willing to take the position. In his resignation Pastor Noyd had clearly expressed the opinion that his work in Wahoo could be conducted by a layman just as well and perhaps more efficiently than by a pastor whose services were needed elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> According to the school’s constitution which Noyd helped to draft the rector of Luther was not required to be an ordained man.<sup>3</sup> The directors of the school were not impressed by Noyd’s view, however, for only pastors were sought out to replace him. Meanwhile, Hill who was certainly eligible for the post of permanent rector stayed on in the status of temporary president.

In the fall of 1887 the board called Pastor C. A. Hemborg. *Hemlandet* reported

this news item from Nebraska together with a comment on Professor Hill. Many had wondered why the rectorship had not been conferred upon Hill. According to *Hemlandet* the answer was simply that Professor Hill did not want the position. If Hemborg accepted the call to Wahoo, then “the old student who had put aside his work in the classroom somewhat” could return to his teaching, free from the responsibility of administration.<sup>4</sup> Hemborg did not accept the call. At the conference meeting in February, 1888, Pastor Swanberg, president of the Luther board stated that the vice-president, Professor Hill, had been elected regular president of the school.<sup>5</sup> Hill’s position at Luther had apparently been settled.

But Hill has left his own interpretation of his position, revealing the imprecise character of the office which he held for fifteen years. According to Hill, he was approached verbally in 1888 with a proposition to make him president of Luther. The proposal never came to him in writing, although the school’s constitution required that form of procedure. When the board finally submitted a written call in 1901, Hill said that he could not accept it. Pastor Torell reported Hill’s decision to the conference:

If a school shall succeed in all parts in these times, it is necessary that the president should be the leader in the financial development of the school. Dr. Hill has therefore orally and in writing declared to the board that he considers his God-given call to be a teacher. Thus, he neither could nor can accept the conference’s call as permanent president. He has wished only to serve until the conference could secure someone else. The permanent call he has answered negatively. The board agrees that Dr. Hill’s interpretation of the president’s duties is correct.<sup>6</sup>

Hill’s own statement appears in the conference minutes. It indicates perhaps the underlying reason for his refusal to answer the permanent call:

Now appoint a president, a man in whom all conference members may have full confidence. Let him take the lead of everything in his hands. Let the teachers have free hands to care for their work in the classrooms, and you will have a school that will go forward and can be a real leader for our people ... I have the whole time felt that I, being a layman, have not had the undivided confidence and full support that possibly could be given a pastor. This is absolutely necessary for a school president if he is to succeed. Therefore, I believe that I ought not to be anything else but a teacher.<sup>7</sup>

The same sense of insecurity and inability to win confidence had obsessed Hill during his missionary work in Utah. Then he had written in *Augustana* that “false and honest friends” considered him unable to express himself adequately. He had come to the

conclusion that the mission work would progress only under a man in whom everyone had confidence.<sup>8</sup> When Hill left Salt Lake City, he wrote to Carl Swensson. Now that he was in Nebraska, he had come to realize that the synod had not withheld support from the Mormon mission because of its lack of confidence in him.<sup>9</sup>

Hill must have found the role of school administrator sometimes alien to his disposition. He had refused from the first to have any part in arranging the school's finances, an incubus which presidents of small private schools inherit just as inevitably as mankind inherits original sin. Furthermore, there was a kind of duplicity adhering to the post which was repugnant to Hill. Once he depicted the dubious path which successful administrators had to walk:

He [the president of a church school] should be a "genius of affairs." ... He should have all the leadership in his hands. He should be a "giver of ideas" rather than a dictator. He should have a personality which draws everyone like a magnet, so that he may win all to his side. Before an audience he should be eloquent ... The president should have broad horizons and an aristocratic aim. In general the people do not have a high plain of culture ... but they must be led ... He should be richly gifted with tact, the ability at the right moment to use the best words and the best actions ... He should be a school man so that he can judge his faculty ... He should not be known as a reformer in some community problems or other problems. It is best that he should have the outlook that what is now is so good that it cannot be made better. Naturally he should never in his life have attacked the methods whereby wealth is created, because to uphold an educational system he must have money and much money. Those who are in a position to give away large sums of money do not want to leave them to people or educational systems which criticize their own sources of wealth. We have seen elsewhere that it is not healthful for individual teachers to express any criticism, and much less so for the college president. In the Augustana Synod the president should be a pastor. This is a stipulation which is not concerned with the work of the president but rests on the opinion of the people.<sup>10</sup>

Since he was about to remove himself from the presidential rank, Hill could use satire like a bludgeon to strike at all the grievances which had been building up in his mind. The pastor-complex, the "popular speaker," the devotee to the *status quo*—all were legitimate targets for his diatribe. Social and political events of the 1890's had left their impressions upon him too. Scarcely aware of it, he was becoming a kindred spirit to those who were sharpening up ideas out of which came the progressive movement.

Hill's column, "The School World," appeared regularly in *Ungdomsvännan* in 1900 and 1901. It was the platform from which he could denounce attempts to curb academic freedom. Hill, like other educators in his day, assumed that large donations from wealthy individuals and corporations were a threat to the academic integrity of

educational institutions. He frequently alluded to “Rockefeller’s school” in Chicago. One college president who could not secure large grants for his school because of his insistence upon free expression of political ideas found it expedient to resign.<sup>11</sup> According to Hill’s account, three professors were forced to resign because of their views: Dr. Andrews from Brown University because of his ideas about the gold standard, Dr. Bemis from “Rockefeller’s University” because of his opposition to certain utility companies, and Dr. Ross from Stanford because of his belief that cities should own their own utilities.<sup>12</sup>

These infractions of academic freedom were proof enough to Hill that large gifts jeopardized the schools of America. In Hill’s opinion church schools could avoid this danger by seeking support from small donations. If a school were dependent upon one benefactor, its policies might easily be subverted. Furthermore, schools with large endowments were likely to be complacent about the injustices which made it possible for their benefactors to accumulate great wealth.<sup>13</sup>

Evidently Hill was abandoning the traditional conservatism of the Swedish Lutheran leaders. Back in the 1880’s when the tide of economic discontent was rising in Nebraska, Hill had been intent upon other pursuits. Leaders of the church sometimes miss the road where the real decisions are being made because they wander off on bypaths in their search for the righteous crusade. The temperance movement has more than once proved to be an irresistible will-o’-the-wisp diverting pious souls from the consideration of more pressing problems. Hill was hardly settled in Wahoo before he took up the temperance banner. He became secretary of the local temperance society which was seeking a prohibition amendment to the state constitution and a ban upon all saloons in Wahoo.<sup>14</sup>

Wahoo was a logical place to initiate a crusade. One observer reported on the prevailing habits of the community:

When we first arrived in Wahoo, there were ten churches and thirteen saloons ... The thirsty ones got around this inconvenience [a Sunday closing law] by rolling a keg from a brewery in the southwest part of town to a place on the sidewalk, where the honor code seemed to be working, for a nickel was left on the top of the keg as each drinker came along to tap the keg.<sup>15</sup>

Hill and his crusading friends soon put an end to that sort of nonsense. Writing in

*Hemlandet* on June 2, 1886, Hill announced the victory: “It was a sad day for drinkers in Wahoo on May 1 when taverns were closed.”

Hill’s interest in prohibition was shared by other leaders of the Nebraska Conference. There were many vital decisions confronting the Nebraska voters in the election of 1890, but the conference singled out just one for special attention:

Be it resolved that the conference acknowledges with sincere gratitude the special blessing of God, our Father, in protecting our churches from the overflow of the deluge of intemperance; ... in regard to the near future be it resolved that the Nebraska Conference of the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod ... sympathizes most heartily with the temperance movement of our land, and especially with that of Nebraska, and ... be it resolved that every member of this conference pledges his influence in favor of a pro-temperance vote of our people next November.<sup>16</sup>

Temperance was one of a trilogy of issues upon which the church expended its crusading spirit. The evil of secret societies and the prevalence of heretical doctrines, together with the curse of alcohol, made a kind of unholy trinity. The synod at large was doing battle with the same foes. The crusade in Nebraska caused all other political issues to be dwarfed to a point where the church was all but silent. Frequently the three evils were lumped together in a hopeless mass of ungodliness. Speaking of secret societies and other unchristian activities, Pastor C. E. Elving wrote to Pastor G. Peters:

They [members of secret societies] should live in union with God, but instead they live in union with the Prince of darkness ... Secret societies, drunkenness, and general worldliness prevail. Most of the Swedes in Omaha are scattered like sheep without a shepherd and use Presbyterian and Methodist churches for their meetings.<sup>17</sup>

In his president’s report to conference Pastor Peters was thankful for the progress of the work among the Swedes; however, “strong drink and social life” were combining with secret societies to hinder the program of the church.<sup>18</sup>

Rules governing student life at Luther were explicit on such points:

Secret societies cannot be organized at the school. No student is allowed to belong to a secret society, visit a saloon, dance, or frequent a billiard room or similar nests of iniquity.<sup>19</sup>

The righteous crusade diverted attention. The Nebraska Conference had little time in its official proceedings to devote to the social and economic problems which bred the Farmers’ Alliance, the Populists, and the Bryan Democrats. In fact, it was almost an

axiom for a Swede to look with distrust at any organized political group outside of the Republican party. Placed in the context of a generally hostile Swedish press<sup>20</sup> and an unfriendly clergy, third party movements were automatically suspect by the devout Swedes in Nebraska. *Svenska Folkets Nyheter* (*Swedish News*) was published in Lincoln for a time with the intent of winning Swedes to the Farmers' Alliance. It discontinued for want of support.<sup>21</sup>

Ignorance made it a simple thing to tag third parties with any one of the evils: drunkenness, secret societies, or heresy. In 1891 there was a letter to *Hemlandet* from Saronville reporting that the Swedes in that area were switching to the Populists.<sup>22</sup> Six years later Pastor P. O. Hanson lamented the state of his Saron parish:

Politics here are harmful, for several in the church are Populists ... They will not see the truth or right. I have tried to avoid controversy with these members, but some of them suspect that I do not vote their way. They have stopped coming to church ... There is something satanic in it [the silver question] which has a devilish influence over its adherents. To add to all of this trouble in the parish, one or another take a drink now and then, but so far I have not found any of my members drunk ... Some Swedes have deserted to the Mission Friends because they think it is cheaper.<sup>23</sup>

Another pastor wrote from Stromsburg that the third party was "like a destroying fire" in his parish.<sup>24</sup> At another church it was feared that the heretical doctrines of the Populists and free-silver people would make "Christ into a bread king."<sup>25</sup>

Though the Swedes did not escape the economic squeeze of the 1890's, most of them had little complaint against the Republican Party. A writer in *Hemlandet* from Potter, Nebraska, summed up the prevailing sentiment: Things were certainly not promising, but there was not much use in joining either Prohibition or Farmers' Alliance parties. "We might just as well stay with the good old Republican Party."<sup>26</sup> Apparently the chance for social and economic salvation outside the Republican Party was almost as great a gamble as the hope of spiritual salvation outside the Augustana Lutheran Church.

Carl Swensson at Lindsborg was particularly virulent in his attack upon the Populists. His favorite target was the Populist leader, Jerry Simpson. Because of his sartorial deficiencies, "sockless Simpson" was vulnerable to Swensson's quips describing him as "naked at one end and empty at the other."<sup>27</sup> In Pastor Swensson's opinion the worst thing about Simpson was that he had supported the "Homestead anarchists," a reference to the strikers at the Carnegie steel plant in Homestead, Pennsylvania.<sup>28</sup> *Prästa*

*Kalle* had a plentiful supply of invective for other Populists. Writing to L. O. Lewelling, the Populist governor of Kansas in 1894, he declared:

The plague of grasshoppers and droughts cannot be compared to the disasters that have been heaped upon our young noble state by the doctrines and proclamations ... of yourself and other leaders of the party.<sup>29</sup>

Such imprecations were generated by a partisan spirit as inflexible as religious dogma.

In 1858 Hasselquist had implied that to vote anything but the Republican ticket was sin.<sup>30</sup> Paraphrasing the venerable prophet of the Augustana Synod, Swensson cautioned Swedes in the election of 1896: "Vote for McKinley, and you won't have to repent."<sup>31</sup> Speaking in behalf of the Republican Party brought him praise from Lutheran pastors in Nebraska. F. N. Swanberg wrote from his Oakland parish: "We Swedish Americans are proud of our Lindsborg doctor who in his oratorical eloquence does not support free-silver Bryan."<sup>32</sup> On one occasion Swensson averred that a Swede was the best thing in Europe, an American the best thing in the United States, and a Swedish-American Republican the best thing in the world.<sup>33</sup>

Hill had his roots in this Swedish-American tradition. As president of Luther he was probably expected to keep the faith. Actually, there was the spark of the rebel in him. When he first came to America, he chided his Swedish friends who were content in reading only one paper, *Hemlandet*.<sup>34</sup> At that time he even talked of joining the Masonic Lodge, although he gave up the idea upon learning that it was "unchristian."<sup>35</sup> His family background was pietistic, but Hill's own writings are for the most part free from pious phraseology so commonly found in the utterances of other Lutheran leaders. There was no deficiency, however, in his religious faith. Since his interest tended toward the practical application rather than the theological intricacies of Christianity, his preaching at the local Lutheran church in Wahoo sounded more like lectures than sermons.<sup>36</sup>

Hill had no patience with pious professions of religion void of Christian service. This rejection of "faith without works" made him impatient with both the Lutherans and Mission Friends when the Waldenström quarrel arising out of doctrinal differences created unbrotherly dissention among the Swedes. Practical considerations certainly accompanied his work on the mission field in Utah. Not only was Mormonism heresy from the Lutheran point of view, but Hill believed that it was employed to enslave poor,

ignorant Swedish immigrants. This practical approach to religion created in him a sensitive social conscience. His resentment against the Swedish aristocracy and its exploitation of the poor in Sweden was implicit in much that he wrote.<sup>37</sup> The same feelings were aroused in him when the Americans, in his opinion, sometimes took advantage of ignorant Swedes:

Education is necessary so that a person can answer for himself in this land of mixed nationalities ... It is said about the Swede that he is too simple and green to be dishonest, and if this is so, it is necessary for him to get an education to protect himself ... It is all right to have good farms, large buildings, and bank accounts, but a man does not live by bread alone ... Farmers have been so busy making money that they have not had time for an education. They should help to make the laws. If farmers' children do not get an education, they will never have any influence on the laws of the land ... The power of education can keep immigrants from falling into a worker caste.<sup>38</sup>

Education at a Christian school like Luther could protect Swedes against exploitation.

Hill was an extensive reader. Although he cherished the old bromide that fiction injured the memory,<sup>39</sup> he sanctioned the reading of social novels. He thought that Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* was "rather visionary," but perhaps something of value for a better society would emerge out of such writings. Harriet Beecher Stowe had rendered a great service to oppressed humanity through her writing. Emile Zola was equally intent upon correcting injustices. But Hill thought that Charles Dickens had done more than any writer to call attention to social evils:

All of these writers have pointed out the way to social consciousness. They have set forth the problems of poverty and crime. They have brought up the use of law to control railroads and interest rates. Their work may eventually bring laws to protect the workingman and secure the passage of legislation for social insurance ... Over the whole civilized world the betterment of humanity is a burning question, and this, I think, is to the credit of our dear Charles Dickens.<sup>40</sup>

Here was advanced, not to say radical, thinking on the part of a member of the Augustana Synod. He dared to admit in print that his sympathies were with the Farmers Alliance. His name had been suggested for one of the leaders of the movement, and he wrote, "I would have accepted the position if it had not been for certain unchristian tendencies inherent in the movement."<sup>41</sup> The "unchristian tendencies" were apparently the secret rituals supposedly connected with membership in the organization.

Like some other progressives at the time, Hill rejected the imperialistic

proclivities of the McKinley administration. He vigorously spoke out against the annexation of Hawaii and Cuba. Americans ought to put an end to “this national kleptomania.” The United States had enough land for its needs. Furthermore, the plan to annex these foreign territories, according to Hill, had originated with the sugar trust which wanted to degrade American labor by having it compete with “slave labor” in the islands.<sup>42</sup> Many years later he was critical of the Wilson administration for its intrusion in Mexican affairs.<sup>43</sup>

His repudiation of imperialism probably had much to do with his attitude toward England. He could praise English writers like Dickens, but he had no appreciation for the British role in empire building. During the First World War Hill wrote a series of poems called *Penitentiary Pointers*. The peculiar title was the result of frenzied patriotism approaching insanity which was obsessing the Midwest, particularly the state of Nebraska.<sup>44</sup> The collection of “poems” has little poetry but great vehemence against England. The preponderance of Anglo-Saxon culture in America and British imperialism caused Hill to write at times like an Anglophobe. He may have been influenced by the prevailing coolness which some Swedes felt toward England. Some of Hill’s students had this feeling before coming to Luther or absorbed it in Hill’s classes.<sup>45</sup>

The Luther faculty organized a little discussion group called the Topelian Circle in 1895. At first the meetings alternated between the two topics, Swedish history and the literature of nineteenth-century England. After several studies spent in such innocuous pursuits, the little literary circle found itself discussing economic issues. Hill directed the discussions toward bimetallism, workmen’s insurance laws, and socialism.<sup>46</sup> Rector Hill was, in his gentle way, tearing his little staff away from the safety of contemplating the literature and history of the nineteenth century by confronting them with the violent decisions which the twentieth century would be asked to make.

Hill was not unaware of the danger in too open a discussion of controversial subjects. Writing in *Ungdomsvännen* he confessed that he was forced to be very general in his commentary on the current political situation because the editors of the paper would not permit him to be specific.<sup>47</sup> In a critique on church schools, Hill wrote that generally they were too conservative. Teachers in such schools were not always free to express their opinions:

There should be recognition of the original ideas and aims which teachers may have, so that we do not criticize or misunderstand them, but rather encourage them. Now they must keep silent, or they will not get their bread and butter.<sup>48</sup>

Hill's comments may explain his reticence to give more active support to causes like the Farmers' Alliance. By 1906 he was feeling freer about expressing progressive ideas. He was no longer the official head of Luther, and the times were more receptive to liberal thinking. Even the Republican Party was undergoing a metamorphosis through the ideas of men like LaFollette and the voice of Theodore Roosevelt. Hill had submitted some general observations reflecting the political and social changes to *Fosterlandet*. In responding to this writing a friend in Minnesota wrote:

For two months I traveled over Minnesota speaking ... every night. The burden of my message was freedom from party slavery ... The young reform movement in both parties is taking higher ground than formerly, and it has been the good fortune of my party, the Democratic Party, to be the special champion of reform in Minnesota. The landslide for Governor Johnson shows that the voters have believed us ... I have read the great part of your sociological articles with a great deal of pleasure and profit ... Your articles are the first real contribution to sociology made by a Swedish-American. What a difference between your articles and the stuff which Carl Swensson used to write, or the editorials we read in the Swedish-American press. And still so undeveloped our people are that I suppose they will continue to applaud superficial writers as before. But courage, brother, little by little we teachers are teaching the world to think.<sup>49</sup>

The development of Hill's political acumen becomes evident from a study of his life over several decades. In the 1880's he was carrying the torch for prohibition. Ten years later he was writing and talking about the need for extensive social legislation to protect the American workingman, and at the same time he was strenuously opposing every form of imperialism. By the 1900's Hill was in full rebellion against the political orthodoxy which kept most Swedes loyal to the Republican Party. Hill was now prepared to laud the independent voter. Eric Johnson, the editor of *The Viking* which appeared for the first time in 1906,<sup>50</sup> was nominally a Republican, but he had no firm party ties. In 1900 he supported Bryan for the presidency.<sup>51</sup> Johnson planned the series, "Fifty Years in Politics." Hill was generous in his tribute to Johnson and recommended his account of American politics:

"Fifty Years in Politics" will show how deep in the mire of corruption this Republican Party sank and how the reaction called into being the Anti-Monopolist and the Populist parties. And it will show how this spirit of progress and reform now has seized the

Republican Party, and how the former Anti-Monops and Pops now find themselves at ease as Roosevelt Republicans.<sup>52</sup>

By 1906 Johnson had returned to the Republican fold, drawn there by the progressive element in the party. Hill must have agreed with Johnson who was once more committing his hopes for reforms to Rooseveltian Republicanism, for on several occasions Hill wrote in *The Viking* in high praise of its editor.<sup>53</sup>

To “keep quiet” for the sake of “bread and butter” was not a philosophy of courage, but it was eminently practical. Hill was cautious. He could not drive too far ahead of those from whom he received his support. Furthermore, he himself had to make his way back to the main path where the telling decisions were in the making. His spirit did not equip him for life in the arena of conflict. He could encourage the more active apostles of reform, but his own efforts were largely confined to the classroom. Here he was expending himself on eleven recitations a day for a five-day week.<sup>54</sup> In these classes he was not silent. His students reported how many times the regular assignments were put to one side while Professor Hill lectured on the theme of Christian socialism.<sup>55</sup>

Hill considered education to be the key to the future, and out of the classroom could come the answers to exploitation and the ways of reform. Hill once apologized to his readers for writing so many times about education.<sup>56</sup> It is perhaps pressing the point a little to call it *apologia pro vita sua*. He declared that his God-given calling was to teach.<sup>57</sup>

The immigrant who had come to America to escape poverty left his trade of harness making to seek an education at Augustana. For thirty years he taught other immigrants and the children of immigrants at Luther. Hill translated into his role of educator much of his own personal philosophy and experience:

To know Dr. Hill and to be a friend of his was a benediction. He was a humble and sincere Christian that lived his Christian life every day. He had been and remained poor all his life and therefore he sympathized with the poor and the downtrodden. In the press he often took the part of the laboring man and proclaimed a high Christian idealism in the sphere of the social and economic life of the nation. He was admired and loved by all who knew him intimately.<sup>58</sup>

In the classroom Hill devoted his life to the task so well outlined by his successor, President O. J. Johnson, who put the cause of Christian education before the Nebraska

## Conference:

The importance of the church school becomes greater from year to year. Our people are in a transitional period from the education received in Sweden to Christian education at our own hearth ... The children of the first generation now begin to be the leaders of the church work. Their parents who were educated in Sweden have transmitted to them the Lutheran viewpoint, creed, and practice ... The second generation stands at the door, and it is our task to educate them so that they remain steadfast in creed and faith.<sup>59</sup>

Hill had put the idea more succinctly and still more completely when he had written some years before: "The church school has the task to educate for eternity and the present world."<sup>60</sup> The "present world" was not to be abandoned to others by the Swedes who had come to America. They had as much right to possess it as any other nationality, certainly as much right as the bearers of Anglo-Saxon culture.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> Hill, memoirs, 45; Mrs. Cordelia H. Barnes to J. I. Dowie (Portland, Oregon, Dec. 27, 1956). In Swedish the epithet reads, "Den beskedlige Sam."

<sup>2</sup> Cf, *Prairie Grass Dividing*, Ch.8, p.128.

<sup>3</sup> *Rules for Luther Academy, Wahoo, Nebraska* (Omaha, 1891), Ch. II, Sec. B; *Framåt* (April 7, 1888).

<sup>4</sup> *Hemlandet* (Sept. 24, 1887).

<sup>5</sup> *Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Nebraska Conference* (Rock Island, 1888), 24-25. The meeting was held at Omaha, February 21 to 26, 1888; *Framåt* (February 29, 1888).

<sup>6</sup> *Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Nebraska Conference* (Rock Island, 1901), 36-37. The meeting was held at Omaha, February 26 to March 4, 1901.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 41-43.

<sup>8</sup> *Augustana* (Jan. 2, 1883).

<sup>9</sup> S. M. Hill to Carl Swensson (Wahoo, Nebr., April 26 and May 20, 1884).

<sup>10</sup> *Ungdomsvännan* (March, 1901).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* (August, 1900). Hill did not specify the name of the president, but he added that he refused to be silent on certain issues. According to Hill, President Harper of Chicago never had any trouble securing large gifts for his school.

<sup>12</sup> *Ungdomsvännan* (Jan., 1901).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* (August, 1900).

<sup>14</sup> *Hemlandet* (July 30, 1884).

<sup>15</sup> Mrs. A. M. Levin writing in the *Wahoo Wasp* (May 4, 1933).

<sup>16</sup> *Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Nebraska Conference* (Rock Island, 1890), 34. The meeting was held at Oakland, Nebraska, January 28 to February 4, 1890.

<sup>17</sup> C. E. Elving to G. Peters (Omaha, Jan. 2, 1889). Elving was missionary pastor to Swedes in Omaha, and at the time of this report Peters was president of the conference.

<sup>18</sup> G. Peters, President's Report to the Nebraska Conference (MS., Bethesda, York County, Feb. 9, 1889).

<sup>19</sup> *Rules for Luther Academy, Wahoo, Nebraska*, Ch. III.

<sup>20</sup> Ander, "The Swedish-American Press in the Election of 1892," 535.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 540.

<sup>22</sup> *Hemlandet* (March 5, 1891). No signature appeared on the report.

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- <sup>23</sup> P. O. Hansen to F. N. Swanberg (Saronville, Nebr., Jan. 12, 1897).
- <sup>24</sup> O. A. Johnson to F. N. Swanberg (Jan., 1897).
- <sup>25</sup> F. H. Hartelius to F. N. Swanberg (Concord, Nebr., Jan. 20, 1897).
- <sup>26</sup> *Hemlandet* (April 9, 1891). No signature appeared on the letter.
- <sup>27</sup> Lindquist, *Smoky Valley People*, 135.
- <sup>28</sup> *Fosterlandet* (Chicago, August 3, 1892). *Fosterlandet (The Fatherland)* was a Swedish language paper with no special ties to the Augustana Church.
- <sup>29</sup> The letter is cited by Lindquist in *Smoky Volley People*, 135.
- <sup>30</sup> Ander, *Hasselquist*, 158.
- <sup>31</sup> *Svenska Journalen* (Oct. 29, 1896).
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* (Sept. 24, 1896). Swensson had made some campaign speeches for McKinley in Nebraska during September, 1896.
- <sup>33</sup> Lindquist, *Smoky Valley People*, 134.
- <sup>34</sup> Cf. *Prairie Grass Dividing*, Ch. IX, p.132.
- <sup>35</sup> S. M. Hill to Rydin (n.p., n.d.).
- <sup>36</sup> Interview with Esther Lindgren. Miss Lindgren was a student at Luther during Hill's presidency in the nineties, and she attended Bethlehem Lutheran Church where Hill often preached. Others still living in the community confirm her observations about Hill's preaching.
- <sup>37</sup> Cf. *Prairie Grass Dividing*, Ch. IX, p.134.
- <sup>38</sup> *Svenska Journalen* (Oct. 29, 1896).
- <sup>39</sup> Hill, memoirs, 18.
- <sup>40</sup> *Svenska Journalen* (Dec. 31, 1896).
- <sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* (Oct. 29, 1896).
- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid.* (June 3, 1896).
- <sup>43</sup> Hill, notebook (MS., nd.) This notebook, containing sundry entries, is among the Hill papers made available to me by Cordelia Barnes.
- <sup>44</sup> Hill left Luther in 1915, and about the same time his colleague, Professor Linus Bonander, was forced to leave. There is a story current among older Swedes in Wahoo but otherwise undocumented to the effect that both Hill and Bonander were "pro-German" and consequently were no longer welcome in the eyes of townspeople.
- <sup>45</sup> S. O. Johnson and Julius Hult, both of whom studied under Professor Hill, commented on his attitude toward England in interviews. They acknowledge their own distrust of the motives and policies of England. The point of grievance was the same, "English imperialism."
- <sup>46</sup> Minutes of the Topelian Reading Circle (MS., Jan. 10. 1895, to May 10, 1897). The minutes list the subjects discussed by the circle.
- <sup>47</sup> *Ungdomsvännan* (Nov., 1900). He was writing about the presidential election.
- <sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* (April, 1901).
- <sup>49</sup> P. M. Magnusson to S. M. Hill (St. Cloud, Minn., Nov. 17, 1906). Magnusson had been acting president of Minnesota College, an Augustana Lutheran academy in Minneapolis, for a year before returning to St. Cloud, where he was teaching at the St. Cloud Normal School at the time of writing this letter.
- <sup>50</sup> Johnson was a ubiquitous journalist who published Swedish and English papers in various places in Illinois and Nebraska. The papers were short-lived as was *The Viking* itself. Johnson apparently had financial difficulties with most of his enterprises. The first issues of *The Viking* contain accounts of some of his earlier papers.
- <sup>51</sup> Hill recorded Johnson's defection from McKinley in *Ungdomsvännan* (Nov., 1900).
- <sup>52</sup> *The Viking* (August, 1906).
- <sup>53</sup> *Ibid. The Viking* (May and June, 1907).
- <sup>54</sup> S. M. Hill to Carl Swensson (Wahoo, Nebr., April 24, 1899). Swensson had asked Hill to specify the teaching loads at Luther. Along with his class work Hill also had administrative duties.
- <sup>55</sup> Sandahl, *Nebraska Conference*. 365. Sandahl was Hill's student. According to Sandahl, Hill as professor rode "the hobby of Christian Socialism which later on became a ruling passion with him." Hill prepared in 1913, a Catechism on Christian Socialism. See *Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Nebraska Conference* (Rock Island, 1913), 62.
- <sup>56</sup> *Svenska Journalen* (Oct. 29, 1896).

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<sup>57</sup> Cf. *Prairie Grass Dividing*, Ch. XI, p. 166. I have interviewed several of Hill's students. They describe him with such words as "kind" and "fatherly." As to the quality of his teaching, one of his students has written: "As professor he could teach any subject, and often had to do it too, which made him, with reverence be it said, specialist in none, with the possible exception of history." See Sandahl, *The Nebraska Conference*, 365.

<sup>58</sup> An excerpt from an obituary written by O. J. Johnson (MS., St. Peter, Minn., 1921). This excerpt appears in a manuscript prepared by Cordelia Barnes which bears the title, *Family History of the Hills*.

<sup>59</sup> *Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Nebraska Conference* (Rock Island, 1908), 34-35. The meeting was held at Bertrand, Nebraska, April 22 to 26, 1906.

<sup>60</sup> *Svenska Journalen* (Feb. 11, 1897).