

**EARLY HISTORY OF THE LUTHERAN
CHURCH IN AMERICA, FROM THE
SETTLEMENT OF THE SWEDES ON
THE DELAWARE, TO THE MIDDLE OF
THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY**

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Early History of the Lutheran Church in America, from the Settlement of the Swedes on the Delaware, to the Middle of the Eighteenth Century by C. W. Schaeffer

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BY

C. W. SCHAEFFER,

PASTOR OF ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, GERMANTOWN, PA.



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PREFACE.

THE preparation of this book was first suggested by the Board of Publication. According to the original plan, it should have furnished a hasty view of the whole history of the Church down to the present time, in the form of a tract. The importance of the subject, however, and the abundance of its materials, were such as to occasion an early departure from this original plan. The investigation has been confined to a limited period of our history, and we have surveyed that period with a considerable degree of deliberation.

Thus we have succeeded, at least partly, in carrying out the intentions of the Board, by the preparation of a small volume. We have also endeavored to present such a variety of facts, and to show their connection in such a manner, as might possibly make the volume somewhat instructive.

Our facilities for the collection of materials, in the several public libraries of Philadelphia and elsewhere, have been such, that a regard to brevity has often compelled us to restrain ourselves from the discussion of matters which would certainly be appropriate to a more extended and elaborate history. We have been the more willing to pursue this course, because we felt that what we did present had much of the charm of novelty, and that we were acting only as pioneers in an enterprise which will surely be undertaken yet, as it deserves to be, with a more comprehensive grasp, and achieved with greater thoroughness.

The *Hallische Nachrichten* is invaluable as a treasury of historical information for the period over which it extends. Written by the fathers of the Church themselves, its exhibitions are fresh and authentic; and it is to be hoped that the day is not far distant when at least the substance of it will be presented to the public in an English dress. In our references to this work, we have given what we supposed would be its English title, and called it *Halle Reports*.

The remembrance of recent agitations in the Church that are now quieted, never again, we trust, to be aroused, suggests the propriety of our making some reference to the exhibition we have given of the doctrinal stand-point of the fathers.

We have written not at all in the spirit of controversy, but with a sincere regard to historic truth. If any apprehensions ever arose that we might possibly be charged with partialities or prejudices upon the subject of Symbolism, or that our allusions to the matter might possibly prevent our securing the confidence of any, those apprehensions have been quieted by the consideration that we have attempted no argument either on the one side or on the other. We have supposed that we could see in the fathers of the Church, with all their fidelity to our Confession, a fervor and liberality of spirit, an intelligent zeal, a depth of devotion, that was altogether commendable; and we have simply endeavored to exhibit what we have seen. Indeed, we flatter ourselves that our exhibition will tend largely to allay all controversy upon the subject, and will help to establish and confirm the peace of the Church; for it may be seen and felt to prove what, we are persuaded, men on both sides are willing to be convinced of:—that fidelity to the Lutheran Confession may harmonize with the highest and clearest tone of Christian devotion. We should therefore be sorry if either the author or the Board should be held, by the statements of this volume, as being committed upon the subject of Symbolism. In good faith, and with the best of feelings towards the whole Church, we disclaim such committal.

So this book, making no particular pretensions, is sent forth, with the prayer that, by the divine blessing, it may be the means of doing some good.

C. W. S.

GERMANTOWN, February 23, 1857.

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