

**LUTHERANISM IN AMERICA:
AN ESSAY ON THE PRESENT
CONDITION OF THE LUTHERAN
CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES**

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Lutheranism in America: An Essay on the Present Condition of the Lutheran Church in the United States by W. J. Mann

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BY

W. J. MANN, D.D.,

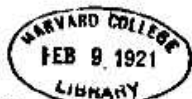
PASTOR OF THE GERMAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN ST. MICHAEL'S AND KING'S
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P R E F A C E.

THIS book has been written with a sincere desire to serve the Lutheran Church, and not a party in it. There is a work extant under the title of "The American Lutheran Church," &c., by the Rev. S. S. Schmucker, D.D. The material difference existing between the two will appear on a mere comparison of their respective titles. I endeavor to give a portraiture, not of the American Lutheran Church, but of the Lutheran Church in America, as it exists at the present time. I propose to describe the various prevailing tendencies, views, &c., which lay claim to the name Lutheran. The first step towards meeting the difficulties under which we are laboring, is properly to understand them. Some, perhaps, may think that I might have saved myself the trouble of giving a description of what is, in reality, before the eyes of all. I have no disposition whatever to forestall the reader's opinion about the book, nor undervalue his knowledge of the state of affairs in the Lutheran Church. But I would wish him to give it a fair and dispassionate perusal.

I also admit, that the title is not quite adequate to its contents. It is too narrow. I have often been obliged to go back to the past, in order to be able to throw more light on the present. To avoid making too large a book, I have in many instances only thrown out hints, where subjects might have been profitably enlarged upon. Of course, a great many things that form integral parts of the state of the Lutheran Church, in our day, have not received a place in this description, simply because they are of no peculiar interest.

My intention has not been to present a polemical work to the Lutheran public. I endeavored to confine myself, as much as possible, to facts, because about these there can be no dispute. Opinions, wherever I have expressed them, must stand on their own merits. I am very far from expecting a general consent to all my positions, but will be well satisfied if intelligent readers, here and there, will only be induced to think and reflect and examine for themselves those subjects which are of interest to them no less than to myself. Wherever I incidentally controvert the views expressed by others, it proves, that they with their opinions had interested, even where they did not convince me. I willingly subscribe to the following sentiment, expressed by the Rev. Dr. S. S. Schmucker, in the first chapter of his *American Lutheranism Vindicated* :—“Religious controversy, though it often degenerates from that calm

and dignified character which it should ever sustain, as a mutual search after truth, seems sometimes to be necessary and proper."

Some, perhaps, may be of opinion that I should have discussed, more minutely, the views of those who object to some parts of our Augsburg Confession, on the ground of its being tainted with error. Those I refer to a small work, under the title of "A Plea for the Augsburg Confession," which treats on that subject. The position taken there, I still maintain. I have enlarged on some of those points in this work. To those who have neither time nor inclination for a fuller investigation of the Evangelical and Protestant character of the Augsburg Confession, it may be comforting to know, that already, in the same century in which the Reformation occurred, a Jesuit by the name of Herman Tyrens instituted a searching inquiry into the character of that celebrated document, and found in it no less than six thousand deviations from the orthodox faith, and two thousand irregularities. The whole document will hardly contain as many words. This proves, that it gave very little satisfaction on the other side. It did not give any on that glorious 25th of June, 1530, when it was first delivered before Charles V, at the Diet of Augsburg.

For the English garb of the book the public is indebted to my beloved and esteemed colleague in our ministerial charge, the Rev. G. A. Wenzel, to whom our

thanks are due for the faithful and skilful manner in which he has succeeded in translating my German manuscript into English.

May the Giver of all Good add his blessing to these our humble labors, that they may become instrumental in advancing the interests of his kingdom on earth.

W. J. MANN.

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 1856.

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