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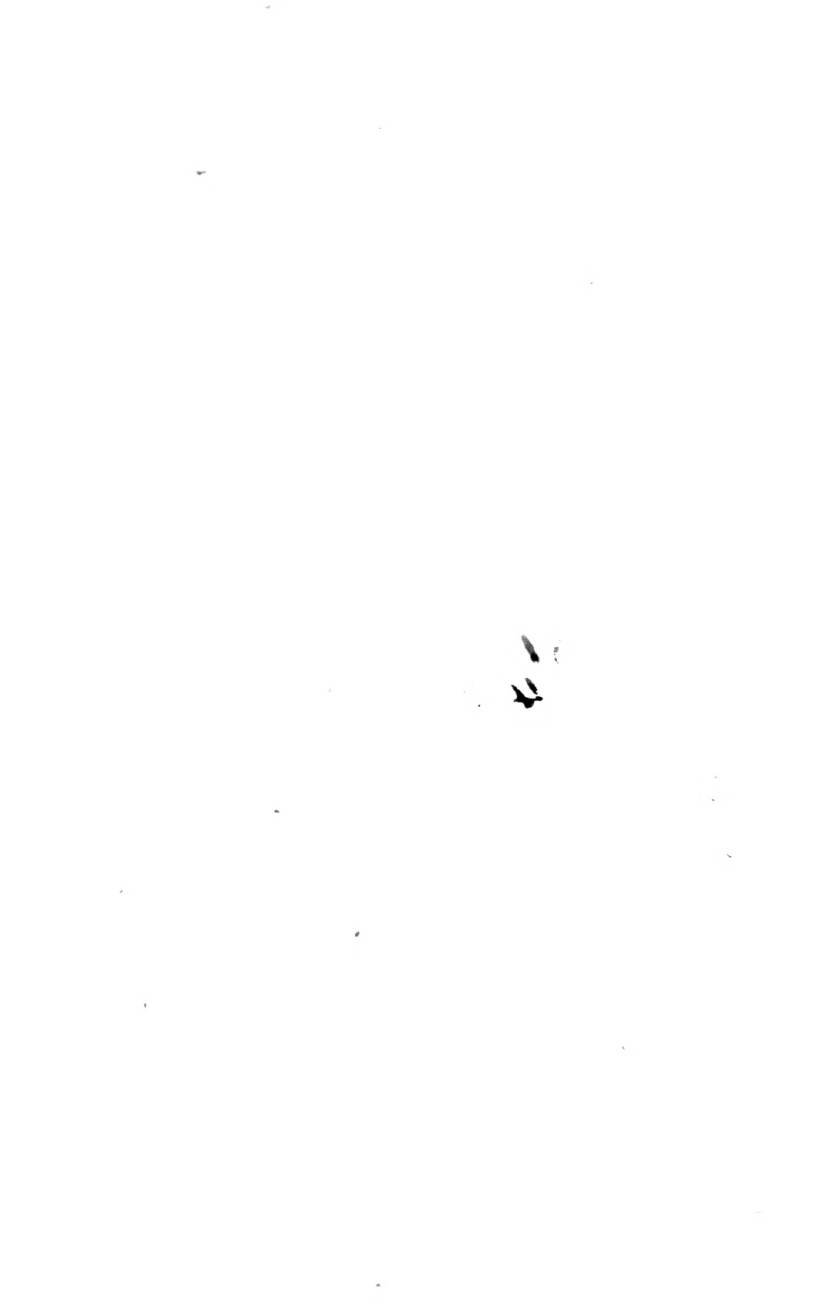
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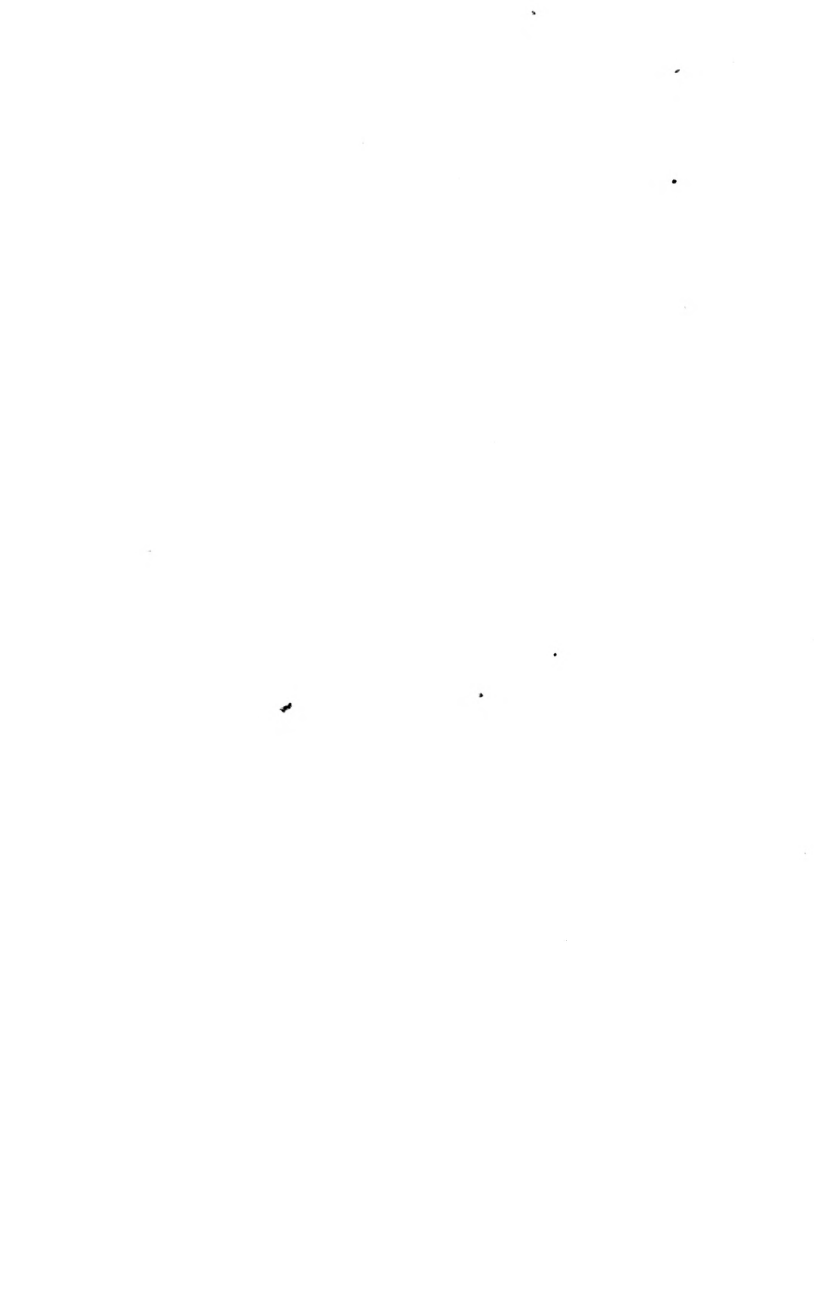
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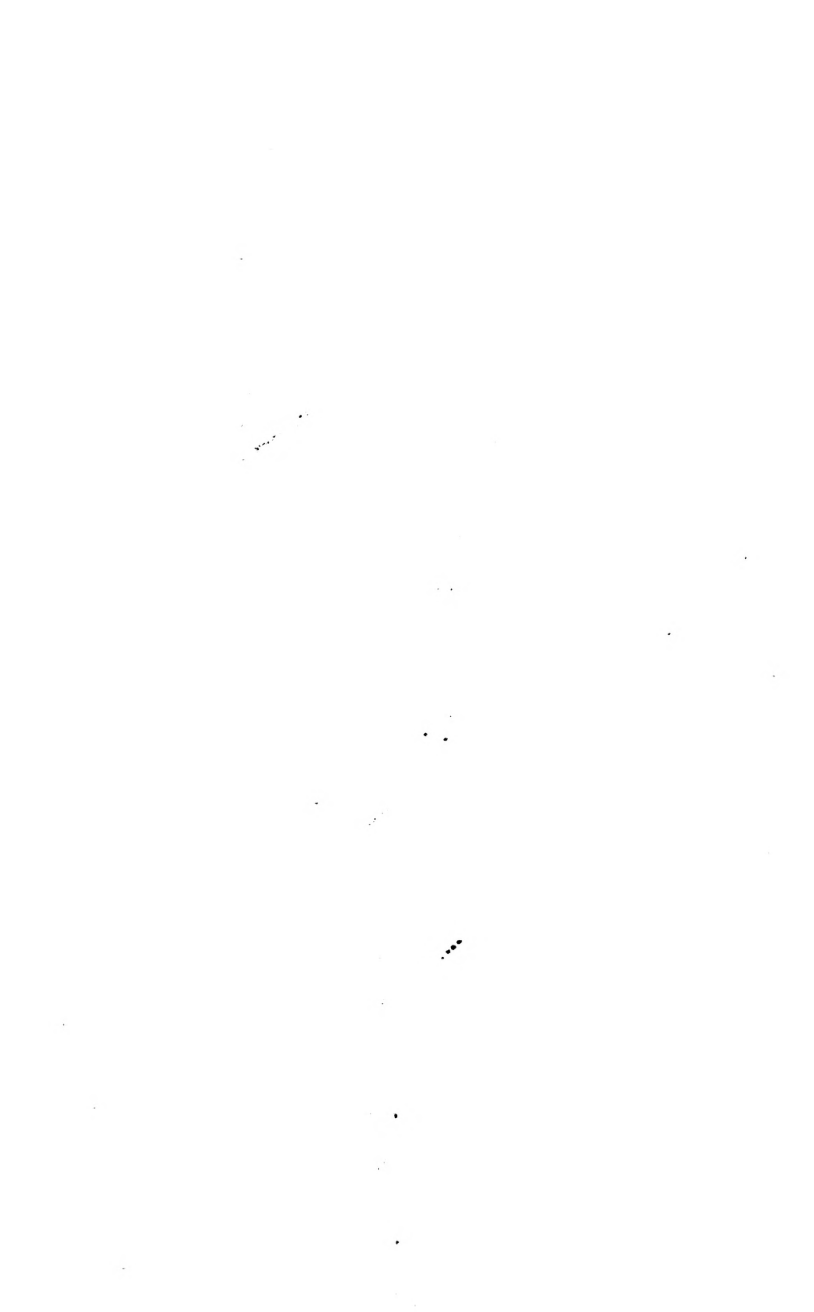
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# EARLY HISTORY

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,

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

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## PREFACE.

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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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EARLY HISTORY  
OF THE  
*Lutheran Church in America.*

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CHAPTER I.

THE SWEDES.

It is proposed to furnish a short history of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The field of observation thus opened is, in itself, so extensive and so full of materials, that the chief difficulty will be in making the history a short one.

After the agitations of Europe consequent upon the Reformation had begun to subside, various causes combined to arrest and fix upon the newly-discovered Continent of the West the practical attention of the nations of the Old World. To some, it appeared as an admirable field for the exercise of a bold and adventurous spirit. Others appreciated it because it promised to reward the enterprise of commerce with the richest gains.

And yet another class longed for it, and sought it under the noble conviction that it would be an asylum for the oppressed, a refuge from civil and religious persecution, affording to their devout and believing hearts what their native land had denied them,—“freedom to worship God.”

So a company of English adventurers effected the first permanent settlement upon this continent, in Virginia, in the year 1607. The Dutch, impelled by the spirit of mercantile enterprise, established a second colony along the Hudson in 1614; and the Puritans, supported through many trials by their faith in God, and enthusiastic for the advancement of his kingdom upon earth, planted the third in New England in 1620.

Influenced by the progress of these events, many families from the several countries of Europe which had adopted the Augsburg Confession, set out to seek a home and a place to worship God, in the attractive regions of the West. First, and, until the end of his days, most prominent in encouraging this movement, stood that illustrious hero of our faith, Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden. The statements of the climate and the soil and the population of America that had reached him were such, that, in his sagacity and the comprehensiveness of his spirit, he rapidly developed a plan for the establishment of colonies in foreign parts, to which emigrants from all Europe were to be invited. The motives that mainly influenced him were these:—the planting of the



Christian religion amongst the heathen, the honor of his own kingdom, and the commercial interests of his subjects. X

His own subjects were especially interested. Cheered by the encouraging accounts they had received from the New World, many of the inhabitants of Sweden and Finland turned their longing eyes towards what seemed to them to be an earthly paradise. Their piety, their enterprise, were alike engaged and ready to forsake their kindred and their homes to brave the dangers of the deep, and so, with the Divine blessing, to carry the intelligent plans of their sovereign into successful operation. Startling events, however, soon attracted their attention to another quarter, and for a time their peaceful purposes were utterly confused by the stern and relentless demands of war. The Protestant princes of Germany, having been compelled to take up arms in defense of their religious rights, placed Gustavus Adolphus at the head of their allied forces. His attention was, of course, at once diverted from the immediate execution of his plan for colonization. Yet he had not forgotten it. Only a few days before that glorious victory upon the field of Lützen, in the blaze of which he lost his life, he recommended to the people of Germany the colonial project, which he still regarded as "the jewel of his kingdom." The enterprise thus so fondly contemplated by the king, was designed to open a safe retreat for the good and defenseless of every land, to be a bless-

ing to the common man, and at the same time, without national distinction, to offer its advantages to the whole Protestant world.

After the death of Gustavus, the chief control of the undertaking was assumed by Oxenstiern, Prime Minister of Sweden. This distinguished statesman, eminently fitted for the post by his qualities both of mind and heart, urged on the work at once with the intelligence of a patriot and the zeal of a Christian.

Accordingly, in 1637, two ship-loads of emigrants from Sweden sail up Delaware Bay. They are richly furnished with provisions for themselves, with merchandize for traffic with the Indians, and with the means of instruction and edification in the holy faith they professed. In all this we can readily discover the industry of their habits, the integrity of their purposes, and the purity of their character.

The Dutch having already settled upon the east, the Swedes on their arrival purchased and occupied the lands on the west of the Delaware, from its mouth far up to the vicinity of Trenton. Tidings of their safety and their pleasant prospects reached their brethren at home. Bands of emigrants from the Fatherland soon followed, and ere long "the eye of the stranger could begin to gaze with interest upon the signs of public improvement, ever regularly advancing from the region of Wilmington to that of Philadelphia."

The power of Sweden over this territory ceased

after the lapse of seventeen years. The Swedish colonists, whose numbers perhaps never far exceeded one thousand, were forced to submit to their more powerful neighbors, the Dutch of the New Netherlands. So, the results which otherwise would naturally have followed from this early establishment of the Lutheran Church in America, were of course greatly interfered with by the civil and political disturbances that so soon effected the overthrow of Swedish power.

These events, however, cannot be overlooked in any history of the Lutheran Church in America. The class of Lutherans of the present day that traces its descent from these ancient Swedes, though retaining the name of Lutheran, harmonizes in doctrine and in polity with a church that knows not the Augsburg Confession. Their rectors and teachers can make it plain enough that they inherit the names and the blood of the early colonists; but their total separation from the fellowship of Lutherans, and the sportiveness with which they can regard some of the solemn usages of their fathers,\* may indicate that, content with

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\* The author of the "Annals of the Swedes," for example, in giving an account of an ordination of a pastor by three Swedish ministers, not one of whom was a bishop, sees how utterly at variance this was with all the views and usages of his own Episcopal Church. As the pastor ordained was to be sent to the Lutheran Church in New York, Mr. Clay gets over the difficulty by facetiously observing, that "perhaps they thought such orders would do for the Dutch."

the name of the Swedish Church, they have entirely relinquished the inheritance of its Lutheran spirit.

To the Lutheran Church in America that inheritance belongs; and she has never been backward in the assertion of her claim. Those Swedish colonists were Lutherans. They were of the same blood and faith as the noble heroes who a few years before had followed their great prince in the defense of Christian liberty through the battle-fields of Europe, and who, like him, at last lay down in victorious peace upon the plains of Lützen. They were Lutherans, bringing the Bible with its Sacraments, the Church with its ministry, the Augsburg Confession and the Small Catechism, along with them. Not only was it intended by the originators of the colony that its religious element should be a prominent one; but, as we learn from its records for upwards of a whole century, a commendable zeal was displayed, both along the Delaware and in the fatherland, to keep that religious element true to its Lutheran type.

To plant the Christian religion amongst the heathen, was the first object contemplated by the great Gustavus; and so the first establishment of Lutheranism in America deserves to be regarded as that of a missionary Church. The specific form of doctrine, however, to which the colonists were bound both by their own convictions and by the instructions of the government at home, was the form expressed in the familiar words,—“upon the

foundation of the apostles and prophets, according to the unaltered Augsburg Confession."

In the royal instructions sent from Sweden in 1642, by John Printz, governor of the colony, whilst the relations he should maintain to all his neighbors, and the efforts he should make for the civil and economical improvement of the people, are minutely specified, the religious, the Lutheran element of the colony is commended to his attention, by a prominence that he could scarcely have overlooked. "Before all," says this letter of instructions, "the governor must labor and watch that he renders in all things to Almighty God the true worship which is his due, the glory, the praise, and the homage that belongs to him, and take good measures that the Divine Service is performed according to the true Confession of Augsburg, the Council of Upsal, and the ceremonies of the Swedish Church, having care that all men, and especially the youth, be instructed in all the parts of Christianity, and that a good ecclesiastical discipline be observed and maintained."\*

We have much reason to believe that these instructions were faithfully executed. In company with Governor Printz, upon his arrival in 1642, came also the Rev. John Campanius, as chaplain of the colony. We may readily infer, from his enlightened zeal on behalf of the Indians, that he was diligent and devoted as the spiritual guide of

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\* Hazard's Annals of Pennsylvania.

his own countrymen. His intimacy with the neighboring tribes and their several chiefs was promoted by the successive governors of the colony; and with the simplicity and tenderness of one who is dealing with babes, he unfolded before them the great mystery of the gospel, God manifest in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.\*

Encouraged by the interest they manifested in his instructions, he addressed himself diligently to the study of their language, that he might the more readily proclaim to them in their own tongue the wonderful works of God. The early appearance of Luther's Small Catechism, which, like the Augsburg Confession, is one of the symbols of the Church, translated into the language of the Indians, afforded an evidence of his zeal and his success. It could hardly be supposed that we should be indifferent to the circumstances so plainly indicated by these facts, that "Lutherans were the first missionaries of the Cross, at least in Pennsylvania, and that perhaps the very first work ever translated into the language of the Indians in America was Luther's Small Catechism."†

It was not unusual for the Swedish pastors to be recalled after a few years' residence in the colony, and to be appointed to some valuable and honorable post at home. The result of this was many changes in the pastoral relations,

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\* Clay's Annals, p. 27.

† Ib. p. 28.

and the churches at times were wholly forsaken, like sheep without a shepherd. After the conquest of the colony by the Dutch in 1655, many of the principal men and families were violently removed, intercourse with Sweden was almost entirely abandoned, and the congregations, unable to supply their pulpits as they became vacant, were compelled to rely for the conduct of public worship upon the zeal and devotion of laymen themselves.

Under these circumstances, so unfavorable to the growth and even to the continuance of the Church, we might suppose that their religious zeal would have become deeply chilled, or at least that their affections would have been somewhat removed from the fair form of their Lutheran faith. But their Christian zeal and their Lutheran affections nobly survived forty years of trial. After the lapse of that time subsequent to 1655, during which they sometimes had two pastors, sometimes but one, sometimes none at all, they express their hungerings for the word of the Lord, the preaching of the gospel, with a touching importunity; and their declarations of attachment to the true Lutheran faith rise to the high level of Christian heroism.

After a long and painful interruption of their intercourse with Sweden, a friend and an advocate was furnished for them in the person of John Thelin, a pious man of Gottenburg. Interested himself in their spiritual welfare by the informa-

tion he had providentially received, he was able to interest the court of Sweden also on their behalf. In 1692 he addressed them in a letter assuring them of his Christian sympathy, of the willingness of the King of Sweden to befriend them, and asking to be more particularly informed of their spiritual necessities. Their answer was dated May 31, 1693. Among other things, they state in reply, "We heartily desire, since it hath pleased his majesty graciously to regard our wants, that there may be sent unto us two Swedish ministers, who are well learned in the Holy Scriptures, and who may be able to defend them and us against all false opposers, so that we may preserve our true Lutheran faith, which, if called to suffer for our faith, we are ready to seal with our blood. We also request that those ministers may be men of good moral lives and character, so that they may instruct our youth by their example, and lead them into a pious and virtuous way of life." In the same letter they request that books of devotion, Bibles, hymn-books, catechisms, might be purchased in Sweden and forwarded to them, promising at the same a proper maintenance to the ministers after they should arrive.

Of this letter many copies were taken: it was circulated from hand to hand in Sweden: it drew tears from many eyes.\* The king himself took prompt and active measures to answer and even

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\* Clay's Annals, pp. 46-47.



to exceed their prayer. The pious zeal of the Swedes on the Delaware to preserve among themselves and their children the pure evangelical religion was highly pleasing to the monarch. Instead of two ministers, as they had modestly asked, he sent them three,—the Rev. Messrs. Rudman, Biork, and Auren. Instead of the few books they had requested as a purchase, he sent them hundreds, as a gift. He provided a vessel for the passage of the ministers; he furnished them with large funds to meet their expenses; he dismissed them in the name of the Lord; he invoked the divine blessing upon them; he promised never to forget them.\*

The final departure of these ministers from Sweden was delayed, for a short time, by a circumstance that recalls an interesting fact mentioned in the foregoing narrative. They had already taken leave of their friends. They were about to set sail; but the failure of the printer to furnish them with the Indian catechisms forbade the movement, and they went not, until five hundred copies of Luther's Small Catechism were placed on board.† This book had been translated by Campanius, one of their first ministers, about fifty years before; and the liberal supply granted to them on this occasion shows at once how anxious the Church in Sweden was, that they should be diligent as missionaries of the Cross amongst

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\* Chay's Annals, p. 56.

† *Ib.* p. 54.

the heathen, and, in all their instructions, faithful to the Symbols of the Lutheran Church.\*

During all this time, and subsequently, the enterprise and the benevolence of the Swedes was exercised, to a commendable degree, in the erection of churches at suitable points. Fort Christina, on Christina Creek, where their first settlement was made in 1638, † Tinicum, ‡ selected as the residence of Governor Printz in 1646, and Philadelphia, which Mr. Biork considered, in 1697, as a “clever little town,” were the chief places of their solemn assemblies. It will accord best with the brevity to which we are bound, and be quite sufficient for our purpose, if we confine ourselves more particularly to a notice of the place last specified.

The city of Philadelphia was founded by William Penn in 1683. The movements of William Penn in locating his city were opposed by the Swedes, who were the owners of the soil. But

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\* A copy of this book is to be seen in the Philadelphia Library. It is in Indian and Swedish,—the languages alternating. It contains every thing usually found in the old German editions,—the five principal parts, the doctrine of confession, tables of duties, and the very prayers. Appended to it is a vocabulary of Indian words and phrases, which, with the catechism, makes a volume of one hundred and sixty pages, duodecimo. The Swedish portion is printed in German and the Indian in Roman characters. It is dated 1696, and both for paper and for type seems to have been put forth in liberal style. The pages of the Catechism itself number one hundred and thirty-five.

† Now the city of Wilmington, Delaware.

‡ Now the Lazaretto, twelve miles below Philadelphia.

his conciliatory manner, his kind promises, perhaps enforced by a reference to the weight of royal authority which he might call to his aid, and, above all, the liberal exchanges of land which he proposed, disarmed their opposition, and they acquiesced in the plans of the great founder of Philadelphia.

The stream of intercourse between the Swedes and William Penn ran smoothly. If we refer to the fact that an occasional obstruction disturbed the peaceful current, it may serve to show more clearly what strong claims each party had to the respect and consideration of the other. Their character and bearing were such as to draw from him, on several occasions, a manly testimony in their favor. They received him kindly, as they always had, the few English who preceded him. Their respect to authority, and their kind behavior to his own countrymen, he had to commend. He had seen few young men more sober and industrious than they could show. He had met with few families more interesting than those of Swedish name.

Penn's dealings with the Indians have obtained such a record in history as to command the praise of Christians in every land. Under the shade of the large elm-tree in Shakamaxon, the chiefs of the Algonquin race were captivated by the simplicity and sincerity of his manners, and by the language of pure affection in which he addressed them. "We will live," said they, "in love with

William Penn and his children, and with his children's children, as long as the moon and sun endure."\* It should be remembered, however, that Penn's intercourse with the Indians had been preceded by the Christian labors of pious Lutherans, and that, for forty years, these sons of the forest had been accustomed to hear the truths and to discern the principles of the gospel, proceeding from the lips and exemplified in the lives of Europeans. Along with all the civil intercourse between the Indians and the Swedes, there ran a line of spiritual sympathy, which, having begun in the time of Campanius, was afterwards greatly strengthened in the days of Biork and Rudman. It was by such influences, long and steadily operating to subdue the passions and to conciliate the feelings of savage men, that the way was made straight for the successful application of the plans of the great philanthropist.

Half a mile below the southern limits of the city of Penn, stood the Swedish Church of Wicaco. Having been built in 1669, it had been the scene of gospel ceremonies and of Christian devotion for several years before the arrival of the English colonists. It was, indeed, originally erected by the command of the Government, as a block-house, or place of defense against the Indians; but the Lutherans, as though they relied more upon the weapons of a spiritual than upon those of a carnal

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\* Baird's Religion in America, p. 70.

warfare, converted the fort into a church, and in 1677 called the Rev. Jacob Fabritius as its pastor.\*

Thus, for five years before the arrival of William Penn, the gospel had been preached, its solemn ordinances had been administered, and the voice of rejoicing and salvation had been heard proceeding from the tabernacles of Zion, frequented by zealous Lutherans, in the immediate vicinity of what was afterwards the scene of his celebrated treaty. With the Indians, the Swedes were wont to live in much greater friendship than with the English themselves.† There is every reason to believe, that they never forgot their obligations to endeavor to bring them into the marvellous light of the truth; and the effect of all these circumstances, in calming and controlling the feelings of the Indians in their intercourse with white men, it were vain to question. Though we would not detract, in the least, from the merited praise of William Penn, yet we may honestly claim that to the Lutheran Church belonged the part of pioneer in the management of a treaty which, for its purity and integrity, has, above all others, a world-wide, an everlasting fame.

It was at an early period of their ministry that Biork and Rudman began to agitate the subject of church-erection. With little money and with strong faith, a substantial building was commenced

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\* Clay's Annals, p. 37.

† Mr. Biork's Letter in 1697; Clay's Annals, p. 67.

at Christina in 1698; and on Trinity Sunday, 1699, the church was consecrated to the service of Almighty God. When the work began at Christina, there was a similar effort at Wicaco; but, in consequence of a difference of sentiment as to the proper location of the church, no progress was made for upwards of a year. The difficulty, however, having been removed, the erection of the new church was commenced, on the site of the old church or block-house of 1669. On the first Sunday after Trinity, in the year 1700, in the presence of a large, promiscuous assembly, and by solemn acts of devotion, this church was consecrated to the service of God and the preaching of his word. By their zeal and enterprise, as displayed in the erection of these two churches, the Lutherans had distinguished themselves and commanded the admiration of their wealthier English neighbors. Their dimensions, the convenience of their internal arrangements, the tasteful simplicity of their adornments, elicited, in that early day, the meed of praise which is now lavished only upon the sacred temple where the costly perfections of art and skill combine to excite all the feelings of awe and veneration. The English inhabitants, having been interested in the progress of the churches at Wicaco and Christina, continued, long after their consecration, to gaze upon them with wonder. The fame of them was noised abroad to neighboring provinces. Strangers, visiting the region of the Delaware, walked round about these walls of

Zion, and, with respectful mien, were pleased to enter her sacred courts. Even the Governors of Maryland and Virginia,—Nicholson and Blackstone,—attended by their respective suites, were gratified on the occasion of seeing with their own eyes these noble monuments of Christian zeal and of Lutheran enterprise.\*

It was through this church at Wicaco, that the principal stream of communication ran between the Swedes and the other adherents of the Lutheran faith in America.

The close of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century brought large additions to the number of Lutherans. The emigration was especially strong between the years 1708 and 1720. Persecuted inhabitants of the Palatinate, rejoicing in the favor and sympathy of Queen Anne, flocked together by thousands upon the shores of England. They were fed there and clothed by the royal bounty. They were edified by the spiritual attentions of preachers of the court; and when the day of their departure arrived, four thousand Germans at once found accommodations upon ten ships prepared for a voyage to the Western World.† The immediate history of these emigrants, who landed in New York, June 13, 1710, belongs to another branch of our subject. Though the main body attempted to settle in the interior of New York, the proportion that came at once to the

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\* Clay's Annals, p. 83.

† Halle Reports, p. 473.

province of Pennsylvania was not a small one. These emigrants, 'tis true, contributed nothing of any direct value in the establishment of the Church. Without religious teachers to instruct and build them up in the faith of the gospel, surrounded by sects which, though small, were contentious, and too much engrossed by the cares of this life, they served, at best, only as pioneers to prepare the way for their brethren who were soon to follow.\*

This service they effectually rendered. The Bible, the hymn-book, and Arndt's True Christianity, with which they had been generously furnished by the munificence of friends in England, enlivening the hours of their rest and their devotion, still bound them to the faith of their fathers; and when the tide of emigration began again to flow, it was towards the province chosen by these earlier emigrants that its current was directed.

The Lutheran families that arrived during this next period of emigration between 1720 and 1740 were both numerous and hearty in their attachment to the Church. From the Palatinate, from Wurtemberg, from Darmstadt, from other portions of Germany, they came, having one Lord, one faith, one baptism. Many of them sought and found a home in Philadelphia and its vicinity, and, although unable in their poverty either to build church or school-house, or even to secure the ground for such an object, they nevertheless main-

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\* Halle Reports, p. 666.



tained the unity of the faith, and hopefully awaited a more prosperous day.

Upon the arrival of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg in 1742, he found the Lutheran Church of the Germans in Philadelphia in the habit of holding public worship in a small house that had been rented for the purpose. The interest awakened by his appearance amongst them was such, that in a short time this house was altogether too small to accommodate the growing crowds. The Lutheran Church of the Swedes was generously offered for the use of the Germans; and so it happened, that the consecrated walls within which the father of the Lutheran Church in America first proclaimed the unsearchable riches of Christ were those of the Swedes at Wicaco.\* Upon a set day in this church there was a novel and attractive ceremony, refreshing doubtless to many a weary heart, and sanctioned by the holy offices of religion. The Swedes and the Germans were gathered together. Muhlenberg presented his testimonials and letters of recommendation. The senior pastor of the Swedes opened and read them in the hearing of all the people; and there, in the midst of songs of praise and fervent prayer, Muhlenberg was solemnly installed as regular pastor of the German Lutherans in and around Philadelphia.†

A union of hands between the poorer Germans and the more prosperous Swedes, apparently so

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\* Halle Reports, p. 717.

† Ib. p. 671.

earnest and sincere as this, might well suggest the thought that there must also have been a unity of heart, all the goodly, pleasant fellowship of brethren. Such in truth there was; and it is this and the long continuance of it that justifies us in the belief, that the early progress of the Swedish congregations, now separated though they be, belongs to the history of the Lutheran Church in America.

With such a beginning, we might expect to find Muhlenberg, though the pastor of the Germans, moving freely and figuring largely among the Swedes. And when we find them, in their prosperous settlements along the Schuylkill, clustering around him and begging him, with tears in their eyes, to visit them and preach to them upon the Lord's day,—when we see him administer the holy Sacraments in their devout assemblies,—when we hear them testify, with joyful hearts, that these impressive scenes reminded them of apostolic times,\*—we have no difficulty in concluding, that the Swedes and the Germans of this earlier period were one united family in all the completeness of Christian fellowship.

The fruits of Muhlenberg's pastoral fidelity, and of the adherence of the Swedes to the doctrine and order of the Lutheran Church, began in due time to ripen. In the year 1759, there arrived from Sweden a young man duly accredited as provost or chief pastor of the Swedish churches.

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\* Halle Reports, pp. 267-278.

This was Charles Magnus Wrangel, of whom we may say, in relation to the other Swedish pastors, that in gifts, in labors, and in success, he was not a whit behind them. He preached the word of the Lord, and the dry bones lived. He attracted the young; he aroused and quickened the old. Crowds, drawn by his captivating eloquence, thronged around him in the open air. He was wholly given to the work. He seemed as one resolved to make full proof of his ministry; and his brethren, for whom Muhlenberg himself testifies, thought that a special blessing rested upon his labors and a special providence protected his life.\* They persuaded themselves, indeed, that they could trace in him certain features of resemblance to the Great Apostle; for at times he also had a thorn in the flesh, lest he might be exalted above measure; and again, when persecutions abounded and the cross had grown heavy, some new triumph was granted to him, lest he might be swallowed up with sorrow.\* His personal demeanor was marked by the graces of simplicity and gentleness, and his conversation was richly instructive to all who might be interested in the things of the kingdom of God.†

The intercourse between Muhlenberg and Wrangel, frequent and cordial as it was, was at the same time both the cause and the effect of a corresponding fellowship between the German and

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\* Halle Reports, p. 852.

† Ib. p. 851.

the Swedish Churches. As being parts of one and the same Evangelical Lutheran Church, what could have separated them? The difference of their languages was no stronger element of disunion then, than has been the difference between the German and the English of later generations; and, with these two languages prevailing in her borders until the present day, no sound head has ever contemplated the project of a division of the Lutheran Church upon the principle of speech. Her glory might be, that even unto this day she possesses and exercises the gift of tongues, throughout the Union and the adjacent colonies. She holds on to the stirring Saxon of the great Reformer: when occasion requires, she preaches the gospel and administers its sacraments in the languages of Holland and of France; whilst the English, the Swedish, and the Norwegian are the ordinary forms in which she declares the whole counsel of God. Thus diverse in her gifts, she yet continues one in the integrity of her faith and the activity of her benevolence. On the ground of language, then, there could have been no separation between the Germans and the Swedes in the days of Wrangel and of Muhlenberg.

Nor could they have been separated upon the principle of any fundamental distinction in ecclesiastical polity. The Church in Sweden, 'tis true, has somewhat of an Episcopal Constitution; but this episcopacy is maintained upon the ground of convenience, of political expediency, and not, as is

the Episcopacy of England, upon the assumed principle of apostolic succession.

As though they regarded episcopacy as a mere matter of expediency, belonging only to an established Church and to a monarchical government, the Swedish pastors and churches in America seem to have been ready to ignore it from the beginning. In the year 1691, apprehending, from the infirmities of his old age, that their venerable pastor Fabricius might soon be removed from his labors, they addressed an earnest appeal to the Lutheran Consistory in Amsterdam, supplicating them, in consideration of their "happy fellowship in the Lutheran communion," to *ordain* and send to them some faithful Swedish student, qualified to minister in holy things. The ordination thus solicited was that of the Lutheran Church, disclaiming the lofty pretensions of apostolic succession, concerning which they do not seem to have entertained a thought.\*

Shortly after the beginning of the last century, three of their most eminent pastors—Rev. Messrs. Rudman, Biork, and Sandel—*ordained* Justus Falkner, in the church at Wicaco; † and in the month of August, 1748, the Swedish pastors Sandin and Nesman united with the Germans, Muhlenberg, Hartwich, Brunnholtz, and Handschuh, at a meeting of synod in St. Michael's Church, Philadelphia, in the *ordination* of Kurtz to the gospel ministry,

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\* Clay's Annals, pp. 38, 137

† Ib. p. 86.

by the laying on of hands.\* In a word, their uniform doctrine upon this subject seems to have harmonized fully with the representations which Dr. Collin was wont to give to the Lutherans of Philadelphia, in his day. The amount of his testimony was, that whilst the people of Sweden would no doubt prefer to have bishops placed over the Church as a matter of convenience or expediency, yet no one would ever think of putting forth in their behalf the claim of divine right or apostolic succession.†

The Swedes and the Germans, then, were truly one Lutheran Church,—holding the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace. When we study the Christian fellowship that subsisted between Muhlenberg and Wrangel, we discover that, though somewhat more intense, it was nevertheless only upon a smaller scale than the fellowship between the churches themselves. These men were both learned, laborious, and devout. Their zeal was intelligent and aggressive; and the effect of their intimate association was to encourage themselves and their people to faith and good works.

The history of a few days will answer as a sketch of their intercourse for years. On the Lord's day, July 26, 1761, in the afternoon, Muhlenberg

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\* Halle Reports, p. 111.

† My authority for this is a venerable pastor of the Lutheran Church in Philadelphia, who, after a ministry in that city of fifty years, still retains in a remarkable way the laborious zeal and the intellectual vigor of his early days.

preaches English in one of the Swedish congregations, and returns through a heavy rain to Wicaco. Late at night Wrangel comes back to Wicaco, wet and sick, from Jersey. The next day they ride to the residence of Pastor Handschuh, and, accompanied by elders and members of the church, and the children and teachers of the congregational school, they walk in procession to the new school-house of the Germans, and solemnly consecrate it. In the afternoon, Muhlenberg, Wrangel, and Handschuh, edify themselves in the residence of the latter with the word of God and with prayer. On Tuesday, Muhlenberg and Wrangel visit some Christian friends together, and are much refreshed in spirit by their godly conversation. At night they arrive at Wicaco, and there remain. The next day they set out to pay pastoral visits in the Swedish congregations, and, after a day of physical toil but of spiritual joy, they arrive at the residence of Mr. John Taylor, one of the proprietors of Tinicum. This man had been a Quaker or Friend; but, having been instructed by Wrangel in the doctrines and sacraments of the gospel, he had been baptized. The Lord had opened his heart, and, in the spirit of Lydia, he opened his house to the man of God who had shown him the way of salvation. With Taylor and his believing wife they remain; and they edify themselves with Christian converse and with prayer until the hour of retiring. On Thursday they visit the old graveyard at Tinicum, and gaze thoughtfully upon

the memorials of the ancient Swedes, and upon the ruins of the first Christian church erected in these Western wilds. At noon Muhlenberg preaches to an attentive congregation; and in the afternoon they take part in a meeting called for the purpose of devising measures to erect a new church. At this meeting Muhlenberg and Wrangel are chosen as trustees. In the evening they return to Wrangel's residence at Wicaco.\* We can scarcely refrain from continuing this interesting record, revealing as it does the pastoral fidelity, the personal piety, the fraternal harmony of these noble men. We follow it up a little further, and we find them meeting on the next Sunday evening again at Wicaco, both exhausted by the labors of the day, and both seeking to refresh their spirits at the fountain of mercy. We look again, and we see how, after the arduous duties of the following Tuesday morning, Wrangel is pleased to accompany Muhlenberg from house to house in the afternoon, for the purpose of conversing and praying with awakened and inquiring souls.†

In this fraternal union the other pastors and the congregations of the Swedes and Germans largely shared. Being of one mind in regard to the Symbols of the Lutheran faith, and bound by those symbols only to the doctrines of the word of God, they required no foreign influences to unite and cement them together. But the authorities of the

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\* Halle Reports, p. 867.

† Ib. p. 869.



Church in Sweden, hearing of this fellowship, felt themselves called upon to applaud and encourage it. On Monday, September 15, 1760, the Provost Wrangel opened a regular Conference of Swedish pastors in the church at Wicaco. Muhlenberg, having been personally invited by Dr. Wrangel, was also present. The first matter laid before the Conference was the letter of instructions from the Archbishop of Upsal, the highest dignitary of the Church in Sweden. In this letter, among other things, it was ordained that the Swedish pastors should to the fullest extent co-operate with the German Lutheran Ministerium in brotherly love and Christian harmony; that the Swedes should attend the synodical meetings of the Germans, and invite the Germans to participate in their solemn conventions, in order that the welfare of the whole Church might be thus promoted. Observing the hearty acquiescence of the Swedes in this arrangement, Muhlenberg arose, and on behalf of the German Ministerium returned thanks for the interest that the archbishop had been pleased to express in the welfare of the Church in America; announcing at the same time his joyful hope that by such a union its prosperity, under the divine blessing, might be secured.\*

Among the transactions of the same Conference, great prominence was given, and as a matter of history is still due, to another measure, that was

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\* Halle Reports, p. 852.

intended to protect the Swedish pastors and their congregations against a certain catastrophe, in which by the force of circumstances they became after a few years involved.

Here and there, in the vicinity of the Swedes, might be found some congregations, larger or smaller, composed of members of the Episcopal Church of England, more or less organized. The nominal Episcopacy of the Lutheran Church in Sweden appeared to these High-Church Episcopalians a sufficient reason for acknowledging the validity of the acts of the Swedish pastors, in the absence of rectors of their own order. In their desire for the ministry of the word, they held out honorable inducements to the Swedish pastors to minister at their altars; and the willingness of the Swedes to preach the gospel to every creature inclined them, at times, to give ear to these solicitations. The whole subject was brought to the attention of the Conference, and a rule was established that the Swedish pastors should not be moved by pecuniary considerations to take charge of any Episcopal church, since a faithful ministry amongst their own people would occupy all their time. Could they, however, by a diligent use of their time, occasionally visit these English churches and serve them with the means of grace, according to the doctrine and order of the Lutheran Church, it would then be proper, upon the principle of Christian love, that they should

pay some attention to certain specified Episcopal parishes.\*

Strangely enough, history has to record the subsequent marshalling of all these Swedish churches under the banner of English Episcopacy; but it is due to them to observe, that this swerving from the faith and order of the Lutheran Church was a movement against which they seem to have been anxious to protect themselves, by deliberate and solemn enactments. They were bound only to the Brethren of the Augsburg Confession; and when occasionally ministering amongst their Episcopal neighbors, they acknowledged their obligations to contend for the faith only under the Symbols of Lutheranism.

At the conclusion of this Conference, it was advised that a meeting of the German pastors should be convened at an early day, in order that the existing condition of the whole Church might be ascertained. As to the time, the month of October was agreed upon; and Providence, now called "The Trappe," in Montgomery county, the residence of Muhlenberg, was fixed as the place.†

Accordingly, on the 18th of October, 1760, the Conference met. There were, amongst others, Muhlenberg and Wrangel, Gerock, of Lancaster, and Hausile, of Reading, the two Kurtzes, Schaum, and Handschuh. The next day was the Lord's

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\* Halle Reports, p. 853.

† Ibid.

day. Germans and Swedes alike thronged together from a region many miles around, to partake in the rare privileges of the occasion. The Lord blessed the provision of his house, and filled his poor with bread.

Upon the conclusion of the morning and afternoon services, the assembled pastors retired to the parsonage, and united in converse touching holy things. They discussed the elements of a broken and truly contrite heart, of faith, and of righteousness. They drew near to each other, interchanging the results of self-examination and personal experience of the grace of God, until their very hearts throbbed with holy joy. In the evening, and in the same place, they lifted up the voice of praise, they sang their favorite hymns, they accompanied themselves with an instrument of music, they conversed about the internal affairs of their congregations, they prolonged and varied the soul-stirring melodies, they noticed not the passage of the swift-winged hours, and the clock struck three at night before they thought of resigning nature to its repose.\*

One of the most active members of this Conference was the Swedish provost, Wrangel; and the first business brought before it was a matter in which Wrangel had taken a very prominent part. A certain Paul Bryzelius, a young man, a native of Sweden, well educated, of good parts,

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\* Halle Reports, p. 855.

and of upright character, having been brought under the influence of some who were not friendly to the Lutheran Church, appeared to be acting as their instrument in an attempt to draw off the Swedish church at Racoon, in New Jersey, from the Lutheran communion to that of his patrons. Wrangel had approached him in the name and with the word of the Lord. Bryzelius saw his error, was convinced, repented of it, and, under the advice of Wrangel, appeared before the Conference with a prayer for admission into the fellowship of the Lutheran Church. After a thorough examination of the case before the Ministerium, Bryzelius declared, in writing, that, having been thoroughly convinced of his error and having heartily abandoned it, he solemnly bound himself, upon his admission into the Ministerium of the Swedes and German Lutherans of Pennsylvania, to teach nothing but what is based upon the word of God, to conform, in all his ministrations, to our Symbolical Books, and to comply with the order of the said Ministerium. This document was signed, in the presence of the Ministerium, by Bryzelius himself, and by Muhlenberg, Wrangel, and Gerrock, as witnesses. The whole ceremony was appropriately terminated with prayer that the brother thus restored to the Church might, by the grace of God, be an instrument for bringing many souls to the Saviour of the world.\*

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\* Halle Reports, p. 856.

From the result, it might be argued that the divine blessing rested upon these measures. Bryzelius went to the church in New Germantown, New Jersey, labored with much acceptance amongst his people, and was held in honor, both by his Swedish and German brethren, for his faithfulness.

This case, though it is the personal history of an individual, shows conclusively what was the spirit of the Lutherans in 1760. A Swedish minister reclaimed by the prayerful efforts of the Swedish provost is brought to the Synod of the Swedes and Germans, and, being pledged to preach the word of God according to the doctrine and order of the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church, is sent to take charge of a German Lutheran congregation. The union, the harmony of spirit, between the Swedes and Germans was most complete. There was but one Lutheran Church, to which they all belonged; and, whatever courtesy they were wont to display towards other Churches, among themselves they cultivated, in a peculiar degree, the sentiments of brethren.

It is of considerable importance to observe, that the course thus adopted and pursued by Wrangel and his Swedish brethren met with the approbation of the Church and Government that had sent them hither. After the labors of about nine years in preaching the gospel of Christ and promoting unity of spirit and action amongst all the adherents of the Lutheran faith in America, he was recalled to his native land, and rewarded with one

of the most prominent appointments that the Government of Sweden had to bestow. The departure of the distinguished provost called forth many expressions of regret from the whole Church. Muhlenberg especially has recorded the sorrow with which he received the intelligence of Wrangel's removal. Yet time and space could not destroy the fellowship of those congenial spirits. They had long labored together in joy and in sorrow. They had stood side by side at the altar in Wicaco and in Providence. In journeyings oft, they had nobly shared in the burden that came upon them both,—the care of all the churches. With their large experience, they had legislated together in synodical session; with childlike simplicity, they had read the word of God and bowed before the throne of grace in company; and they still continued to take sweet counsel together, and to co-operate for the advancement of the Lutheran Church in America, though an ocean rolled between them.

## CHAPTER II.

## SPIRITUAL CONDITION OF THE SWEDES.

IN pursuing the history of the Church, the heart of the Christian is ever on the alert to discover in each particular period the condition of that divine kingdom which is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. It is indeed a matter of interest to know where congregations were organized, where churches were built, what doctrines were professed, what efforts were made for the diffusion of gospel light upon the earth, and what were their general results. The external history of the Church, affording, as it does, most attractive instances of the plans of genius, the fearlessness of heroism, the sacrifices and conflicts of benevolence, with its subsequent triumphs, might well engage and absorb the attention of minds that are prone to seek excitement amid the agitated scenes of human passions, or addicted to indulge even in the intoxications of romance.

But, in the estimation of the Christian, the King's daughter is all glorious within. He enters the sanctuary of Zion, that he may see the goings of the Lord, the Holy One, and he feels lonely and comfortless, amid all the splendor of her courts, unless he realizes the divine presence there.



What was the spirit of the Swedish churches? Were they bound up in cold formalism and in rigid orthodoxy? Were they animated by a fervent and intelligent zeal for the gospel of Christ and the conversion of souls? Did they labor, with faithfulness and success, to bring men from the power of Satan to God? Did they insist with becoming earnestness upon the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and train their people to the exercise of that faith that worketh by love? These are questions of importance; and it is with no small degree of interest that we advance to consider them.

Their enterprise in the erection of churches, their anxious care to have them supplied with an able and faithful ministry, that might defend the truth against all opposers and train their children in the way of life, afford strong presumptive evidence that their piety was active, experimental, and sincere. With no further indications of their Christian character than these circumstances afford, we might dispose of them under the conviction that everywhere their memory would be held in honor, even by those who are accustomed to the special and active measures of the present day. But we are able to look more deeply into the relations of their inner life. Their historians and annalists, 'tis true, have not in general appeared much inclined to turn their investigations into this channel. Their attention was mainly occupied with the civil polity of the Swedes, and the external

history of their churches; but in the midst of all this they furnish us with occasional facts of great value in their spiritual bearing,—occasional, yet frequent enough to convince us that it is the fault of the annalists themselves that such statements are so rare. After the German churches under Muhlenberg and his brethren had been well established, and Swedes and Germans had been confirmed in the unity of the faith, it was natural that the circumstantial reports of the German congregations should at the same time present the spiritual condition of their Swedish brethren. So, when we attempt to describe the religious standing of the latter, our principal source of information will be found in the Halle Reports, devoted though they are to the cause and interests of the former. If any portions of the History of New Sweden, by Acrelius, have a bearing upon this subject, they are still locked up in the original Swedish tongue, and will probably remain so until some zealous inheritor of the blood of the early Swedes shall bring forth the record in some other speech more prevalent in our land.\*

The efforts of Campanius, forty years before the arrival of William Penn, to convert the Indians to the faith of the gospel, have not only the appearance of zeal; they have also the indisputable merit of intelligent Christian perseverance. By his patient teaching he succeeded in making them under-

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\* Yet a translation of this work is reported.

stand many of the cardinal truths of the gospel. They took so much interest in his instructions, and seemed so well prepared for further advancement in the knowledge of Christ, that he studied their language in order that he might make full proof of his ministry amongst them.\* As he did not faint, we have the assurance of the divine word that in due season he was able to reap. So it is no slight commendation of the character of the Swedish Churches that impresses us, when, as we discover in the early times the distinguished Puritan, Eliot, toiling for the edifying of Christians and the conversion of Indians in Massachusetts, we can turn straightway towards the South and find the equally-faithful Lutheran, Campanius, accomplishing the same thing along the Delaware.

About the close of the seventeenth century, the Rev. Messrs. Biork and Rudman, upon their arrival from Sweden, were sadly grieved at the discovery of the state of the Church, the irregularity of the congregations, their neglect of the ordinances of the gospel, and especially their forgetfulness of the proper training of the youth. Like reasonable men, however, they accounted for it by the fact, that the churches had long suffered for the want of the requisite pastoral attention. Like hopeful Christians, too, they promised themselves and their congregations that these things should be mended, if God would grant them life.† The

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\* Clay's Annals, p. 27.

† *Ib.* p. 66.

road before them was rough, but they would not spare themselves. They would labor diligently in word and doctrine, so that with God's blessing the crooked might become straight and the rough places smooth.

Trained in the same school as Campanius had been fifty years before, they trod faithfully in his footsteps, and were worthy to be the successors of this co-laborer of Eliot among the Indians. They had been largely supplied with Luther's Catechism, in the Indian tongue. They found ready access to the neighboring tribes. They were surprised and encouraged by the aptness of the Indians to learn from the lay teacher, Charles Springer, to whom they had intrusted this ministry. They hoped for great results. They said, "Who knows what God has yet in store for these Indians, if our lives should be spared, when we shall have acquired their language? We shall spare no labor to attain that object."\*

The labors of these two pastors seem to have resulted in a genuine revival of religion throughout the whole Lutheran community. It was not, indeed, attended by those forms of excitement—those public indications of religious awakening—that have marked the extensive revivals of later years; but it had in it all the elements that could be expected from a genuine work of grace amongst a people of mild and amiable character, of gentle

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\* Clay's Annals, p. 68.

and retiring habits. Of the large number of Bibles, hymn-books, prayer-books, and other books of devotion sent from Sweden, not one was unemployed.\* They were read. They were carried from house to house. They were passed from hand to hand. They were devoured. They encountered the treatment, and they produced the results, which, colporteurs tell us, belong to the history of some stray copies of Baxter's *Saints' Rest*, or of Doddridge's *Rise and Progress*, which, working their lonely way through the few households of some dreary regions, are silent, though mighty, in opening the eyes of the blind and bringing mourning sinners to the Saviour. The Swedish churches arose at once, and shook themselves from the dust: they put on garments of beauty. Religion flourished in the household, the children were carefully instructed in the doctrines of the gospel, and parents and children, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were edified.†

The period of Wrangel's labors among the Swedes began in 1759 and ended in 1768. During all this time the intimacy between the Swedish and German churches was particularly cordial; and it is mainly in consequence of this intimacy that we are furnished with the information that will enable us to form a correct estimate of the character and spirit of the Swedish congregations.

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\* Clay's *Annals*, p. 68.

† *Ib.* pp. 71, 85.

In those days a religious party of the English, and several sects of the Germans, were loud, if not eloquent, in the maintenance of a certain negative position, against which it has always been the glory of the Lutheran Church to present a positive principle. These parties derided Luther's Catechism. They opposed the use of what they called the letter of the divine word in the instruction of the young. In their social intercourse, and when the Spirit was thought to move them in their meetings, they testified that it was wrong, it was sinful, to attempt to influence the minds of children by the use either of the one or of the other. "Let the youth," said they, "be unprejudiced, uncommitted, until they shall receive the baptism by fire and the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, which shall all be given in his own good place and time."\* But the Lutherans, always apprehensive that tares were sure to grow where no good seed was sown,—that where the light was not made to shine there gross darkness must prevail,—steadily persisted in their efforts to train their children under the influence of the Bible and the catechism. The cultivation of religion in the household, the treatment of the children, both by parents and pastors, as though they already stood in covenant-relations with God by virtue of their baptism, and required the most prayerful attention that they might be rendered

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\* Halle Reports, p. 1199.

steadfast and adorn their profession,—these are principles in the illustration of which the Lutheran Church, during all the periods of its prosperity, must be acknowledged to abound.

It was so among the Swedes in the days of Wrangel. In the Conference of Lutheran ministers at Wicaco, and afterwards at the Trappe, his high character and the weighty influence he was exerting amongst his people are indicated by his tender regard for the divine command, “Feed my sheep; feed my lambs.” The care and labor he devoted to his congregations, that they might live and flourish in the spirit of the gospel, seemed to his brethren to be truly astonishing. When they speak of his preaching, our impression is that his strength belonged to the pulpit, so lucid were his exhibitions of gospel truth, so effective his instructions, so close his applications, so stirring his appeals in the sacred desk. When we follow him in his pastoral walks, our impression may be quite as positive, that his strength lay in the fidelity with which he preached the gospel from house to house, and the interest with which he invested the catechetical instruction of the young.

The recommendations which he eloquently urged upon the attention of his Lutheran brethren in the Conference at the Trappe, in 1760, may be regarded as descriptive of the usages of the Swedish churches; they certainly were of those of the Germans in the times of Muhlenberg. The same catechism (Luther’s Small Catechism) was studied

in all the churches. The pastor visited the congregational schools and the families of his people, and sought, by the use of the catechism, to present the doctrines of the gospel in a plain, simple, attractive form, so that the children themselves would desire it as the sincere milk of the word. Care was taken that the memory should not be burdened with oppressive tasks; yet every doctrine was to be proven and established by some apt passage of the Scripture. It was the duty of the parents and the pastor to see that whatever was committed to memory was thoroughly understood, so that not only the memory, but also all the affections of the soul, might be occupied with the good word of God.\*

There had been times in which the Swedes were remiss in that devout observance of the sacraments of the gospel that is characteristic of a faith that worketh by love. They neglected especially the table of the Lord. Guilty fears and a legal spirit drove them from it, until old age had settled upon them, or until Providence had laid them upon the bed of death. But the tears and eloquent appeals of Wrangel, the devout spirit, the steady perseverance of Borrel, the hearty co-operation of Bryzelius and Wicksel, through the blessing of God, effected a thorough, a happy change; and, from the weeping and the praying with which both old and young surrounded the table

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\* Halle Reports, p. 853.



of the Lord upon their solemn festivals, it might be argued that a blessing had indeed been bestowed upon them, and that God had visited his people.\*

By their varied and untiring efforts, the Church prospered; Zion seemed to break forth on the right hand and on the left. From time to time there were souls added to the number of the faithful, with whom the Swedes had had no nearer connection than the common ties of humanity. At one time Roman Catholics were brought to the knowledge of the truth of the gospel; at another, Quakers were baptized in the name of the Holy Trinity; and again, negroes, the children of Ethiopia, were admitted to the household of faith and the table of the Lord.† Their pastors, with Wrangel at their head, “worked themselves almost to death” in building up the kingdom of Christ; and in their seasons of retirement they could but weep over the desolations they saw around them. In this laboring in public and weeping in private, this ceaseless remembrance of Zion, we discover the solution of Muhlenberg’s testimony in 1761:—“There seems to be a special revival and a peculiar blessing abiding upon the Swedish churches.”‡

A revival in the sense of Muhlenberg was unquestionably a work of the Holy Spirit. Such works it was his privilege often to behold; and

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\* Halle Reports, p. 860.

† Ibid. pp. 957, 958.

‡ Ibid. p. 948.

he was well qualified to judge of the spiritual condition of the Church around him. In a word, we may say that in the Swedish congregations the cardinal doctrines of the gospel were preached in the pulpit and from house to house. They were insisted upon as the subjects of a living, saving faith; they were believed by the people and exemplified in their lives. They served to guide and instruct the young; they were for the comfort and consolation of the old. Their prevalence secured to the faithful pastors many souls as seals to their ministry; and under their influence the churches were increased and edified.

After the intimate fellowship that subsisted for so long a time between the Germans and the Swedes in the bosom of the Lutheran Church, a day of separation came. The Germans continued faithful to the doctrine and order of their Church. The Swedes broke loose from their historical connections; they turned aside from their venerable Lutheran antecedents; they essayed to swim alone, and were soon swallowed up in the stream of High-Church Episcopacy.

This event does not appear to have been the result of any angry controversy upon the subject either of doctrine or of polity. It was not brought about by any acknowledged or existing incongruity between the German and Swedish elements. Both agreed in testifying to all men repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. They taught everywhere that nothing

would avail in Christ Jesus but a new creature. In their churches and families they were all alike in the use of Luther's Small Catechism and the Augsburg Confession. In their synodical conventions they stood side by side in their respectful deference to "our Symbolical Books." We will not say that they regarded the Bible as the only infallible rule of faith and practice; for, as Lutherans, it does not appear that they could have done otherwise. The Augsburg Confession itself protests against "entailing upon our children any other doctrine than that of the pure divine word and Christian truth." We will not say that they did not desire the Augsburg Confession to supersede the word of God; for we might then be asked, Where is the Lutheran who has ever been conscious of such a desire? In a word, they agreed in every thing. As members of the same Lutheran family, they were not conscious of any diversity of sentiment, even upon the subject of ecclesiastical polity. The Swede would as soon have pretended to trace his descent from a nobler race than the family of man, as presume to claim for his ministry, a higher authority or a greater value than belonged to the ministry of his German brother. They were all brethren; and amongst themselves there could be no cause for separation, for there was no strife between them.

Notwithstanding all this, the Swedish brethren withdrew from the fellowship of the Lutheran Church in America; and whoever undertakes to

follow up their history as developed in later years, will find them moving along smoothly and noiselessly amidst the forms and traditions of English Episcopalianism.

In view of the lofty pretensions put forth by High-Church Episcopalians of the present day, it seems to us unaccountable that any respectable portion of the Lutheran Church should be willing to abandon its own venerable historical connections, and humbly receive, in return, the vaunted benefits of what is called the apostolical succession. Indeed, if the Swedish Churches had continued faithful to their Lutheran profession until the present generation, there is no reason to suppose that they would regard the exclusive claims of English Episcopacy with any more favor than is felt by the existing membership of the Lutheran Church in America. Of the Swedish immigrants settling in our Western States within the last few years, several large and flourishing congregations have been formed. Their attachments are not to the Episcopal but the Lutheran Church; and in the language of the Archbishop of Sweden, in a letter to certain Swedes in this country, in the year 1850, they speak of a departure from the Lutheran to the Episcopal Church as being, "if, not an apostasy, at least a downfall."\*

But the condition of the Lutheran Church, that of the Episcopalians, and the relations between

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\* Rev. L. P. Esbjorn.

them, were, towards the close of the last century, vastly different from what they are at present. So the transition of the Swedes from the one to the other, which at this time would be at least a downfall, may have been effected, in the day of its occurrence, by most honorable motives and by the plainest force of circumstances. It was done, indeed, without any dissatisfaction with the Lutheran Church,—without any special preference for the forms, without any peculiar approbation of the claims, of Episcopalians.

Indeed, so fraternal, so cordial, was the intercourse between the Lutheran and Episcopal clergy of these earlier years, that it deserves to be spoken of as an honor to both. That they invited Muhlenberg to visit the annual Convention of Episcopal ministers, and treated him with the utmost deference when he took his seat amongst them; that they requested him to preach in the Episcopal church in Philadelphia; that they maintained towards him and the Lutheran ministry in general the attitude of Christian brethren in the pastoral office,—all this was as honorable to the Episcopalians as to the Lutherans themselves. It would be unfair, too, to suppose that these Episcopalians adopted this course under the impression that the Lutherans might gradually be led, by a certain patronizing air, to abandon their own foundation, and adopt Episcopal rule,—apostolical succession and all. They were too well informed not to know the hearty attachment of

the Lutherans to their Symbolical Books and their ecclesiastical immunities. It is true that they contemplated establishing a closer union between the Churches; but in this contemplation the Episcopalian never allowed himself rudely to question the clerical character of the Lutheran ministry, nor arrogantly to insinuate that Episcopalians were the Church and Lutherans were schismatics.

In short, strong sentiments of mutual regard and good faith bound Lutherans and Episcopalians together. Had both then been united so as to constitute one Church, it would have been the union of two Churches each of which had previously recognized the Christian character and polity of the other. So, when the Swedes began to approach towards the Episcopal Church, the movement implied, on their part, no disavowal whatever of the doctrine and polity of Lutheranism, no acknowledgment at all of the exclusive claims with which the Episcopacy of more recent times has attempted to fill our ears.

The circumstances that led them to make this movement were wholly of an external character. Although the Swedish language had been preserved in their churches, for many years, in its purity, yet, about the middle of the last century, it began to yield to the greater prevalence of the English.

Wisely endeavoring to accommodate themselves to the advancing change, they petitioned the authorities of the Church in Sweden to extend to

their pastors permission to preach in the English language. This petition was addressed to the Archbishop and Consistory of Upsal, in the year 1758, shortly after the decease of the Rev. Mr. Parlin.\* In the year 1759 the eventful ministry of Wrangel began; and it was not the least of his distinctions that he was diligent in laboring amongst the Swedes through the medium of the English language,—perhaps in cherishing their fondness for it. He preached in English, he translated Luther's Small Catechism into English, he taught the children in English; and it is altogether reasonable to suppose that the use of the English language, which had been a mere matter of desire among the Swedes in 1758, before Wrangel came, should have become indispensable in 1768, after his departure.

This growing necessity for services in the English language increased the demand for men who might be able to preach in English with ease and with acceptance. The venerable Swedish pastors, who still served to keep up the ancient connection with the Church in Sweden, were held as worthy of all honor; but the congregations began to feel, and soon expressed the necessity, of having pastors who had been educated in this country; for the Swedish language was about becoming extinct, and the English was completely occupying its place.

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\* Clay's Annals, p. 124.

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But, in those days, the ministry of the Lutheran Church seems to have been trained and educated abroad. Neither the Germans nor the Swedes could furnish the men, of requisite qualifications and of a Lutheran spirit, to occupy the Swedish pulpits and labor in the Swedish congregations in the English language. The Episcopal Church of England having long cultivated friendly relations with the Lutheran Church, it was to the Episcopalians that the Swedes at once resorted. Their demand was promptly supplied, and for many years before the close of the last century we find Episcopal clergymen diligently officiating, as assistants and rectors, in the Swedish churches. The introduction of this element, of course, prepared the way for the adoption of other and stronger elements of Episcopacy, as they might be developed in the lapse of time. In the year 1787, an amendment of the charter legalized the election of Episcopal as well as of Lutheran clergymen as pastors of the churches; and in a short time their transition from the Lutheran to the Episcopal fellowship was completed.

Beyond this point it is not worth our while at present to prosecute their history. Whether the change was so gradual as to have produced no perceptible impression upon themselves, or whether they woke up suddenly and found, to their surprise, that they were Episcopalians instead of Lutherans, are questions of little moment here. The change was in every respect contrary to the



spirit of the Swedish Church, and was completed only after their connection with the Church in Sweden had been virtually dissolved.

Of all the nations that adhere to the Lutheran Church, the Swedes have ever been the most faithful in their support and defence of her Symbols; and the prominent position which Luther's Catechism and the Augsburg Confession held among the Swedes in America for upwards of one hundred and forty years, is a sufficient indication that their attachment to the Lutheran Church was hearty and sincere.

In view of the circumstances under which their connection with the Church in Sweden was dissolved, the thought might occur, that it could be fairly regarded as an attempt to set up an American Lutheran Church, although it was not so avowed. An American Lutheran Church might be defined to be a Church in America, which, whilst it retains the name of Lutheran, disclaims connection with the Lutheran Church in Europe, and is at liberty to adopt or to reject any feature of polity or of doctrine it may think proper, without respect to the ancient Symbols of Lutheranism. Such, practically, was the course pursued by the Swedes; and the fate that so soon overwhelmed them is full of warning that might be regarded with profit at the present day. Breaking off from ecclesiastical connections that had been rendered venerable and glorious by the sufferings, the victories, the spiritual heroism of successive genera-

tions, they became American Lutherans. Do we look for something noble, some striking token of good, as the first-fruits of this unusual movement? We hear nothing but the rustling of the robes of Episcopacy; and these American Lutherans fade wholly from our sight amid the flowing vestments of the apostolic succession.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE DUTCH.

HOWEVER, as the Lutheran Church at present exists in America, the seed by which it was originally sown was German. Among the early colonists that Holland furnished for the settlement of the New Netherlands, as New York was then called, there was a small proportion of Lutherans. The Dutch do not appear in the beginning to have been strongly characterized by intelligent Christian zeal. They concerned themselves very little, if at all, about the conversion of the Indians. The chief object of the Government at home, and of the colonists themselves, seems to have been to raise the New Netherlands to the highest degree of commercial prosperity. If years, if many years, elapsed then before the Lutherans from Holland made any combined effort on behalf of the Church, this is to be accounted for by the prevalence of the worldly aims that generally ruled amongst the Dutch.

After a while, however, their religious sentiment began to awaken and extend. Yet almost every step of their progress was taken in the face of an opposition that rose at times even to persecution

itself. The Lutherans in Holland never sympathized in the doctrinal system of the Arminians; but in popular opinion they were confounded with that condemned party, and exposed to a share in its persecutions. Those of them who had emigrated to the New Netherlands were in the habit, as early as the year 1644, of meeting in private houses for purposes of social devotion. Well disposed towards their Dutch Reformed brethren, they were pleased to meet with them in their seasons of public worship, and, having no pastors of their own, they were anxious to have their children baptized by the ministers of that denomination. In such cases, however, they were required to profess their belief in the truth of the doctrines promulgated by the Synod of Dort, and to promise to train up their children in the same. This would have made them and their families rigid Calvinists at once. It would have been a step which multitudes of German Reformed Churches on the continent of Europe—in Brandenburg, in Hesse, and at Bremen—were themselves unwilling to take.\* Of course, no conscientious Lutheran could agree to the prescribed terms. Their refusal drew down upon them the violence of the Established Church. The two ministers of the Dutch Reformed, Megapolensis and Drisius, in the ardor of mistaken zeal, demanded that all Lutheran parents should attend church with their children, and have them publicly

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\* Goericke. Part III. p. 566.

baptized according to the formulary of the Synod of Dort. Several Lutherans refusing to comply with this extravagant demand were arrested, fined, and in default of payment thrown into prison.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, the congregation of Lutherans continued to grow both in numbers and in zeal. About the year 1653, both the Dutch and the German Lutherans of the New Netherlands united in a petition addressed to the civil authorities in Holland, asking the privilege of electing their own pastor and holding public worship according to the tenets of the Lutheran faith. This petition, so reasonable in itself, was zealously urged by the Lutheran Consistory of Amsterdam, and every relation and bearing of the subject held forth the hope of a favorable answer. Megapolensis and Drisius, however, lifted up the voice of remonstrance against it: they bewailed, they said, the spread of sectarianism, and spoke of the dangerous consequences of extending such privileges to the Lutherans. The Anabaptists, the Mennonists, the Quakers, and the English Independents, they said, abounded in the province; and, if the Lutherans were indulged, all the others would demand the same thing for themselves. Influenced by these representations, the Classis of Amsterdam and the Directors of the West India Company refused the petition of the Lutherans, and instructed Stuyvesant, the Governor of the New Netherlands, to employ all moderate means for the purpose of luring the Lutherans into the

Dutch Reformed Church and matriculating them in that religion.

Stuyvesant gladly received these instructions. They ran at least in the direction that was most pleasing to himself and his spiritual colleagues Megapolensis and Drisius. But they did not go far enough. So, rejecting the moderate policy that his superiors had recommended, he avowed himself as ready to go greater lengths than ever in the spirit of religious persecution.

The Lutherans had long been accustomed to meet in their own dwellings for purposes of social devotion. Against these meetings, called "conventicles" in contempt, Stuyvesant published a fiery proclamation, showed that the Lutherans could expect no indulgence from him, encouraged the Dutch Reformed clergy in enforcing their baptismal formulary, so obnoxious to the Lutherans, and continued to punish by fines and imprisonments those who refused submission.

This cruel intolerance, being reported to the Directors of the West India Company, drew forth from them such a rebuke as for a season cheered the hearts and revived the hopes of the Lutherans. They renewed their appeals to the civil and ecclesiastical authorities in Holland for permission to organize their own church and to call their own pastor. They obtained a promise of toleration, and avowed the hope that a person would, before long, arrive from the fatherland, properly qualified to instruct them and watch over their souls.

The first practical result of their efforts to establish the Lutheran Church is seen in the arrival of the Rev. John Ernest Goetwater, in the month of June, 1657. He came commissioned by the Lutheran Consistory of Amsterdam to act as pastor of the Lutheran congregation "at the Manhattens." The determined opposition, not to himself, but to the Lutheran Church, led off by the Dutch clergy and acquiesced in by the civil authorities of the province, prevented him, however, from even entering upon his labors. He was cited to appear before the civil tribunal, and forbidden to preach, or to hold any Lutheran "conventicles:" in short, he was forthwith banished from New Amsterdam; and, having spent some few weeks in sickness in the suburbs of the city, he embarked in the month of October, and returned to Holland.

Upon the surrender of the New Netherlands to the crown of Great Britain in 1664, the Lutherans readily obtained from the English authorities what the Dutch had always denied them,—the privilege of holding their worship publicly in the city of New York. This privilege was continued to them by the successive governors of the province. The Church, thus released from its bonds, began to devise ways and means for the discharge of its high and holy duties to the gospel and to the world. Their efforts to obtain a pastor for themselves were so far successful; and in 1669 the Rev. Jacob Fabritius commenced his ministry

amongst them. His talents were of a high order, his learning solid and extensive, his gifts and bearing such as belong to the eloquent and attractive speaker; but his spirit was haughty, selfish, and overbearing, whilst his morals were such as to have destroyed his personal influence for good, and exposed him even to public reproach. Indulging his appetite for strong drink, he furnished another of the many sad evidences the world has seen of the power of intemperance to make havoc in the Church. During eight years he labored in New York, and, at the expiration of that time, received and accepted a call from the Swedish Church of Wicaco on the Delaware.

Of the condition of the church from this time until the close of the century very little has been recorded. The successor of Mr. Fabritius was Rev. Bernard Arint; but of the period of his connection with the church as pastor no specific notice has been taken.

In the year 1701 the Rev. Mr. Rudman, intending to return to his native land, resigned the charge of the Swedish Church in Philadelphia. As the Lutherans in New York, however, had been for a long time without a pastor, he yielded to their urgent solicitation and settled in that city. The climate proved to be too severe for his constitution. He therefore withdrew; and, having abandoned the purpose of returning to Sweden, upon retiring from New York he became a pastor once more in the vicinity of Philadelphia. His



concern for the church in New York, which he was about to leave, and his fear lest, if neglected, it might fall away from the pure faith of the gospel, made him exceedingly anxious to secure some worthy pastor to occupy the place. His wishes were accomplished. He obtained the consent of Justus Falkner to accept of the call which the Lutheran Church in the city of New York might extend to him.

Justus Falkner, of Saxony, arrived in this country a student of divinity. He was afterwards ordained by three Swedish pastors in the church at Wicaco. Shortly after his ordination he became pastor of the church in New York, in the year 1703. It was in this, the first year of his ministry, that the Holland Lutherans erected a church at the southwest corner of Broadway and Rector Streets, where, together with many German Lutherans, they worshipped for a long time exclusively in the Holland and English languages, but adhering to the discipline, doctrine, and faith of the Lutheran Church.

From this time until the year 1750 there were but three pastors in charge of this church. These were Justus Falkner, Christopher William Berckemeyer, and Christian Knoll. Under the ministry of the former two, the church was large and flourishing, both spiritually and in its worldly circumstances. Afterwards, however, serious conflicts arose; old members became weary of strife and withdrew; the children as they grew up threw in

their lot with other churches; and the congregation which in times of oppression had contended so earnestly for the faith—which had begun the century under such favorable circumstances—was so completely reduced by a few years of contention, that, in the year 1750, Muhlenberg, already sick at heart by what he had heard, when duty called him beyond the city of New York, sought earnestly, but all in vain, for some excuse to avoid the necessity of even looking in upon them.\*

During the ministry of the three pastors above named, the congregation stood in connection with the Mother-Church in Holland. To the Lutheran Consistory in Amsterdam they regularly reported the condition and progress of the congregation, and the pastors held their ecclesiastical jurisdiction subordinate to that body.

Although many *German* Lutherans were connected with this church, yet it seems that for nearly fifty years the exercises of public worship were conducted only in the languages of Holland and England. During the last year of the ministry of Mr. Knoll as pastor of Trinity Church, the German language was, for the first time, allowed to be occasionally used. This measure was adopted mainly in consequence of a kind consideration for the necessities of the many German brethren who had arrived and settled in New York in that very year. The Germans, however, had been gathering

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\* Bill in Chancery, 1840; Halle Reports, p. 363.

into New York for many years already; and in studying the history of this church, we cannot refrain from expressing our wonder at the early use of the English and the long omission of the German language in the exercises of public worship. But the language of Holland, which always preponderated, was the native speech of the founders of the church. With this language the early German immigrants generally seem to have been somewhat familiar; whilst the English, being the language of the Government, increasing in the walks of business and of social life, and doubtless preferred by the younger portion of the church, presented claims which from the first were regarded with respectful consideration.

Not many years elapsed, however, before the Germans began to urge their own claims and that of their language. Contention, disorder, and divisions ensued. But we turn for the present from the contemplation of this one scene of confusion towards the long series of happy consequences that resulted from the immigration of the Germans.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE GERMANS.

THE immigration of the Germans, who contributed to the planting of our Church, extended over a period of many years, varied in its numbers, was influenced by a diversity of circumstances, and yet continued from beginning to end, with perhaps but two exceptions, unchanged in its external poverty and in its lack of efficient patronage.

The earliest authentic record that we have of this immigration was drawn up by Muhlenberg, Handschuh, and Heintzelman, in the year 1754, at the instance of the Synod of Pennsylvania. Beginning with the year 1680, and coming down to their own time, they specify five periods as distinguished amongst themselves by their length or by the number and spirit of the German Lutherans they transferred to our shores. From 1680 to 1708, the number of Germans who ventured to cross the ocean was very small, and is noticed simply upon the principle that they were the pioneers of the masses that soon rolled in after them. The troubles that were agitating Europe during this period, and the liberal religious principles advo-

cated by William Penn, were the main causes of their movement to the West. Thankful, no doubt, to the kind Providence that gave them a new and peaceful home, they seem not to have been much concerned about the form of doctrine that had been dear to their fathers, and, with a capacity for easy adaptation to the new circumstances by which they were surrounded, many of them assumed the garb, the manner, and at length even the faith, of the Quaker.

The second period extended from 1708 to 1720, and was distinguished as the time of the great emigration from the Palatinate, under the patronage of Queen Anne. The wars and the persecutions that had arisen because of the word were such as to favor the plans of the queen. Knowing the peaceable character of the Germans, and anxious to increase the population of her American colonies, she held out strong inducements to them to become British subjects. The generous offers of transport, subsistence, and land in the New World, were cheerfully accepted by the Germans; and thousands flocked to England, that they might take advantage of the rising tide of royal favor. About four thousand of these landed in the city of New York in the month of June, 1710. Many of them remained in the city, and afforded evidence of their devotion to the true faith of the gospel, by promptly seeking the privileges of Christian fellowship in the congregation of Holland Lutherans that had recently been organized.

The benevolence of Queen Anne had truly been expanded in their favor upon a scale of royal munificence. In the province of New York, that tract of land on which the towns of Newburg and New Windsor have been built was allotted to them; and the patent expressly stipulates that it was granted for the support of Lutheran parish schools, and ministers for the Germans who might be settled in the neighborhood of the river Hudson.\*

We know not which most to wonder at,—the favors attempted to be heaped upon the German Lutherans by the occupant of the British throne, or the apparent indifference of these Germans themselves to the possession of such princely domains. Perhaps they had not been correctly instructed, and did not clearly understand the intentions of the queen, or perhaps they had learned, from sad experience, to put no trust in princes. Certainly their first care had to be to provide subsistence, to keep off hunger and nakedness from their families. In the mean time, shrewd speculators seized upon the royal grant, and were too successful in diverting it from those for whose benefit it had been intended.

As the fall of the year approached, the great mass of these immigrants set their faces towards the interior, and, having advanced about one hundred miles north of the city of New York, they

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\* Hazelius's History, p. 25.

occupied the homes allotted to them on Livingston's manor. It was not through lack of industry or perseverance that they failed to prosper. The authorities of the colony exacted too large a portion of their labor as payment for their passage across the water in Government transports. Two or three years were enough to convince them that the interests of the whole required that this, their first settlement, should be at least partially abandoned. Accordingly, one hundred and fifty families resolved to advance farther into the wilderness.

They sent a committee of trusty men to a neighboring tribe of Indians, and obtained from them the possession and the good-will of a large and fertile region in Schoharie. Here, for a few years, though often exhausted by hunger and worn down by toil, they lived in peace and prospered. Their ignorance of the ways of the world, however, their imperturbable confidence in what they supposed were the engagements and promises of Queen Anne, soon exposed them to a series of annoyances and troubles which dismembered this their second settlement, and sent many of them adrift again to be lodged in some new home of the more distant wilderness.

Supposing that the Indians had been the sole possessors of the soil, they were satisfied with the conveyance that was executed by the tribe. It never occurred to them that it was necessary to obtain patents or title-deeds from the royal gover-

nor of New York. They lived without a preacher, without a civil ruler; every one did what was right in his own eyes; they hunted with the Indians, they attempted too to teach their wild neighbors the arts of peace; the forest fell and yielded its place to the waving grain; the busy streams were employed in advancing the useful operations of the mill; seven villages, small but thrifty, rose beneath their industry and ministered to their social enjoyment, whilst the long seasons of labor were occasionally relieved by manly sports, by innocent and temperate amusements.\*

They felt secure, too secure, in the possession of their ground. The law of nature, the law of nations, they said, would protect them in the enjoyment of the territory they had redeemed from the wilderness and improved at the cost of their own sweat and blood. But the absence of a legal title under the royal Government proved to be fatal to their security and their hopes, and, without any intimation of the crafty designs of the rapacious speculators who dispossessed them, the very soil was sold beneath their feet. In their distress they sent a delegation to England to obtain relief. Disasters by sea and by land obstructed their progress. They had been anticipated and forestalled by the seven purchasers, and they returned to their homes with the sorrow for their loss deepened by the mortification of their defeat. The colony was

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\* Simm's History of Schoharie.



divided. Some families bowed to the force of circumstances, and, taking a lease of their farms as offered by the Proprietors, remained at Schoharie. A large portion set out in 1723, in company, towards the West. They soon struck the Susquehanna, and, following its course, entered within the borders of Pennsylvania. A few days of irregular wandering brought them to the region of the Tulpehocken and the Swatara; and there, still among the Indians, they sought to establish themselves at a distance of some seventy or ninety miles north-west of Philadelphia.\*

Of the four thousand immigrants who arrived in 1710, a considerable portion seem to have turned themselves at once towards the South and taken up their abode in and around the City of Penn. This was a Paradise of the Quakers. The plain garb, the plain speech of the Friend were to be seen and heard everywhere. The benevolence and easy familiarity of his manner, the signs of worldly thrift that attended him, both in town and in country, the talent for shrewd and close calculation that seemed to be natural to him,—these things were not without effect in attracting the attention of the Germans to the Society, and ultimately drawing some even of the Lutherans into the fellowship of the Meeting. Others, however, more firmly established in their faith, though without any of the ordinary privileges of religion, con-

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\* Halle Reports, p. 973, *et seq.*

tinued in prayer and meditation to possess their souls in patience until the dawn of a better day.

So, by a variety of circumstances, personal preferences, disappointments, disasters, providential dealings, it happened that these four thousand Germans, with their natural increase, were scattered broadcast throughout the land. After fifteen years of agitation and uncertainty, they are all disposed of. They grow with the growth of New York and Philadelphia; they cultivate the soil upon the flats of the Hudson; they are faithful to their engagements as tenants in Schoharie; they subdue and enliven the wilderness of Pennsylvania along the Tulpehocken and Swatara.

Of the religious character of this immigration, as far as it was Lutheran, we might say much if our object were to illustrate personal experience. We could show the young man, who, though active, bold, and enterprising, yet bears the cross in his youth and seeks to refresh himself beneath his burden by the faithful use of the word of God and prayer. We could speak of the old man, who, pressing on towards fourscore years and ten, and being faithful unto death, grows eloquent until the hearts of believers melt under his testimony of the grace of God in Christ upon his soul.\* But our duty at present is rather to speak of the religious character of their community at large.

The Lutherans among them were, for the most

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\* Halle Reports, pp. 975, 162.

part, sound in their adherence to the Lutheran faith, and at heart desirous of transmitting it, pure and genuine, to their children. But the depth of their poverty, the necessity of immediate attention to their daily wants, the uncertainty of their several positions and movements, the absence of religious teachers and pastors, and the lack of foreign patronage, all combined to delay and prevent the construction of congregations, and the erection of houses suitable for the purposes of public worship. The party that remained from the beginning in the city of New York, in seeking the fellowship of the Church, and in all their active efforts to advance the Lutheran faith, indicated what their brethren would have done in the interior, had their circumstances been at all favorable to a general movement on behalf of the Church. There was a will, but there was no way; and this second period of immigration is lost in the third before these beneficiaries of Queen Anne are permitted to welcome a pastor amongst them, or to unite in public worship within any enclosure more dignified than a barn or a hovel of framework.

During the third period, extending from 1720 to 1730, the immigration of German Lutherans brought large additions to the materials about to be used in the establishment of the Church in America. The arrival of several companies with pastors of established character, having the oversight of the flock, led several of the earlier settle-

ments to take a step or two in advance of all their former progress. Those in New York and those in New Jersey sent imploring letters to Holland and to Hamburg, in answer to which they received from abroad now an acceptable pastor, then books of devotion, and then, again, pecuniary contributions for the erection and support both of the school and of the Church.

Indeed, during the whole of this period there was much agitation of a kind peculiarly calculated to animate pious Lutherans with earnest longings for religious privileges, and for the order and fellowship of their own Church. With the increase of population from abroad there came also an increase in the variety of sects and doctrines and opinions. The number of those who forsook the word of the Lord and turned aside from the form of the Lutheran faith appeared to grow from year to year. The fathers of strange sects, the heads of new parties, religious adventurers, scheming fanatics, who knew well how to pervert the language of Scripture to gain their own ends, who could clothe error with such a garb of sanctimoniousness as to mislead and seduce many, came on, thronging the settlements of the Germans. They derided the Lutheran Church; they sought, by persecution or by blandishments, to move her children from their steadfastness; and their success was often such as to cause great grief in the hearts of those who had been taught by our Confession to believe only in

God and in the word of his grace. Then the word of the Lord was precious in the land: there was no open vision. The soul, afflicted in the dreary night, sighs for the morning; and the Lutherans, who loved the Church and had ever delighted in her sweet communion, grieved by the devastation they saw around them, sighed and prayed for pastors who might go in and out amongst them, who might instruct their children in the faith, and who, as true and holy men, might, with the divine blessing, defend them and their Church against all opposers.

And the Lord had respect to the desires of them that loved Zion. The holy office was sometimes assumed by worthless men who had been degraded in Germany, or by ignorant schoolmasters, who had a tact for winning confidence, and an ambition to lord it over the Church. But even in the midst of this destitution and danger, there were still some pastors and teachers raised up for the work of the ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ. The pastors Hinkle, Falkner, and Stoever, belong to this period,—Knochendahler, Berckenmeyer, Knoll, Wolf, and Hartwich. They labored not wholly in vain; but the lives of some of them were cut short, and the success of others was limited by the unprofitable agitations and conflicts in the midst of which they lived.

The fourth period of immigration extended from 1730 to 1742. The desires that had been felt in many places for the regular ordinances of the

Church, and previously expressed in urgent letters to the fatherland, began now to ripen into healthy, vigorous action. The Lutherans in Philadelphia had united in the organization of a church. Those who had settled thirty or forty miles northwest of the city—in Providence and New Hanover—had taken the same measures. Not willing to countenance the pretensions of the worthless schoolmasters who were prowling around making havoc of the flock, they applied to the Swedish Ministerium, and obtained from them such services as were necessary for the instruction and confirmation of the young, and such as a communion-season might require. But the Swedes were overburdened with the care of their own flocks; and this, added to the difficulty they found in attempting to minister in the German tongue, showed, from the first, that this arrangement could not be long continued. Meanwhile, the children were growing up in ignorance, save in those few cases in which the piety and intelligence of the parents could train them to an experimental knowledge of God and of divine things. The Lutheran faith was exposed to reproach by the infamy of those who had forced themselves, uncalled and unqualified, into the pastoral office; and reflecting minds and believing hearts both saw and felt that what ought to be done must needs be done quickly.

Accordingly, in the year 1733, the congregations in Philadelphia, Providence, and New Hanover, sent a delegation of their brethren to Europe to repre-

sent their spiritual necessities, both in England and in Germany, to collect funds for the building of churches and school-houses, and especially to enlist, for the service of the Church in America, such good and faithful men as might be willing and competent to bear the pastoral office amongst them.\* The principal member of this delegation was Daniel Weissiger, of Philadelphia, whose name deserves to be held in remembrance for his intelligent devotion to the interests of the Church, and for his laborious enterprise on her behalf.

Passing through England, they waited upon Rev. Dr. Ziegenhagen, Court-preacher in London, and were greatly encouraged by his prompt and generous co-operation. He furnished them with letters of commendation to his friends and brethren in Germany; he appealed to them on behalf of the poor famishing lambs and flocks of Jesus Christ in America; he plead hard that some refreshment at least might be sent before they would utterly perish; he made a personal application to the Rev. Dr. and Professor Francke, in Halle; he enforced these appeals by raising funds and procuring the books most necessary for spiritual instruction, to be at once distributed amongst the German Lutherans in America.

Upon their arrival in Germany the delegation were kindly received. In addition to their personal labors, they used the agency of the press in

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\* Halle Reports, p. 4.

spreading their wants before their brethren. Encouraged by the patronage and approbation of the Rev. Drs. Pfeiffer in Leipsic, and Francke in Halle, Pastor Maier and Senior Urlsperger in Augsburg, they met with warm hearts and fervent prayers and material aid everywhere. The funds, however, were not large; and, as though their main object had been to secure pastors for the flock, Weisiger and his colleagues made this the subject of their last appeal, previous to their journey home:—“Send us pastors who will teach us and our children in the word of God, who will administer the holy sacraments in our congregations, and under their direction we have reason to believe that every thing can be established and ordered in a Christian way.”\*

Yet, after all, years elapsed and no pastor arrived. Letter after letter was forwarded, both to England and to Germany, from the three associated congregations. The unwillingness of the brethren in Germany to send any but a faithful, competent man, the difficulty they met with in their efforts to obtain the consent of such men to cross the ocean for the West,—these were amongst the principal reasons of the long delay. At length, in 1741, Providence opened the way for the calling of the Rev. Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, as pastor of the churches in and around Philadelphia, and for his acceptance of the post.

Muhlenberg, having left the scene of his earlier

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\* Halle Reports



labors in Lusatia, arrived in England April 17, 1742. After a sojourn of about nine weeks, gathering refreshment of spirit and strength for his work from his frequent intercourse with Dr. Ziegenhagen, chaplain of George II., he embarked in a vessel bound for Charleston, South Carolina, and landed in that city September 21. Though his destination was Philadelphia, there were nevertheless sufficient reasons for bending his course towards this Southern port.

In the year 1734, and subsequently, matters of great importance in the history of the Lutheran Church were transpiring in this portion of the colonies. A violent and relentless persecution—a persecution even unto death—had been started and kept up from year to year, by the Popish authorities and their people, against the Protestants of Salzburg, then the most eastern district of Bavaria. The sympathies of Christians, not only on the continent but even in England, were aroused on their behalf. The original object of the chartered company of “Trustees for Establishing the Colony of Georgia” was to provide a home and the means of subsistence for the indigent inhabitants of Great Britain. The distresses of the Lutherans of Salzburg induced the Trustees to extend the wing of their protection over them; and so they avowed the additional object of “furnishing a refuge for the distressed Salzburgers and other Protestants.”\*

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\* Strobel's History of Salzburgers, p. 45.

The benevolence of this company provoked the "Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge" to good works. This society had already been actively engaged in building churches, and providing pastors and supporting them, for the members of the Church of England in the colonies. Learning the action of the "Trustees" on behalf of the Salzburger, it began to interest itself for their removal to Georgia. A liberal grant of money to the colony in Georgia, made by the British Parliament, together with several thousand pounds raised by private contributions, enabled the "Trustees" to carry out their designs in regard to the Salzburger. They invited fifty families to remove to Georgia, promising them liberal grants of land, and provision until their lands could be made available for their own support.

The first company of emigrants consisted of forty-two men, with their families,—numbering in all seventy-eight souls. In the city of Augsburg, where they halted to refresh themselves, they were cheered by the affectionate kindness of the Lutheran pastors and their flocks. Here they had an opportunity of personal intercourse with the Rev. Senior Urlsperger, so long the benevolent and the active friend of the Lutheran Church in America. In the city of Rotterdam they first met those two devoted men, John Martin Bolzius and Israel Christian Gronau, who at that time took their post as the pastors of the exiles, afterwards shared with them all the vicissitudes of their wanderings

by sea and by land, and, like Moses and Aaron, were great in counsel and faithful in labor, even unto death.

After a short sojourn in England, they embarked for America, and reached the city of Charleston, South Carolina, in the month of March, 1734. There they were at once welcomed by the benevolence and aided by the judicious counsel of the good General Oglethorpe, who had led over the first colony of English settlers, early in the year 1733. Having refreshed themselves by a few days' repose in Charleston, they passed on to the city of Savannah, and encamped in its vicinity until arrangements were made for their permanent location. This duty was undertaken by a "corps of observation," who selected a district some thirty miles in the interior, in what is now called Effingham county, Georgia. The exiles themselves approved of the choice. Arriving upon the ground with their wives and their little ones, they set up a rock; they broke the silence of the wilderness as they sang a hymn of praise; they sought the blessing of the Lord with the earnest voice of prayer; they said, "Hitherto the Lord hath helped us;" and so, in the language of their excellent historian, "was the foundation laid for the Colony of the Salzburgers."\*

Upon this the superstructure gradually arose;

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\* Strobel's History of Salzburgers, chap. iii.

and the additions made from time to time served not only to enlarge the external circumstances, but also to improve the spiritual condition, of the colony. Early in the year 1735, there arrived a second company of Salzburgers, numbering fifty-seven persons; and towards the close of the same year occurred what they called "the Great Embarkation." Upon a visit of their friend General Oglethorpe to England, he was able to make such representations to the "Trustees" as inclined them to be even more active and enterprising than they had ever been, in building up and confirming the colony at Ebenezer, as their placé was called. The operations of the "Trustees" in the settlements of Georgia were no longer an experiment. Their announcement that they would provide for the transportation of a given number of persons of approved character was answered by the application of above twelve hundred persons to be sent to Georgia. With a commendable solicitude for the welfare of their infant colonies, they resolved to encourage none but the worthy, and those whose characters and habits might be of advantage to the settlement. Accordingly, at this time they extended their benevolence chiefly to Highlanders from Scotland and persecuted Salzburgers from Germany.

In the month of October, 1735, two ships set sail from Gravesend, bound for Georgia, with a company of emigrants amounting to two hundred and twenty-seven persons. Of these there

were about eighty Salzburgers. The whole character of the company thus thrown together, for the first time, upon the eve of a perilous voyage, its whole character in all its variations, was such as to entitle it to special notice.

There were the Highlanders and the Salzburgers and a few Moravians, peasants, or laborers, or mechanics, having nothing of this world's goods, but rich in the treasures that come from above. Whether the ocean was calm or convulsed, these poor Germans—the men, the women, the very children—had the happy faculty of always discerning the divine presence at their side: whether they were wafted on by breeze or gale, or fiercely tossed by storms, they felt that the eternal God was their refuge, and that always underneath them were the everlasting arms. Trouble might melt the souls of their companions, as on the raging billows they mounted up to heaven and went down again to the depths; but no trouble was able to disturb their serenity: the Lord keepeth them in perfect peace whose faith is stayed on him. Associated with them in this voyage was Oglethorpe, himself the friend and patron of the Salzburgers already in Georgia. Of him the pastors in Ebenezer testified, "He bears great love to the servants and children of God." He was the constant benefactor of the Lutherans. His heart throbbed warmly for all around him; he loved to relieve the indigent, to soothe the mourner; and his name became known as another

expression for "vast benevolence of soul."\* In the same company were John and Charles Wesley, the latter the secretary of Oglethorpe, and the former going, as a preacher of the gospel, upon a mission to the Indians. The interest of the Wesleys in divine truth was such as to render them susceptible of any impressions of the Holy Spirit that might reach them; and their religious experience had been so confined, that much enlargement was needed as a preparation for the important duties that were before them.

To them these persecuted Lutherans preached the gospel, not in word, but in deed and in power. Having heard how calmly and peacefully the Salzburgers could sing the praise of God when every heart was quaking and some were almost dead with terror in the storm, Mr. Wesley himself felt that the religion of his own experience was entirely destitute of that calm, attractive, confiding, and heroic spirit which these Germans had exemplified in the time of trial. He approached one of these believing men:—"Were you not afraid?" The German replied, "I thank God, no!" "But were not your women and children afraid?" "No! Our women and children are not afraid to die." Strange feelings were aroused in the heart of the great founder of Methodism. Conviction seized upon him. He felt that he was himself yet unconverted,—that his heart was not right in the

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\* Bancroft's United States, vol. iii. chap. 24.

sight of God. In the spirit of meekness he humbled himself under the mighty hand, he took counsel with them who knew the Lord, and at length, after the lapse of two years, and subsequent to his return to England, he found peace in believing. This occurred at a Moravian prayer-meeting, during the reading of Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans.\*

The majority of the Salzburger in this company were speedily added to the colony of their brethren in Ebenezer. From the character of the materials thus far described, and the workmen by whose skill they were to be moulded, it might be expected that the settlement of the Salzburger would occupy altogether a prominent position in Georgia, and exert a lasting influence for good. As a whole, there seems to have been a more prevalent piety amongst them—a more general and harmonious obedience to the dictates of elevated Christian principle—than was usually displayed by the German colonists of the North. No sooner do they take possession of the wilderness than a tabernacle is set up for the Lord. This is speedily followed by provision for the education of the children: then an asylum for the lonely orphan succeeds. So, whilst their brethren in the faith in Pennsylvania and adjacent States were clamoring for help from abroad, or flying like sheep in the midst of wolves, the Lutherans of Ebenezer

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\* Strobel's History of Salzburger.

steadily cherish and exercise the grace of God in their own souls, and harmoniously co-operate in building up his kingdom amongst men.

It was greatly to their advantage that, from the time of their first arrival, they enjoyed the oversight of those two faithful pastors, Bolzcius and Gronau. It was of immense service that Urlsperger and Francke in Germany, and Ziegenhagen in England,—those venerable and eminent fathers in the Lutheran Church,—were so deeply interested on their behalf. Without this patronage, and the unity of spirit and action that it promoted, they might have lived in almost utter destitution and forgetfulness of religious privileges, like the early colonists of Schoharie; they might have been distracted by the impositions of ignorant and crafty pretenders to the pastoral office, like the unsuspecting farmers of New Hanover.\* From the beginning, Urlsperger, Francke, and Ziegenhagen were particularly prominent in making the arrangements for their emigration and settlement. The high character of these Lutheran divines is a sufficient evidence that the persons whom they agreed to recommend as the guides and spiritual teachers of the Salzburger were no ordinary men.

Bolzcius and Gronau then had had a deep personal experience in the ways of the Lord. As Lutherans, they had been taught by the Confes-

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\* Stoever's Memoir of Muhlenberg, p. 53.



sion of the Church to build their faith upon nothing but the inspired word, and to esteem it above all earthly price. Their administrative qualities were discreet and energetic, patient and commanding. They understood well the responsibilities of the post they occupied, and took the oversight of the flock not for filthy lucre's sake, but of a ready mind. Their piety, as manifested by their works, excited the admiration of Whitefield, for it appeared to him to be of that high order that is very rarely seen.\* The fruits of their labor, as they grew and ripened at Ebenezer in peace and industry, in moral purity and Christian love, presented to the eyes of strangers and visitors all the appearance of a field which the Lord hath blessed.

From the time of its foundation until the year 1741, over twelve hundred German Protestants had arrived in the colony. By the blessing of the Lord upon the faithful labors of their pastors, their town was marked by neatness and pleasantness. No drunken, no idle, no profligate people were amongst them; industry and harmony prevailed, souls were converted by the word of God, and believers were edified.

All these circumstances, and many more of an interesting character, were well known by those Lutheran pastors in England and in Germany who had been so active as the friends and patrons

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\* Stobel's History, p. 110.

of the colony. No less concerned about the labors of Muhlenberg in the North, than they had ever been about those of Bolzius and Gronau in the South, they wished him to enjoy from the beginning all the benefits that might be derived from the experience of the pastors at Ebenezer.

As they dismissed him for the field allotted to him in Pennsylvania, "Go," said they, "go first of all to our brethren in Georgia; seek the acquaintance of Bolzius and Gronau, the experienced pastors of the Salzburgers; confer with them about the duties that are before you; learn from them the peculiarities of the country and the best plans of operating amongst its people: you may expect that if it is possible Bolzius himself will accompany you to Pennsylvania, and so effect for you an easy entrance into the field of your future labors."

It was in pursuance of these directions that Muhlenberg landed in Charleston. Having enjoyed two days' repose in this city, he went to Savannah. Here he first met Pastor Gronau, and in company with him rode to Ebenezer. His voyage had been one of great peril and exhaustion. He required time to refresh himself. Eight days—the whole period of his stay at Ebenezer—were taken for this purpose; but the spirituality of his own character, as well as of the pastors of Ebenezer, is shown in the fact, that all three united many times during those eight days in seeking strength and refreshment from the word of God. With his

diligent attention to the duties that had drawn him thither, the time was long enough to make him feel anxious to begin his own appropriate work. With these brethren he might well have felt at home, so sweet was their fellowship, so attractive were their external circumstances, and, in spiritual things, so promising was the future. Upon the eve of bidding them farewell, he wrote in his diary, "So I must leave Ebenezer. The worthy patrons and benefactors in Europe have not exercised their benevolence in vain, for I have here seen the reality of the reports that have been published in Germany. In many respects, things are even in a much better condition than I had been led to anticipate. I am astonished at the signs of external prosperity; and, in regard to the spirit, the prospects of the harvest are bright and glorious." The Christian affection he felt for these brethren was fully reciprocated, and an earnest of it was afforded by the fact that Bolzius, notwithstanding many serious difficulties, resolved to accompany him to Pennsylvania.

They set out for Charleston October 12, 1742. Upon their arrival here, they learn that no vessel would be likely to sail for Philadelphia before the following spring, and that the journey by land was altogether out of the question. Thus arrested almost at the very threshold, they submit. Bolzius returns to his post at Ebenezer, and Muhlenberg collects and instructs the German children of Charleston, and, like Paul in Rome, expounds

and testifies the kingdom of God to all who would come to him upon the Lord's day.

The passage of Muhlenberg from Charleston to Philadelphia is indicative at once of his heroic and confiding spirit. On the 1st of November, a sloop—a crazy sloop—arrived from Philadelphia, with the intention of speedily returning to that port. In this vessel he resolved to set sail. All his friends united to dissuade him: the captain of the sloop himself said the vessel was too small; it had no accommodations for passengers; it was the winter-season, and then the voyage was a very dangerous one. In defiance of these cautious arguments, he responded only to the calls of duty. He had seen in the public prints such representations of the affairs of the Church in the North as increased his anxiety to be there. So, on the 12th of November, he betook himself on board the sloop, and on the same day, in the name of the Lord, set sail for Philadelphia. On this vessel he passed two weeks of severe trial, drenched with rain, chilled with frost, sick and exhausted; yet he arrived safely at the desired port at last.\*

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\* Halle Reports.

## CHAPTER V.

## ORGANIZATION OF GERMAN CHURCHES.

THE judicious and persevering efforts of the congregations in and around Philadelphia, to secure the ministry of able and faithful pastors, may be regarded as the indications of a certain prominence belonging to them in the Lutheran Church in America. There was something in the province of Pennsylvania (shall we say it was the fertility of the soil, it was the salubrity of its climate?) that rendered it especially interesting and attractive to the Germans. Muhlenberg, in giving his first impressions, which he never saw reason to alter, described it as a land flowing with milk and honey,—as the best of all the regions of the continent for his countrymen. Such was the prevailing sentiment. There were Germans in Georgia, at Ebenezer and Savannah; there were Germans in the province of Maine, at Waldoboro, near the head of Muscongus Bay; there were Germans at New York, and along the Hudson, and west of Albany. In the course of time the population of these several settlements was increased by various additions from abroad. But towards Philadelphia and the inland regions of Pennsylvania the tide of immigration was especially steady and strong.

In the autumn of 1750, twenty vessels arrived at Philadelphia with twelve thousand Germans on board. Each of the two years immediately following brought almost as large a number. Through all these multitudes there ran a strong current of generous sympathy. They were fellow-countrymen; they had become companions in trial and adventure. The movements of any considerable portion would be apt to excite the interest of all the rest; and whether they remained in Philadelphia, or spread themselves over the regions that now belong to the counties of Bucks, Lehigh, Northampton, Berks, Lancaster, Dauphin, and Cumberland, in Pennsylvania, the developments of any particular part might be regarded by us as a fair specimen of the spirit of the whole.

This is especially true of those who, whether in city or in the inland regions, were united in the fellowship of the faith. The Lutherans of Philadelphia and its vicinity, therefore, may be regarded as fair representatives of the Lutheran Church; and a history of their progress, though it would contain many local facts, might nevertheless be, in its spirit, a correct history of many years of the Church in America.

So Muhlenberg arrived in Philadelphia, and there lay the labors of a Hercules before him. He had not only had no one to prepare the way, but, on the contrary, there were many circumstances and various personages that combined to block up the way and impede his progress. He

compared the condition of the Lutherans with that of the members of other Churches in Philadelphia; he compared it with that of the Lutherans in the fatherland; and he felt that it was deplorable enough to draw forth tears of blood. Scattered by hundreds, yea, thousands, through the land, were people who, according to their baptism, their education and confirmation, ought to have been active members of the Lutheran Church. Yet they lived without the enjoyment of religious privileges, many of them without even the desire for that enjoyment. The children were growing up without baptism, without religious instruction; they were verging fast on to heathenism, or starting off, on this side and on that, towards some one or other of the many sects and parties with which the land was filled. Unbelievers of various names and shades and nations were not unfrequently encountered; and the condition of the Lutheran Church, in a word, was altogether such as might be expected to result from thirty years of confusion, disorder, and neglect.

The little flock that still pretended to keep up the form and to cherish the spirit of our faith, both in Philadelphia and its vicinity, had been distracted and laid waste by crafty intruders into the pastoral office. Men who, for good reasons, had been deposed from the Lutheran ministry in Europe, and men who, for good reasons, might claim pre-eminence in other churches, had undertaken to pass themselves off as Lutheran

clergymen. For a while they succeeded in their schemes. They obtained a position; they managed affairs; they had things all their own way; and, as the last of the long series of calamities with which the Church was afflicted, they entered in where disorder and confusion already existed, and so made that disorder and confusion at once absolute and complete.

We unite heartily with the Christian world in extending to the Moravian brethren of Herrnhut and their zealous descendants the high praise to which they are entitled for the sincerity of their devotion, the boldness of their missionary enterprise, and their happy illustration of the gentle graces of the gospel. But in perusing the records of history we cannot omit to notice the fact that, at the period of which we are now speaking, Count Zinzendorf, the patriarch of the Moravians, had placed and sought to maintain himself in a position grossly offensive to Muhlenberg and to the eminent and holy men who had sent him hither. The count had come to Philadelphia; he had assumed the name of Von Thurnstein. He presented himself as a Lutheran preacher and inspector of all the Lutheran churches in Pennsylvania. He took possession of the books of the Lutheran congregation in Philadelphia. He insisted upon Muhlenberg's bowing to his authority. He sought to prevent his preaching in the Swedish Church at Wicaco, and endeavored, in various ways, to excite such suspicions and pre-



judices against him as might entirely prevent his exercising the pastoral office in the Lutheran Church.\*

Upon learning the state of affairs both in the Church and around it, the brethren in Europe were perfectly astonished, as they well might have been, at the resolution and the courage with which Muhlenberg, alone, unattended, without a colleague, without a friend, faced and bore down upon all these multiplied obstacles. In his previous history he had worn dignities with grace; he had occupied high and responsible official positions with ability; and now, by virtue of that apostolic talent that enabled him to be made all things to all men as his duty dictated, he minded not high things, but accommodated himself to men of low estate. His papers, his credentials, were so clear and satisfactory,—besides, they were so highly corroborated by his own personal appearance, his address, his talent and spirit,—that it was not long before all opposers and gainsayers were dismissed or took their departure; and the Lutherans, revived and reassured, began to unite and cluster around him.

At that time there were seven churches in Philadelphia,—the Episcopalians, the Presbyterians, the Roman Catholics, the Baptists, the Quakers, the Moravians, and the Swedes, having each one place of worship. The religious exer-

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\* Halle Reports, p. 14.

cises of the German Lutherans had been held in a private dwelling. Upon the arrival of Muhlenberg, however, they obtained from the Swedish brethren, and continued to enjoy for a short time, the use of the church at Wicaco.

No sooner had Muhlenberg entered upon his labors, than he began to till and cultivate every portion of the extensive field to which he had been called. (Philadelphia, Providence or the Trappe, New Hanover or the Swamp,—the latter two places about thirty-five or forty miles northwest of the former,—were the principal scenes of his first solitary operations. About seven miles north of Philadelphia was Germantown. Here, too, the Lutherans had organized a congregation, which, in accordance with their earnest entreaties, after a few weeks, he also added to his bishopric. Early in the year 1743, he began to bear the heat and burden of the day in these localities, so dividing his time that he might devote one week to each congregation, excepting the one in Germantown, which he treated as an appendage of the church in Philadelphia. He kept school all the week, and he preached the gospel every Lord's day. (In his three schools, however, he collected not the little children, but the young people from eighteen to twenty years of age and upwards,—sometimes parents even, with their adult sons and daughters. He began with the principles of the doctrine of Christ; he accommodated his instructions to their several capacities; he exhorted them

with many words; he was gentle among them as a nurse cherisheth her children; he travailed until Christ was formed within them; and, as the result of his labors, the churches were found to rejoice in seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

During the course of the spring and summer of 1743, he was engaged in gathering in the first-fruits of his labors; and whoever reads the simple and touching accounts he has himself furnished of this, his first spiritual harvest, will see that he who sows in tears may reap in joy.

On Whitsunday, 1743, he administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in New Hanover. Here he had previously confirmed twenty-six catechumens. In this number there was a young woman of twenty-two years of age, who, in her seventh year, had been put out to service by her widowed mother. Having lived for fifteen years in an English family, without spiritual care, she had forgotten many of the lessons and utterly lost the language of her youth. The good pastor led her to the knowledge of Christ through the medium of our English speech; and when this German congregation heard her publicly testify her faith in Christ in the language to which she had been used, they listened with profound interest, and were affected even to tears. On this occasion of the communion, the crowd was so great that the people trod one upon another. In Providence similar scenes transpired on Whit-Monday. They

were repeated in other portions of his charge during the year. Late in the fall, he baptized, in the church at Germantown, a mother with her five adult children. They were so deeply affected that he "might almost have baptized them with their tears." He continued to watch for their souls, and "their growth in grace and their promise of fruitfulness was most refreshing to behold."

So it was. As we pass by the field where springeth up first the blade, then the ear, and, after that, the full corn in the ear, we are satisfied, though we may not have seen it, that upon that field the hands and the feet of industry have toiled for weary hours, and hope and patience watched and waited—perhaps prayed—for the blessing from above. And as we look through this first ingathering of the few churches in Pennsylvania, whilst we behold the laborious faithfulness of the pastor, we may also discern the anxious, hopeful, prayerful spirit of the people. In Philadelphia, in Germantown, in Providence, and in New Hanover, had the prayer long gone up from many a heart, from many a house that mourned for the desolations of Zion:—"Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts; cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved."

The effect of this little reviving was soon apparent in the external activity of the churches. They began to encourage each other in the erection of houses for public worship. In prayer they spread the matter before the Lord. They entered

upon it in his name. In the depth of their poverty their liberality abounded. They sought and obtained aid from the fatherland; they enjoyed the favor of the Lord, and the work went bravely on. The congregation in Philadelphia, which was already large, having purchased an admirable lot of ground in the centre of the city, were cheered as they witnessed the laying of the corner-stone of St. Michael's Church, with appropriate ceremonies, April 7, 1743. On the 20th of October following, though as yet not completely finished, it was solemnly consecrated to the worship of God. The corner-stone of the church in Providence was laid May 2d of the same year. The attentive crowds that witnessed the ceremony were composed of English as well as Germans; and the pastor, having preached first in his native tongue, took advantage of the occasion to proclaim the word also to his English friends in their own language. On the 12th of the following September this church was so far finished that the congregation were able to leave the barn in which they had previously met, and, for the first time, worship God within the walls they had reared for his praise. Meanwhile, the congregation at New Hanover, having previously had a church, were engaged in the erection of a school-house for the benefit of their children.

These undertakings not only increased the cares of the pastor; they also convinced both him and the people that the next object claiming their at-

tention was an increase of laborers in the harvest. Their cry went out to Germany,—“Come over and help us!” It was an earnest cry; it was meant to be heard. Every ship that arrived at Philadelphia was hailed, first of all, with the inquiry, “Are there any Lutheran ministers on board?” At last they came.

The Rev. Peter Brunnholtz, a native of Schleswig, having first been proven and found faithful in the care of souls, was ordained April 12, 1744, and forthwith took his departure, duly commissioned as pastor of the churches in and around Philadelphia. In company with him came also the Messrs. Schaum and Kurtz, students of theology, who had been well reported of for good works, and whose object was, first of all, to act as catechists or assistants of the two pastors in their new home.

Having been subjected to many delays in England, and tossed by contrary winds upon their voyage, these three brethren at length reached Philadelphia, January 26, 1745. They landed; and, as they were approaching the city, they met a German coming out of the forest, who, as he saw that they had arrived in the vessel lying in the harbor, first accosted them with the usual question:—“Are there any Lutheran ministers on board?” Upon learning their character he leaped for joy: he took them to the house of a German merchant, known for his hospitality. The elders, the deacons, many members of the Church, soon

gathered around them; an express was sent off to Providence to convey the intelligence to Muhlenberg; and upon that day they all united to thank God and to take courage. There was very little delay about the commencement of their operations. Before two weeks, Brunnholtz had visited all the churches and been acknowledged as copastor with Muhlenberg. Schaum opened his school in Philadelphia, and Kurtz did the same at New Hanover.

Immediately after this increase of clerical force, the demand for pastoral services became louder and more extensive than ever. The four associated churches, 'tis true, were satisfied, as they had reason to be. They devoutly returned thanks to God, and sent back their grateful acknowledgments to the fathers and brethren in Europe, for the Christian kindness that had been experienced at their hands. They would ask nothing further for the present than the sympathy of prayer, the encouragement of friendly counsel, and some timely aid in liquidating the debts incurred by the building of the churches, for which Muhlenberg and a few of the elders, poor as they were, were themselves personally responsible.

Ere long, however, news reached them from all the regions round about, that their brethren in the faith, less favored than they, were waking up to the things concerning the kingdom of God, were famishing for the word of life, were organizing congregations, were longing for some faithful

pastor to instruct them in the truth and to administer the sacraments amongst them. From Oley, and Schwartzwald, and Tulpehocken, above the Trappe; from Chester, below Philadelphia; from Cohanzy, in New Jersey, where a church already existed; even from the distant settlement in Schoharie, the most urgent entreaties for spiritual attentions were addressed to them. And what were they among so many? Yet they were the men for the emergency. The two assistants, Schaum and Kurtz, whether engaged in the operations of their schools, or preparing the young people for confirmation, or occupying the pulpit upon the Lord's day, showed themselves apt to teach, for their hearts were in the work. They were prepared for any service the pastors might demand of them, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ,—to go to any point, at any time, whither the interests of souls required. Had they done less, they might have blushed in view of the laborious and unwearied zeal of Muhlenberg and Brunnholtz. When the pastors were accustomed to recapitulate their sermons with their congregations, in the form of question and answer,—when they would go about from house to house, that they might apply the truth to the hearts of individuals,—when they sought, with affectionate concern, to ascertain the spiritual condition of every soul committed to their charge,—when they might be met, any day, laboring with equal earnestness near at hand or afar off among the destitute families of the wilderness,



—it would not have become the two assistants to hang far behind in pastoral duty.

The demand for pastors, however, was sent in from more remote congregations, with such touching importunity, that both Schaum and Kurtz were promoted, at an early day, to posts of much greater prominence and responsibility. The former went to York in Pennsylvania, the latter to Tulpehocken; and there they labored faithfully and long. The Lord was not unmindful of their work and labor of love. Their churches were increased in numbers, and edified greatly; and the memory of their self-denial, their heroism and devotion, lingers about these scenes of their early toils even to the present day.

The name of York, Pennsylvania, occurring at this period of our history, is an evidence that it was one of the characteristics of the Germans, in that early day, to spread themselves over all the land. The pastors from Philadelphia, who, from time to time, undertook a visitation of the Church, having reached their brethren at York, would press on as far as Maryland, and urge their way even into Virginia. Everywhere they met their fellow-countrymen, the children of the Augsburg Confession. Whither could they have gone along the seaboard without being reminded of their faith and their fatherland? Beginning with Maine, and continuing on to Georgia, the frequent and flourishing settlements of their brethren in the faith might easily have impressed them with the

idea that the German nation and the Lutheran Church were ubiquitous. The comparative numerical strength of the Church, the purity of its spirit, and the fidelity of its discipline, held out a most promising future. It may not be useless for us to consider these facts, and, at the same time, to weigh the circumstances by which the hopes that they justified have, to so great an extent, been disappointed.

The appeals of the pastors and congregations to the brethren in Germany were often renewed and insisted upon. Their tardy responses were not occasioned by any lack of interest in the welfare of the Church in America, but by the scrupulous caution with which they sought to commission and send out such pastors only as, being men of God, might make full proof of their office. In the year 1746, Dr. Francke, of Halle, communicated a call from the churches in Pennsylvania to the Rev. John F. Handschuh, who for several years had been actively engaged in the labors of a successful ministry. The learning, the diligence and faithfulness of Handschuh eminently qualified him for the post, whilst his views of duty were such as to induce him to throw himself body and soul into the work. The Lord, he said, had already prepared him for such an undertaking,—had lifted him up above many of the restraints of earth; and, since the great change of his heart, he wished only to yield himself up entirely to the disposal of his Lord and Master, to whom he owed so much. He

would go whithersoever the Lord might direct him, and offer up all that he had, that he might glorify the name of the Redeemer amongst men. He felt, for a season, a certain misgiving, occasioned by a sense of his bodily weakness; but he betook himself to prayer, and was then able to quiet his heart, as he inquired of it, "What objection wilt thou urge if the Lord himself will have thee there?" It seemed to him that the Lord had often taken the weak to confound the mighty; and so he felt satisfied, that if God wished to have him in America, to labor in his kingdom there, he would surely give him, weak though he was, both grace and strength enough for every time of need.

Vigorous efforts were made to seek out two assistants, who, associated with him as Kurtz and Schaum had been associated with Brunnholtz, might make his arrival even more joyful to the churches in Pennsylvania. These efforts, however, failed, and it was resolved that Handschuh should depart alone. In the month of June, 1747, he left his native land, and, directing his course through England, he arrived in London July 4. Here he tarried about six weeks. In the following September he embarked at Gravesend, and on April 5, 1748, he arrived in Philadelphia. On the 26th of May following, he preached his introductory sermon as pastor of the church in the city of Lancaster. This city contained at that time about four hundred houses. The Germans formed by far the larger part of the population, and, by a

commendable spirit of enterprise, rendered it a prominent centre of attraction. The good living for which it had already become famous secured the addition of many to the number of its permanent inhabitants, and Handschuh foresaw that it would soon become and continue to be a great and populous city.

There are peculiarities enough in the early history and continued progress of the church in Lancaster, to entitle it to some specific notice. It was large. It was in all respects German. Yet it contained a small, quite a small, proportion of Swedes, who, as Lutherans, of course stood in intimate fellowship with their German brethren. It was owing to this circumstance, that in their desire to obtain a pastor for their congregation, some time previous to the year 1745, they addressed themselves to the Archbishop of Sweden. In Sweden, German students of theology were to be met with, and the expectation was that such a man, in addition to his regular ministry in the German language, would be the more able to labor for the edifying of the Swedes also, who, from time to time, might come and settle amongst them. In their appeal to the archbishop they specify that they wish a teacher of the Holy Scriptures, who shall be true to the Augsburg Confession and the other Symbolical Books of the Church.

The person by whose mission from Sweden this appeal was answered was a man by the name of Nyberg. Upon his arrival in Lancaster, he was

received by the congregation as an angel from heaven, and duly acknowledged as pastor of the church, with the reiterated understanding that he should be faithful to the pure Lutheran doctrine. His prospects were most encouraging: he possessed the unbounded confidence of the people, and the promise of a glorious harvest seemed to rise fair and bright before him. But he proved himself to be unworthy of it all. The period of his connection with the church was one of great uneasiness and turmoil to the brethren, of scandal in the eyes of the world, whilst it resulted at last in his own complete confusion.

He was a man of keen susceptibility, of strong passions; and, had his training been thorough, his understanding enlightened and solid in proportion, he might have become long and eminently useful. But his zeal was without knowledge, his will was obstinacy, and his antecedents were altogether such as to unfit him for the responsible post of a Lutheran pastor.

He had commenced his preparation for the active duties of life with the study of civil-engineering. Subsequently, however, he turned his attention to theology. The consequence of this late beginning of his theological course was a superficial, a very defective training, the unhappy influence of which might be seen at almost any point of his career. After the expiration of his academical course, he acted as private tutor in the family of a Swedish nobleman; and it was

through the influence of this man that he obtained, from the Consistory in Sweden, the appointment called for by the appeal of the church in Lancaster.

There is abundant evidence that even before he left Sweden, though professing to be a Lutheran, he had given his heart to the Moravians; and that, though he formally bound himself, by the Symbolical Books, only to the word of God, he devoted himself in spirit to the plans of Zinzendorf.

The Lutherans of Lancaster—and, indeed, the Lutherans of any place—could have no reasonable objection against the labors of Moravian clergymen amongst their own people or amongst the people of the world at large. On the other hand, they have often admired their zeal, and rejoiced with great joy in their remarkable success. But when the pastor at Lancaster began to seek to pervert the church from its Lutheran fellowship,—to deride and misrepresent the evangelical Lutheran doctrine,—to decry Muhlenberg himself, and the faithful officers of the congregation even, as most dangerous men,—it would have been strange indeed if the Lutherans, both in Lancaster and elsewhere, had not met such movements with an earnest and a firm protest. Such a protest was made. It excited Nyberg to take up a position more hostile to the Lutheran interest, more openly favorable to the Moravians. His epistolary correspondence with them became frank

and frequent; he appeared as an active participator in the meetings of their Conferences; he was the chief agent in gathering a Moravian Conference in Lancaster in 1745, and in making arrangements for its accommodation. And so, by a course which would have been altogether praiseworthy in an honest Moravian pastor, but which, under the circumstances, was especially unbecoming a Lutheran, he forfeited the confidence of his congregation, and plunged them into a long and trying series of troubles.

During the progress of the conflict, the church was violently closed and guarded; it was opened by force; an appeal was had to the governor, who ordered it closed a second time; counter-representations were made, and the governor opened the doors. The church was then violently closed again, and a suit was entered before the civil tribunal. It terminated in favor of the Lutherans and in the defeat of the friends of Nyberg. The confusion still continued. Conrad Weiser, the father-in-law of Muhlenberg,—a man of high standing and of extensive influence,—exhausted his skill in attempts to effect a compromise; and Muhlenberg, when appealed to, in the summer of 1746, to allay the disturbance by testifying what the Lutheran doctrine was, went to Lancaster with a heavy heart and with very feeble hopes of success. After this, however, the storm ceased to rage. Nyberg and his adherents passed along

to the building of a new church, upon Moravian principles, and the Lutherans had peace.\*

Of course, the sad effects of this conflict continued to be seen long after its violence had passed away. For many months they were felt and lamented. Gradually, however, the congregation revived. An occasional visit from the pastors in Philadelphia, whether German or Swedish, began to restore the church to a consciousness of its duty and its strength. Then the more regular labors of Kurtz, from Tulpehocken, one Sunday in every month, quickened it still more, until, with the arrival of Handschuh, in 1748, we discern rising upon it the dawn of its better days. Handschuh entered upon his duties there with his characteristic faith and prayerfulness. His connection with the church in Lancaster, however, was from the first regarded only as temporary; and, after the indefatigable and successful labors of three years, he withdrew from Lancaster and took charge of the church in Germantown.

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\* Halle Reports, p. 69, *et seq.*



## CHAPTER VI.

## STATE OF THE GERMAN CHURCHES.

ABOUT the middle of the eighteenth century, the Rev. Mr. Schlatter occupied a most prominent position and exerted a most salutary influence amongst the German Reformed of America. His intelligent zeal secured for them much material aid both in Holland and in England, and the success of his efforts seems to have been considerably promoted by the formidable array of his statistics. He represented the German Reformed in Pennsylvania as amounting to thirty thousand, constituting forty-six congregations and forming sixteen pastoral districts. His appeals not only drew forth streams of benevolence from Holland, from Germany, and from Switzerland, but even instigated the nobility and royal family of Great Britain to emulate the Christians of the continent in befriending the Germans of America. In England, twenty thousand pounds sterling were placed in the hands of the trustees of the "Society for Propagating the Knowledge of God among the Germans," and the interest of it was employed in founding and sustaining schools under the inspection of Mr. Schlatter. The Lutherans, having no such munificent patronage, found their only com-

fort in the reflection that they needed it twice as much. It was a moderate estimate, allowed by Schlatter himself, that the Lutherans were twice as numerous as the Reformed; and so, about the year 1750, we find sixty thousand Lutherans in the province of Pennsylvania. This number represents of course the whole population of the Lutheran Church, and not simply its membership. It was the amount of material upon which able workmen, had they been present in the proportion in which pastors were required, might have operated successfully, at that early day, in rearing and beautifying the walls of our Lutheran Zion.

With these Lutherans in Pennsylvania, there stood in as close sympathy as the state of the country would allow, many brethren in the faith in New York, in New Jersey, in Maryland, in Virginia, and as far south as Ebenezer in Georgia. As to the advantages of spiritual care, they were to be found in all possible varieties of condition,—from the regularly-organized congregation, edified by the ministry of a faithful pastor, to the remote and neglected settlement, over which the heart might sigh as over lost sheep without a shepherd.

If, however, it is any advantage to a Church, upon its first introduction to any territory, to have a wide door and effectual opened to it, to find ready access to many families, to meet with a large portion of the population already inclined by habit and by education to accept its ministry and to

worship at its altars, that advantage was largely enjoyed by the Lutheran Church.

At this time there were in all the colonies, Nova Scotia excepted, about forty organized congregations and sixteen regular pastors. Twenty-three of these congregations were in connection with the Synod of Pennsylvania,—the others being too remote to be able to co-operate directly with it.\* The lack of regular instruction of faithful pastors of course retarded the introduction and administration of Christian discipline. Upon the adoption of such a discipline by the church in Philadelphia, however, we learn that it had been for years the subject of anxious thought and of fervent prayer on the part both of the ministers and the people.† In the absence of any complete system, the pastors were careful to supply the deficiency by a scrupulous application of Christian principles upon all occasions of sacramental communion. Their mode of proceeding is important and interesting enough to justify us in illustrating it by the exhibition of one or two examples.

In the month of November, 1746, Muhlenberg administered the Lord's Supper to the congregation at Tulpehocken. In his report of the proceeding he remarks, "It is indeed a serious undertaking to celebrate the Holy Supper in a church the members of which are not under our special care, and the spiritual condition of whom we have

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\* Hazelius's History, p. 77.

† Halle Reports, p. 831

no direct means to ascertain. Yet, under existing circumstances, we have to do it. So we examine the communicants with great rigor, we press home upon them both law and gospel, we preach repentance, faith, and the fruits of righteousness, we point out to them the benefits that faith may expect to find in the sacraments, and, with the help of God, seek to keep our conscience clear. We dig about the old trees; we plant and water, and pray God to send the increase. At the meeting preparatory to the communion in Tulpehocken, I had a text on the subject of repentance, according to which the hearers were exhorted to examine their own selves. After this I recorded the names of those who wished to commune. I then published all the names, and inquired of the elders and deacons, upon their conscience, whether they knew any perverse and wilful offenders amongst these communicants. They wept, and replied that this responsibility was too heavy for them: they had enough to do to judge their own hearts; every one should answer for himself. I was satisfied with this reply, and added that each one should the more faithfully examine himself in the sight of God. I had been previously informed that two persons, whose names I recorded, had been addicted to intemperance. I called first upon one of them, to state before the congregation how it was at this time. Deep agitation prevented a direct answer from the individual, but certain members of the family replied that a reformation had been

in progress for some considerable time already, and that, by the grace of God, they hoped for a complete recovery. The other one, whom I had myself seen under the influence of strong drink, was then called up and exhorted to repent. He replied that he had already refrained from intemperate drinking for the space of six months. I then told him that such an offence was an evidence that his heart was yet unconverted, and pointed out to him how he might, through grace, obtain the forgiveness of all his sins, and adoption into the family of God. This, however, enraged him, and, replying in offensive terms, he went off. I then exhorted the congregation with much warmth, telling them that they should by no means think that a freedom from gross sin constituted a worthy communicant; because a heart truly penitent, and hungering and thirsting after righteousness, was here the one thing needful. I taught them, too, how such a heart should be obtained. After this examination, we confessed our sins upon bended knees, implored pardon through Jesus Christ, and pledged ourselves to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Then I announced to them the assurance of the divine forgiveness. On the Lord's day I preached upon the proper use and the benefits of the Holy Supper, and administered the communion to two hundred members. There was the best of order, profound reverence and deep feeling, in

all the congregation. The Lord knoweth the heart.”\*

In connection with a report of the congregations of Providence and New Hanover, the disciplinary operations of the Church are recorded as follows:—

“During the week preceding the communion, every one who wishes to partake of it is expected to visit the pastor, either in the parsonage or in the school-house. The pastor then speaks with him faithfully and tenderly about the state of his heart and the character of his life; he inquires about his growth in grace, and gives him the necessary admonition, instruction, and consolation according to circumstances. By these personal conferences the pastor learns the spiritual condition of the souls committed to his charge.

“On the day before the communion, those whose names have been recorded attend the preparatory exercises in the church. After the conclusion of the sermon, they all come forward and stand around the altar; and if there be any amongst them who have been guilty of gross offences, these are then personally called to account. The pastor reminds them of the evil they have done, and questions them about their repentance, their faith, and their promise of reformation. If their answers have been satisfactory, the pastor then asks the other communicants if they will forgive their of-

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\* Halle Reports, p. 176.

fending brethren and unite with him in imploring God's forgiveness for Christ's sake. Often have these questions been asked, and as often have the brethren testified by tears their willingness to forgive the wanderers and to remember them in prayer. Hereupon the pastor addresses a short exhortation to all, reminding them that it is through the grace of God in Christ alone that they can be delivered from sin. Then all kneel together before God, and the pastor prays in the midst of them. A few more questions follow, and the pastor repeats the promise of pardon to them that believe. In conclusion, they are asked if any one has yet any cause of complaint against another. If this happens to be the case, they then retire to the parsonage, confer with each other, and are reconciled."\*

This was administering Christian discipline with a strong hand. It was taking the oversight of the flock in the spirit of the divine word; and we may add, too, in the spirit of our own Confession. The pastors, as they scrutinized the several congregations throughout the land, saw that they verified the comparison of a net having fishes of all kinds, both bad and good; or of a field in which wheat and tares grow together. They could not rashly fall upon the field to gather up the tares, lest they might root up the wheat also. They could not allow the tares to grow wholly undisturbed, lest the precious seed might be choked and be-

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\* Halle Reports, p. 183.

come altogether unfruitful. So, like faithful laborers, they endeavored to make full proof of their ministry; and, as workers together with God, they administered the word and the sacraments in his name, hoping and believing that the Lord would prosper the work of their hands.

In doctrine they aimed to show uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity. In public and in private they insisted upon it, that out of the heart proceedeth every thing that defileth the man, and that nothing would avail in Christ Jesus but a new creature. The variety of means they employed with a view of converting souls and confirming the faith of the disciples was everyway worthy of admiration. By the simplicity of their preaching the pastors accommodated themselves to the capacity of their hearers. Sometimes they would recapitulate their sermons with the congregation in the form of questions and answers. Sometimes at the conclusion of the discourse they would read an appropriate hymn, and accompany it with suitable remarks. This they were encouraged often to do by observing that it arrested attention, produced deep impressions, and resulted in winning men for Christ. No small portion of their time was occupied in visiting from house to house; and the object steadily kept in view was to bring the truth directly home to the hearts of the hearers, and to encourage them personally to seek salvation through repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.



The pastors with the Church were symbolical; by no means, however, in the odious sense in which, alone, some of the present age are willing to employ that term. They were not symbolical in contradistinction from being Biblical. They were eminently Biblical,—scriptural in the highest sense, but, as Lutherans, symbolical; that is, they found the doctrines of the Holy Scripture—which they loved, which had prevailed to the renewing of their own hearts, and upon which they relied for success in leading others to Christ—aptly expressed, in a confessional form, in the unaltered Augsburg Confession and the other Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church. Upon these principles they laid the foundations of the Church in America; and their hope and prayer was that their descendants, until the latest generation, might continue in the pure doctrines of the Cross, according to the word of God and our Symbolical Books. They were persuaded that the doctrines of the gospel, thus expressed, would not train the Church to dry orthodoxy nor in mere formalism; but must be mighty through God in begetting a living faith and thoroughly renewing the hearts of the children of men. They endeavored to show that the Lutheran doctrine in no respect countenanced a life without God, but, by all means, insisted upon a renewing of the hearts and lives of those who embraced it. They ventured to hope that the doctrines of the Lutheran Church would abound in such works of

faith and fruits of righteousness as would touch and subdue the hearts even of the Indians themselves. These savages, they found, had been repelled and rendered suspicious by the inconsistent conduct of mere nominal Christians; but they expected that, by exemplifying the doctrines of the Lutheran Church, they would attract the attention of the sons of the forest to Christianity, and prepare the way for the Lord himself to appear and claim them as his own.\*

In the times of which we are writing, the Lutherans do not appear to have sought toleration or popularity upon the ground of the conformity of their doctrines and usages to those of any other denomination in the land. They were convinced that the Church was truly evangelical in every sense; and upon the strength of this they went forward, boldly preaching its doctrines in the name of the Lord, whether men would hear or whether they would forbear. On a certain occasion, Muhlenberg was requested to preach a sermon on the death of a Lutheran whose body was interred in a Mennonist burying-ground. A very large mass of people of all denominations was present, and amongst them were three Mennonist preachers. His purpose was to address the congregation in the open air; "but the three ministers requested me to go into their large meeting-house, which, they said, had ample accommodations for

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\* Halle Reports, p. 148.

all. After some hesitation, I consented. Upon passing through the door, the oldest of the ministers whispered cautiously in my ear, 'I hope, at least, you will not be making use of any strange ceremonies here.' To which I replied, 'No ceremonies will answer my purpose but those of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.' After the conclusion of the services he excused himself, saying that he did not know what ceremonies we were in the habit of using. Then all three came to me, and, with tears in their eyes, thanked me because I had blown the trumpet of repentance, as they called it, so loudly in their meeting-house. After this I preached four times in the same place. These ministers were always present; and were pleased to state, in a most friendly way, that their hearts were awakened and blessed. In these sermons I avoid all matters of controversy, and speak of repentance, faith, and godliness,—subjects that are most useful for us all."\*

We may, perhaps, be allowed to take a similar illustration from a period several years later in the times of Muhlenberg. Upon the occasion of a protracted visit to New York, "I was called upon by an English merchant, a Presbyterian, with the earnest request that I should bring my whole family, and make that city the scene of my future labors. He, with fifteen others, his brethren, had been regularly attending my Sunday

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\* Halle Reports, p. 158.

evening services, he said, and had a prayer-meeting for mutual edification in his own house. In the Lutheran Church they found nourishment for their souls. They could hear in my sermons that I was a Lutheran; but they felt that our exposition of the law and the gospel was in the spirit of the Saviour, and, if I should continue to preach here in the English language, the prospects for gathering a large congregation were most encouraging, for there were many of the English and the Dutch inhabitants whose souls were hungering and thirsting after righteousness.”\*

The Church was symbolical,—in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity. Its symbolism was strict; and it is refreshing to see that symbolism may be taken also in a noble, glorious sense,—that it may be most deeply and thoroughly evangelical. What examples of piety did it call forth and nourish amongst the young! To what devotion and fervor of spirit in the service of the Lord did it encourage and stimulate the old!

Abundantly as the memoirs of pious youth issue from the press at the present day, our interest and our gratification would not falter upon turning to peruse the extended records furnished by the pen of Muhlenberg. He knew a boy in Providence,—a lovely child,—writing of whom as a boy of twelve years of age, he says, “The grace of holy baptism may easily be seen in the charac-

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\* Halle Reports, p. 503.

ter of this child. His memory is richly stored with proof-passages of Scripture and with edifying hymns. He is perfectly familiar with the five principal parts of the catechism, and is often most happy in his applications of divine truth to peculiar circumstances. Not long ago, as his mother was walking with him in the fields, she spoke of the grain, which appeared to be very thin, and expressed her fears that the harvest might utterly fail. He replied, 'Dear mother, let not this trouble you. "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" Remember, too, how the Lord Jesus fed the thousands who were with him in the wilderness.' So, in his ordinary conversation, he shows remarkable readiness in the perception and application of religious truth."

In a word, so many were the cases of youthful piety attracting his attention, that Muhlenberg hardly hesitates to speak of it as one of the peculiar characteristics of the land, that the children of believing parents so often show, and at such an early age, an enlarged personal experience of divine grace.\*

These features of Christian character were often more fully developed in persons of maturer years. Upon the occasions of public worship, the mem-

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\* Halle Reports, p. 164.

bers of the Church did not neglect the assembling of themselves together. They came from far and near, in the summer's heat, in the winter's cold. They received the word with deep attention, many of them even with tears. Though the pastors saw that some of the seed fell upon the wayside, or among thorns, or upon stony ground, yet they discovered that much of it fell upon good ground and was bringing forth fruit unto perfection. In their intercourse with families, with widows and orphans in their affliction, with the sick and the dying, they were often surprised to learn to what a degree persons of retiring habits and of low estate had profited by the simple preaching of the word.\*

This was all the more wonderful because of the many circumstances that seem to have set themselves in array against the interests of the Church. There were false brethren who cruelly abused the confidence that had been extended to them, opposing sects that were not ashamed for their own advantage to misrepresent the Church and her ministry; there were infidels who spake loftily, and scoffers who set their mouths against the heavens. Thus exposed on the right hand and on the left, tried within and without, the long records she has left of the deep personal experience of her children are enough to commend to the admiration of future ages the early history of the Lutheran

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\* Halle Reports, p. 185.

Church in America. Truth requires us to observe, too, that all this was at a time when as a Church she was distinguished by exemplary fidelity to her Confession. Her pastors were firmly bound by the Symbolical Books to the word of God alone, and her people were all trained, by faithful catechetical instruction, to esteem the word and sacraments above all earthly price.

(Their system of catechetical instruction should not be overlooked. It began with the children in the family: it brought them together, as the children of the Church, under the care of the pastor upon the Lord's day; and, still more thorough and practical in its application, it prepared the youth and others of maturer years for a worthy introduction to the communion of the Church. The manual universally commended and in general use was Luther's Small Catechism.) The relations of this volume in the times of which we are writing, as well as on many other occasions, show that it possesses no ordinary character. Contending sects, unable alike to penetrate its depths and to appreciate its simplicity, assailed it with violent opposition and spoke of it in contemptuous terms. But men of God, who had been qualified, by their own profound experience, to estimate its worth, relied upon it and used it faithfully, as a most efficient instrument for enlightening the darkened understanding, for arousing the sleeping conscience, for leading the inquiring soul to God.

Wrangel, the provost of the Swedish churches

at a period somewhat later, translated the catechism into the English language; and the united Synod of Swedes and Germans approved of it, and strongly recommended its use in the English churches. About the year 1749, a German edition was published by Benjamin Franklin; and, large as it was, it was rapidly disposed of. When the duties of the pastors upon the Lord's day permitted it, they occupied the afternoon in the instruction of the children. Then the churches were nearly as well filled as for the morning service. The young men, the young women, the parents, as well as the children, came, many of them furnished with the Bible in addition to the catechism, searching out and repeating the different proof-passages, and with such an earnestness of attention, that the pastors believed that they sometimes did more good by this exercise than by their ordinary preaching. Whilst they required the catechism to be committed to memory, they were careful not to overburden the memory, aiming mainly at a clear exhibition of the truth to the understanding and a direct application of it to the heart.\*

Under the impression that in union there was strength, and that the interests of the whole Church might be best promoted by a harmonious co-operation of all its parts, they organized a General Synod in the year 1748, in the city of Philadelphia.

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\* Halle Reports, pp. 305, 357.



There were present, at this meeting, Sandin, provost of the Swedes, and Naesmann, also of the Swedish Church; Muhlenberg and Brunnholtz, of Philadelphia, Handschuh, of Lancaster, and Kurtz, of Tulpehocken. There were also lay delegates from the congregations in Philadelphia, Germantown, Providence, New Hanover, Upper Milford, and Saccum. The town of York, in Pennsylvania, was at that time so far distant from Philadelphia, that a journey thither was felt to be a very serious undertaking; and, accordingly, Schaum, who was then laboring in York, was not able to attend the meeting. The transactions at this Convention were only preparatory, and had reference mainly to the external organization of the body. The Synod thus organized has, from that day to this, richly shared in the divine blessing. Though subject to the changes incidental to all human affairs, it still continues until this day known and deservedly respected throughout the Church as the German Lutheran Synod of Pennsylvania and adjacent States. In two of its features is it especially true to its early origin: one is the predominance of the German element; the other is its noble maintenance of the doctrinal position of the godly men who organized it. The distinction is very great between the German character as met with at present in our German churches, and that supposed refinement or improvement of the German character that is developed in churches already Americanized. The former is marked by a

piety at once deep and unobtrusive, a faith that is earnest and fearless, yet modest and retiring. The latter, in the development of its spirituality, seeks rather to extend itself, to attract the attention of the world, to acquire power and to wield influence amongst men: in a word, it diligently consults, and faithfully obeys, that law of progress of their subjection to which, in political and civil affairs, the inhabitants of this land are wont to make their boast. The Synod of Pennsylvania, when viewed in the light of this progressive spirit, might appear to be wanting in that devotion to the interests of the Church which its numerical strength and its abundant resources would seem to require. But as the representative of the German Church, as an agent of the German spirit in deep love for the pure unadulterated doctrines of the word, and in uniform, judicious, persevering efforts for the promotion of the kingdom of God at home and abroad, its position is as prominent and as honorable in the Lutheran Church of America, at this day, as is that of any other Synod within her borders.

The reputation of the Church at that day, amongst the intelligent Christians of the land, was at once lofty and extended. Her ministry was distinguished for learning and piety, whilst the earnest zeal, the gentle virtues of her membership commanded general respect.

So, with the abundance of her materials, her evangelical discipline, her fidelity to the pure unadulterated doctrines of the word, her efforts to

combine her various forces, and her general good repute, the Lutheran Church was surrounded at this early day by circumstances that seem to have held out the prospect of eminent distinction and of extensive usefulness among the churches and the general population of the land.

Her subsequent history has not corresponded with these early indications. Encouraging as her circumstances are at present, yet whoever studies her history during the interval will have reason to lament her disasters more frequently than to glory in her triumphs; and many a time when he would fain boast of her progress, he will be able only to deplore the hinderances that arrested her onward march.

To examine this latter history, however, is not our purpose at present. Still, restricting our inquiries to her earlier days, we shall consider the circumstances that seem to have darkened the fair hopes begotten in the brightness of her early dawn.

It might have been no small advantage to the Church if a reasonable proportion of this world's goods had been subject to the control of her piety. The number of her ministry, and the amount of accommodations for public worship and for schools, would have been more likely to keep pace with her increasing wants. Her youth, however, was sadly straitened and cramped by the burden of poverty. Large masses of the Germans, upon their arrival in this country, were in such a state of absolute destitution that the first years of their

abode in America had to be spent in actual servitude for the purpose of defraying the expenses of their voyage across the ocean.

A system of outrageous imposition and deception practised upon the Germans of the Palatinate and of Wurtemberg, for many years, by selfish and designing men, whilst it increased the quantity of the material of the Church, failed to produce a corresponding effect upon its quality. To these impositions the attention of Muhlenberg was often directed, and he has not neglected to give us a graphic description of them.

In the fall of the year 1749 there arrived in Philadelphia twenty-five ship-loads of Germans, comprising altogether seven thousand and forty-nine souls. Many of the people thus arriving from time to time were objects worthy of the deepest commiseration. They had become the prey of the *Neulaender*; and nothing but a weary servitude now could release them from their snares.

These *Neulaender*, as the Germans called them, (we presume, because they preached up emigration to the *New Land* or *New World*, as a panacea for all the ills under which the Germans groaned,) these *Neulaender* drove a thriving business in lading the ships of Holland merchants with German emigrants and transporting their live freight to the shores of the Delaware. The merchants of Holland, thus deeply interested in the increase of emigration, had contracts with the *Neulaender*, engaging to give them a free passage for themselves

and their wares, together with a certain percentage for every emigrant whom they might entice on board their ships.

Accordingly the *Neulaender* overran Germany, determined to make the best of it. So successful were they, even at an early day, that when, in 1749, Muhlenberg saw how the thousands of poor redemptioners came pouring in, even with all his zeal for the Church and his hearty love for all her members, he seems to have deplored and deprecated these large additions, because they would be calculated by their very dependence and helplessness to divide the attentions of the pastors, already overburdened with labors, and to cramp the energies of congregations already established.\*

The *Neulaender* were men by no means destitute of talents. Their talents, such as they were, were strongly marked; but they were of that description that is always more or less fitted for mischief. They were artful, cunning, loquacious, and voluble. In their manners they affected the gentleman of rank, in their attire and adornments the man of wealth; and so they sought by the very exhibition of their persons to prepossess the poor Germans in favor of a land of which they showed themselves as representatives. All this they promptly followed up with sympathizing and pathetic allusions to the burdens, the poverty, the social degradation, the taxes, under which the Germans groaned, and

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\* Halle Reports, p. 125.

with eloquent descriptions of the immense advantages which the "New Land" held out to them. There were the true Elysian Fields; there the grain was sown and the harvests were gathered without the application of human labor. There silver and gold were dug out of the hills, and all the streams flowed with milk and honey. Whoever had been a servant in Germany would in that new land be advanced to the dignity of a master, whilst the maid-servant should find herself surrounded by all the ease and adorned with all the graces of a lady. The ploughman might confidently expect to be a nobleman, and the mechanic a baron.

Whether the Germans literally believed all this, or not, is a matter of comparatively little consequence. It was natural that poor men and dependent families, anxious to improve their condition, should, even after making certain allowances for exaggeration, have sufficient confidence in the representations of these deceivers to induce them to try their fortunes in the New World. Accordingly, they dispose of all they have, sail down the Rhine, gather together in anxious crowds in the ports of Holland, and make arrangements for their voyage to Philadelphia. Their scanty funds sadly reduced by the expenses of delay before setting sail, they are prevailed upon by the deceitful *Neu-laender* to sign a certain contract in the English language, the purport of which they do not understand. Arriving in the New World, they discover to their utter dismay, when the contract is pro-

duced, that they have bound themselves to submit to the disposal of the captain of the vessel, to be sold into servitude for the purpose of defraying the expenses of their passage. The papers then teem with advertisements of the sale of German emigrants. Purchasers from town and country present themselves. Every man makes his own selection, and, taking his newly-acquired servant before a magistrate, holds him fast by legal forms for long and weary years of bondage.

Many, very many Germans began the development of their American history in this depressed condition. All of them, as being Germans, but especially those that were Lutherans, were the occasion of much anxious solicitude to the few and already overburdened pastors of the Church. They could not be neglected: the labor of hunting them up and visiting them, scattered as they were through town and country, was so much deducted from the attentions required by the organized churches, or by flourishing settlements where large congregations might be organized. The spiritual cure of these isolated redemptioners might have a rich reward in the personal edification of many of them, comforting them during the tedious years of their servitude, and perhaps preparing some of them for usefulness and prominence in the Church, when the time of their enlargement came. But it could not be expected to tell favorably upon the external condition of the Church at the time; and

it did not. In view, then, of the condition of these redemptioners, and of the temporal and spiritual attentions extended to them by the Church and its pastors, we may see how it came to pass that the progress of the Church was retarded by the very abundance of its material, and that the fruits of pastoral labor were not well proportioned to its amount.

Large numbers of these poor German Lutherans found their earliest homes amongst different classes of errorists, whose unhappy influence not unfrequently led them either into the turbulence of fanaticism or into utter forgetfulness of God. And so began, at this early day, that practical evil which has ever been so calamitous to the Lutheran Church,—the readiness of her children to turn aside from the faith of the fathers, and seek a home in some one or other of the various communions by which they are surrounded.

Among the colonists brought over by the *Neu-laender* there turned up from time to time sundry notorious characters, who were passed around among the worldly-minded and unbelieving as preachers of the gospel. Some, having once occupied the pastoral office in Germany, had been degraded for misconduct; others, who had been known only as wild and reckless students, had been expatriated by their own lawlessness. Distinguished among the masses by a somewhat higher cultivation in their manners, if not in their appearance, they found no difficulty in com-



mending themselves to the confidence of the unsuspecting, and especially of those unworthy Lutherans who would not endure sound doctrine, and who withstood the faithful pastors of the Church in an opposition which, though not organized, was nevertheless most annoying.

These adventurers, purchased from shipboard by men who, boasting the name, were hostile to the spirit, of the Lutheran Church, then affected the style and dignity of evangelical Lutheran clergymen. They first served their purchasers and paid for their passage by preaching. They then careered through the land, haranguing the Germans wherever they could find a hearing. They talked loudly about organizing congregations; they traduced and attempted to unchurch the members and pastors of those already organized. Their effrontery soon corrected itself: their own rottenness became apparent. Discord broke out among their friends, their personal influence was lost, and they closed their round by taking their exit, to try the same unhappy game in some other quarter.\*

The influence of such movements upon the Church could not be otherwise than deleterious. It would not only discourage the hearts of well-disposed Lutherans themselves; it might, to a great extent, destroy the public confidence in the integrity of the pastoral character, and expose the

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\* Halle Reports, p. 682.

whole Church itself to an odium which only the lapse of many years would be able to remove.

The intercourse of the Germans with the other inhabitants of the land was confined within very narrow limits. Indulging a natural disposition to quietude and retirement, simple in their wants, and ever diligent in the employment of their time, they became reserved and distant, not to say clannish and selfish. Their resolute adherence to their own language was at once the cause and the effect of this. Muhlenberg, in his readiness to preach the gospel in English as well as in German, afforded a noble example, which it would have been well for the Church to have followed. In his own personal history we see an illustration of the good effects such a course might have had upon the Church at large. His fellowship with enlightened men of the land, and with Christians of other name, was at once free and frequent, pleasant and profitable. It not only enlarged his own ideas as to what the Church required, but it impressed the minds of others with ideas concerning the Lutheran Church altogether favorable to its position and its character.

Upon this intelligent and spirited course, however, the German Lutherans, as a whole, refused to follow. They spoke the German language, and they wanted no other. In matters of trade and business they could be bold enough, when necessity required, to attempt the English; but upon the subject of religion their thoughts were all

German, and German only. The doctrines of the Cross, to obtain any notice at their hands, must needs be presented to them in the imposing attire of their own native speech.

Under these circumstances there could exist, between the Lutheran Church and the other evangelical Churches of the land, only a very feeble sympathy. There might be sentiments of mutual respect; but there could be no cordial, extensive, permanent co-operation. The English churches, wisely taking advantage of the necessities of the times, showed themselves servants of all men, and so prospered and gained the more. The Lutherans, confining their ministry to the Germans alone, could accomplish no higher results than what might be produced upon one solitary class, which, with all its virtues, was slow in its movements, deficient in enterprise, shut up within itself, and, in addition to all, small in its minority.

Quite as disastrous as this, if not more so, was the effect produced upon the children of the Lutherans themselves. Brought into contact, more or less frequently, with other classes and the members of other Churches, the children of the Lutherans rapidly acquired the English language, then preferred it, then sought to conform themselves to the manners and customs of their more progressive neighbors, and, finally, did not object to go far beyond their fathers in sympathy with other Churches, whose external aspects they perhaps thought more attractive, and the worship of

which was conducted in the common speech of the country.

So the Lutheran Church, instead of advancing in members and strengthening itself by the training of its successive generations, lost incalculably much by the exodus of each successive generation from its borders, and for many years had to fall back again upon the material furnished by new arrivals from abroad. It was always beginning and always behind.

We cannot impeach the character nor the motives of the good men by whom this policy was resolutely maintained. They supposed that the spiritual interests of the Germans depended upon them, that the Germans could be approached only through the medium of their own language, that the introduction of the English tongue would open the way for ultimately dispossessing the Germans, and that those who might prefer to worship in the English language need themselves suffer no loss, for they could be accommodated elsewhere. Yet it was a mistaken policy. It was the occasion of immense loss to the Lutheran Church; and it has prevented her, for many years, from producing that impression upon the general religious character of the land, the expectation of which arose so strongly out of the devotion and vigor of her early commencement.

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Here it is proposed to stop for the present. Materials for the continuation of this history are

abundant, and the long and eventful years of another century await investigation. If the labor that has been employed in the preparation of this volume should be found to be acceptable to the Lutherans of our land, it will be a pleasing work to the author to bring down the accounts nearer to our own times, with the divine permission.

Whatever reflections may be natural by way of application to this division of the history might be more appropriately made by the reader than suggested by the author. So here he withdraws, though he feels that in doing so he may appear to be abrupt.

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The author is happy in being able to correct an omission which was the result of inadvertence. Several important facts in the foregoing history are quoted upon the authority of O'Callaghan's History of the New Netherlands and of the historical works of Rev. W. M. Reynolds, D.D., whose investigations are believed to be particularly thorough and reliable.

THE END.









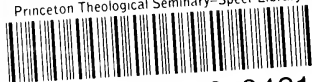






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