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THE SILENT SUFFERER.

In His great passion our Savior endured unspeakable agony, but rarely spoke. When He did open His mouth, it was to pray to His Heavenly Father, to warn and comfort His friends, to bear testimony to the truth, or to make intercession for His enemies. He began His suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane on Thursday evening, and ended it on the cross in the late afternoon of the next day. During these long hours He submitted to cruel and inhuman treatment without one word of resentment or complaint. He heard the taunts and jeers; and the false accusations of His enemies, and said nothing. "Neither was guile found in His mouth: who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not." 1 Pet. 2, 22. 23. It even happened that He positively refused to speak. Although Christ spoke on certain occasions, still He appears throughout His great passion as the Silent Sufferer.

The silence of Jesus is most remarkable. It is very unusual. Why did He suffer in silence? How shall we be benefited by it? Let us study this aspect of Christ's suffering.

Christ was silent because His silence was foretold by the prophets. "The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world," John 1, 29, must by His silence resemble the lamb of the Mosaic sacrifice, which was dumb when it was brought to the slaughter. The Messiah must not only be "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," but also a man of silence. He must bear His intense torture without complaint. He must not cry, nor bewail His hard lot. He must not revile those that revile

BOOK REVIEW.

AMERICAN LUTHERANISM. By *F. Bente.* Vol. I: Early History of American Lutheranism and the Tennessee Synod. X and 237 pages. \$1.25. -- Vol. II: The United Lutheran Church (General Synod, General Council, United Synod in the South). VIII and 243 pages. \$1.25. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

The last chapter of the history of that faith which in 1530 was confessed in thetical form, with rejections of current errors, at the Diet of Augsburg, might be inscribed "Struggles for Survival," if a world-view, embracing every country to which that faith was

carried in the days of its flower, were taken of it. In the four hundred years which it will soon have rounded out, Lutheranism has shared the fate of the Christ whom it has loyally confessed: it has been a sign spoken against, and a remarkably efficient revealer of the thoughts of many. Externally its losses have exceeded its gains; what a leaven and preserving force it has been in the *Ecclesia una sancta catholica* during four centuries only the coming of the Lord may make manifest. Of late, its prospects have seemed anything but prosperous and reassuring. We have spoken of its last chapter; perhaps we should have said its latest chapter; for the last chapter will never be written, as there will be no time to write it. In another respect Lutheranism shares the fortunes of the teaching of the Master: it is ever enduring; its operations reach to the judgment-seat of the Christ to come, as its first chosen spokesman professed.

The brightest pages of the history of Lutheranism have been written in our own country and, to a great extent, within the memory of men still living. If anywhere in the world the Creed of Augsburg justified the ardent hopes of its adherents, it has been here in America. If it fails of its true mission here, as it has failed to a great extent in its homeland, in the Scandinavian countries,—not to speak of the early checks which it received in England, France, Poland, Russia,—it would be reduced to the condition of the Church of the Old Covenant as Isaiah has depicted it in his first chapter. Fact is, Lutheranism has afforded the most fruitful and edifying study during the last hundred years chiefly in its American aspects. It deserves a comprehensive, critical presentation such as is afforded by the work now undertaken by Prof. Bente. The recent evolutions in the American Lutheran Church of our country, in particular, have called for this illuminating survey of the trends and tendencies, the currents and cross-currents in American Lutherans. These evolutions, too, caused the second volume, which recounts the doctrinal development of the so-called Merger synods, to be published first. In the third volume the Western Synods will be discussed, with the exception of the Synodical Conference, which will be exhibited in its distinctive features in Volume IV.

The author's initial thought in his Preface is fundamental to his entire discussion. The essential identification of Christianity with Lutheranism is not the proud notion of a conceited mind, but the soul of the faith of our Lutheran forefathers. "Essentially," says the author, *Christianity* is the special divine faith in the truth revealed by the Bible that we are saved, not by our own efforts, works, or merits, but alone by the pure and unmerited grace of God, secured by Christ Jesus and freely offered in the Gospel. And the Christian Church is the sum total of all those who truly believe, and therefore confess and propagate this truth of the Gospel.

Accordingly, the *history* of Christianity and of the Christian Church is essentially the record concerning this truth, *viz.*, how, when, where, by whom, with what success and consistency, etc., it has been proclaimed, received, rejected, opposed, defended, corrupted, and restored again to its original purity.

Lutheranism is not Christianity *plus* several ideas or modifications of ideas added by Luther, but simply Christianity, consistent Christianity,

neither more nor less. And the Lutheran Church is not a new growth, but merely the restoration of the original Christian Church with its apostolic, pure confession of the only saving Christian truth and faith.

The *history* of Lutheranism and of the Lutheran Church, therefore, is essentially the story concerning the old Christian truth, restored by Luther, *viz.*, how, by whom, where, when, etc., this truth was promulgated, embraced, rejected, condemned, defended, corrupted, and restored again to pristine purity.

As for *American Lutheranism*, it is not a specific brand of Lutheranism, but simply Lutheranism in America; for doctrinally Lutheranism, like Christianity, with which it is identical, is the same the world over. Neither is the American Lutheran Church a distinct species or variety of the Lutheran Church, but merely the Lutheran Church in America.

The *modified* Lutheranism advocated during the middle of the nineteenth century as "American Lutheranism" was a misnomer, for in reality it was neither American nor Lutheran, but a sectarian corruption of both.

Hence, also, the *history* of American Lutheranism is but the record of how the Christian truth, restored by Luther, was preached and accepted, opposed and defended, corrupted and restored, in our country, at various times, by various men, in various synods and congregations.

In the history of American Lutheranism *four names* are of special significance: Muhlenberg, Schmucker, Walther, Krauth.

H. M. Muhlenberg endeavored to transplant to America the modified Lutheranism of the Halle Pietists. S. S. Schmucker's ambition was to transmogrify the Lutheran Church into an essentially unionistic Reformed body. C. F. Walther labored most earnestly and consistently to purge American Lutheranism of its foreign elements, and to restore the American Lutheran Church to its original purity, in doctrine as well as in practise. In a similar spirit Charles Porterfield Krauth devoted his efforts to revive confessional Lutheranism within the English portion of our Church.

This thought is expanded in the following sections of the Introduction:—

I. Christianity the Only Real and True Religion.—Religion is man's filial relation to, and union with, God. Natural religion is the concreated relation of Adam and Eve in their state of innocence toward their Creator. Fallen man, though he still lives, and moves, and has his being in God, is, in consequence of his sinful nature, *atheos*, without God, and hence without true and real religion. His attitude toward God is not that of a child to his father. Heathen religions are products of the futile efforts of men at reconciling God and restoring union with Him by their own penances and works. They are religions invented and made by men. As such they are counterfeit religions, because they persuade men to trust either in fictitious merits of their own or in God's alleged indifference toward sin. Christianity is the divine restoration of religion, *i. e.*, of the true spiritual and filial relation of fallen man toward God. Essentially, Christianity is the divine trust and assurance that God, according to His own merciful promise in the Gospel, is, for the sake of Christ and His merits, my pardoning and loving Father. It is the religion of justification, restoration, and salvation, not by human efforts and works, but by divine grace only. Paganism believes in man and his capacity for self-redemption; Christianity believes in the God-man and in salvation by His name and none other. From Mohammedanism, Buddhism, and all other religions of the world Christianity differs essentially, just as Jehovah differs from idols, as divine grace differs from human works. Christianity is not one of many species of generic religion, but the only true and real religion. Nor is Christianity related to other religions as the highest stage of an evolu-

tionary process is to its antecedent lower stages. Christianity is divine revelation from above, not human evolution from below. Based, as it is, on special divine interposition, revelation, and operation, Christianity is the supernatural religion. And for fallen man it is the only availing and saving religion, because it alone imparts real pardon, and engenders real and divine assurance of such pardon; because it alone really pacifies the conscience and fully satisfies the heart; and because it alone bestows new spiritual powers of sanctification. Christianity is absolute and final, it is the *non plus ultra*, the Alpha and Omega, of religion, because its God is the only true God, its Mediator is the only-begotten Son of God, its ransom is the blood of God, and its gift is perfect union with God. Compare John 8, 24; Acts 4, 12; John 14, 6; 3, 36; Gal. 1, 8. 9. Romanism, Rationalism, Arminianism, Synergism, etc., are heathen remnants within, and corruptions of, Christianity, elements absolutely foreign to, and *per se* subversive of, the religion of divine grace and revelation.

2. *The Church and Its Manifestations.* — The Christian Church is the sum total of all Christians, all true believers in the Gospel of salvation by Christ and His merits alone. Faith always, and it alone, makes one a Christian, a member of the Church. Essentially, then, the Church is invisible, because faith is a divine gift within the heart of man, hence beyond human observation. *Dr. Walther*: "The Church is invisible because we cannot see faith, the work of the Holy Spirit, which the members of this Church have in their hearts; for we can never with certainty distinguish the true Christians, who, properly, alone constitute the Church, from the hypocrites." (*Lutheraner*, 1, 21.) *Luther*: "This part, 'I believe a holy Christian Church,' is an article of faith just as well as the others. Hence Reason, even when putting on ever so many spectacles, cannot know her. She wants to be known not by seeing, but by believing; faith, however, deals with things which are not seen. Heb. 11, 1. A Christian may even be hidden from himself, so that he does not see his own holiness and virtue, but observes in himself only fault and unholiness." (*Luther's Works*. St. Louis, XIV, 139.) In order to belong to the Church, it is essential to believe; but it is essential neither to faith nor to the Church consciously to know yourself that you believe. Nor would it render the Church essentially visible, if, by special revelation or otherwise, we infallibly knew of a man that he is a believer indeed. Even the Word and the Sacraments are infallible marks of the Church only because, according to God's promise, the preaching of the Gospel shall not return without fruit. Wherever and only where the Gospel is preached are we justified in assuming the existence of Christians. Yet the Church remains essentially invisible, because neither the external act of preaching nor the external act of hearing, but inward, invisible believing alone makes one a Christian, a member of the Church. Inasmuch, however, as faith *manifests* itself in the confession of the Christian truths and in outward works of love, the Church, in a way, becomes visible and subject to human observation. Yet we dare not infer that the Church is essentially visible because its effects are visible. The human soul, though its effects may be seen, remains essentially invisible. God is invisible, though the manifestations of His invisible power and wisdom can be observed in the world. Thus also faith and the Church remain essentially invisible, even where they manifest their reality in visible effects and works. Apart from the confession and proclamation of the Gospel and a corresponding Christian conversation, the *chief visible effects* and works of the Church are the foundation of local congregations, the calling of ministers, the organization of representative bodies, etc. And when these manifestations and visible works of the Church are also called churches, the effects receive the name of the cause, or the whole, the mixed body, is given the name which properly belongs to a part, the true believers, only.

Visible congregations are called churches as quartz is called gold, and a field is called wheat.

3. *Visible Churches, True and False.* — The objects for which Christians, in accordance with the will of God, unite, and should unite, in visible churches and local congregations, are mutual Christian acknowledgment and edification, common Christian confession and labor, and especially the establishment of the communal office of the public ministry of the pure Gospel. This object involves, as a divine norm of Christian union, organization, and fellowship, that such only be admitted as themselves believe and confess the divine truths of the Bible, and who are not advocates of doctrines contrary to the plain Word of God. Christian organizations and unions must not be in violation of the Christian unity of the Spirit. Organizations effected in harmony with the divine object and norm of Christian fellowship are true visible churches, *i. e.*, visible unions as God would have them. They are churches of the pure Word and Sacrament, professing the Gospel and deviating from none of its doctrines. Christians have no right to embrace, teach, and champion error. They are called upon and bound to believe, teach, and confess all, and only, Christian truths. Nor may they lawfully organize on a doctrinally false basis. Organizations persistently deviating from the doctrines of the Bible, and establishing a doctrinally false basis, are sects, *i. e.*, false or impure visible Churches. Yet, though error never saves, moreover, when consistently developed, has the tendency of corrupting the whole lump, false Churches may be instrumental in saving souls, inasmuch as they retain essential parts of the Gospel-truths, and inasmuch as God's grace may neutralize the accompanying deadly error, or stay its leavening power. Indeed, individuals, by the grace of God, though errorists in their heads, may be truthists in their hearts; just as one who is orthodox in his head may, by his own fault, be heterodox in his heart. A Catholic may, by rote, call upon the saints with his lips, and yet, by the grace of God, in his heart, put his trust in Christ. And a Lutheran may confess Christ and the doctrine of grace with his lips, and yet in his heart rely on his own good character. False Churches as such, however, inasmuch as theirs is a banner of rebellion in the kingdom of Christ, do not exist by God's approval, but merely by His sufferance. It is their duty to reform on a basis of doctrinal purity and absolute conformity with the Word of God.

4. *The Lutheran Church the True Visible Church.* — The Lutheran Church is the only known religious body which, in the Book of Concord of 1580, confesses the truths of the Gospel without admixture of any doctrines contrary to the Bible. Hence its organization is in perfect harmony with the divine object and norm of Christian union and fellowship. Its basis of union is the pure Word and Sacrament. Indeed, the Lutheran Church is not the universal or only Christian Church, for there are many believers belonging to other Christian bodies. Nor is it the only saving Church, because there are other Churches preaching Christian truths, which, by the grace of God, prove sufficient and powerful to save men. The Lutheran Church is the Church of the *pure* Word and the *unadulterated* Sacraments. It is the only Church proclaiming the alone-saving truth of the Gospel *in its purity*. It is the Church with a doctrinal basis which has the unqualified approval of the Scriptures, a basis which, materially, all Churches must accept if they would follow the lead of the Bible. And being doctrinally the pure Church, the Lutheran Church is the true visible Church of God on earth. While all sectarian Churches corrupt God's Word and the Sacraments, it is the peculiar glory of the Lutheran Church that it proclaims the Gospel in its purity, and administers the Sacraments without adulteration. This holds good with regard to all Lutheran organizations that are Lutheran in truth and reality. True

and faithful Lutherans, however, are such only as, being convinced by actual comparison that the Concordia of 1580 is in perfect agreement with the Holy Bible, subscribe to these symbols *ex animo* and without mental reservation or doctrinal limitation, and earnestly strive to conform to them in practise as well as in theory. Subscription only to the Augustana or to Luther's Small Catechism is a sufficient test of Lutheranism, provided that the limitation does not imply, and is not interpreted as, a rejection of the other Lutheran symbols or any of its doctrines. Lutheran churches or synods, however, deviating from, or doctrinally limiting their subscription to, this basis of 1850, or merely *pro forma* professing, but not seriously and really living its principles and doctrines, are not truly Lutheran in the adequate sense of the term, though not by any means un-Lutheran in every sense of that term.

Of his method, which we believe unimpeachable, the author says:—

As appears from the two volumes now in the market, *our chief object* is to record the principal facts regarding the doctrinal position occupied at various times, either by the different American Lutheran bodies themselves or by some of their representative men, such comment only being added as we deemed indispensable. We have everywhere indicated our sources, primary as well as secondary, in order to facilitate what we desire, *viz.*, to hold us to strict accountability. Brackets found in passages cited contain additions, comments, corrections, etc., of our own, not of the respective authors quoted.

How this method works out in practise the following sections on the appearance and earliest impressions of the Definite Platform may show.

55. *Casting Off the Mask.*—In the early part of September, 1855, leading ministers of the General Synod received a pamphlet: "Definite Platform, doctrinal and disciplinarian, for Evangelical Lutheran District Synods; constructed in accordance with the principles of the General Synod." Spaeth: "The new Confession came without a confessor. It appeared as an anonymous document, proving by that very fact that the men who concocted it were not called by God to lead the Church on this Western Continent to a better, fuller, purer conception and statement of the faith of the Gospel than that of the Fathers." However, it was not long before Schmucker was generally known to be its author. Soon after its publication Krauth, Sr., wrote: "My colleague don't disclaim the authorship, so that it has a daddy." Ten years later Schmucker wrote: "Although my friend Dr. Kurtz and myself passed it in review together, and changed a few words, every sentence of the work I acknowledge to have been written by myself." (Spaeth I, 357.) Besides a brief Preface the Platform contains two parts: 1. "Preliminary Principles and the Doctrinal Basis or Creed to be subscribed"; 2. "Synodical Disclaimer, or List of Symbolic Errors, rejected by the Great Body of the Churches belonging to the General Synod." Part II was not to be individually subscribed to, but published by Synod as a Disclaimer of the symbolical errors often imputed to her. (Second edition, 2. 6.) Its chief object, as appears from the Platform itself, was to obviate the influences of confessional Lutheranism coming from the West, notably from the Missouri Synod. The Preface begins: "This Definite Synodical Platform was prepared and published by consultation and cooperation of ministers of different Eastern and Western synods, connected with the General Synod, at the special request of some Western brethren, whose churches desire a more specific expression of the General Synod's doctrinal basis, being surrounded by German

churches, which profess the entire mass of former symbols." (2.) Part I expresses the same thought, stating that the "American Recession of the Augsburg Confession," as Schmucker called the Platform, had been prepared "at the special request of Western brethren, whose churches particularly need it, being intermingled with German churches, which avow the whole mass of the former symbols." (4.) Furthermore, according to the Platform, Lutherans who believe in private confession and absolution should not be admitted into the General Synod; and Part II makes it a point to state: "By the old Lutheran Synod of Missouri, consisting entirely of Europeans, this rite [private confession, etc.] is still observed." (25.) Accordingly, in order to check the progress of the Missouri Synod's Lutheranism, a more specific declaration of the General Synod's basis was deemed indispensable. In the interest of truth, they claimed, it was necessary to specify, without hesitation and reservation, the doctrines of the Augsburg Confession which were rejected, some by all, others by the great majority of the General Synod. To satisfy this alleged need of the Church, the Platform was offered to the District Synods with the direction, for the sake of uniformity, to adopt it without further alterations and with the resolution not to receive any minister who will not subscribe to it. Thus, in publishing the Platform, Schmucker and his compeers cast off the Lutheran mask and revealed the true inwardness of their intolerant Reformed spirit—a blunder which served to frustrate their own sinister objects. The reception which this document met was a sore disappointment to its author. In the commotion which followed the publication of the Platform the conservative element was strengthened, a fact which, a decade later, led to the great secession of 1866, and gradually also to the present ascendancy of the conservatives within the General Synod, and the subsequent revision of its doctrinal basis, completed in 1913. H. J. Mann wrote in 1856: "The Platform controversy will, in the end, prove a blessing. The conservative party will arrive at a better understanding. In ten years Schmucker has not damaged himself so much in the public opinion as in the one last year." (Spaeth, 178.)

56. *Viewed Historically.*—In explanation and extenuation of the Platform blunder Dr. Mann remarked in 1856: "The more thoroughly we investigate the history of the Lutheran Church of this country, the better we will comprehend why all happened just so. No one is particularly guilty; it is a common misfortune of the times, of the conditions." (Spaeth, 175.) H. E. Jacobs explains: "The ministers, in most cases, did not obtain that thorough and many-sided liberal culture which a college course was supposed to represent, and this was felt also in their theological training. . . . It may serve as a partial explanation of the confusion that prevailed that there was not a single professor of theology in the English seminaries in the North who had obtained the liberal training of a full college course, except the professor of German theology at Gettysburg. The controversy connected with the 'Definite Platform,' prepared and published under a supervision characterized by the same defects, may be more readily understood when this is remembered." (History, 436.) The explanation offered by Dr. Jacobs might be reinforced by the report of the Directors of the Seminary in 1839: "It is to be regretted that the students generally spend so short a time in theological studies. But few attend to the full course of studies as laid down in the Constitution. The average time of the stay of the major part is only about two years. Thus the theological education of those who go out from the Seminary is necessarily defective." (23.) C. A. Stork admitted with respect to the students at Gettysburg, notably the scholars of Prof. J. A. Brown (since 1864): "It is true, our young men did not know Lutheran theology thoroughly; on many minor points they were cloudy." (Wolf, *Lutherans*, 371.) Howbeit, ex-

planation does not spell justification. Nor is it correct to view the Definite Platform as a mere derailment, a mere incidental blunder, of the General Synod. It was, on the contrary, the natural result and full development of the indifferentistic and unionistic germs which the General Synod inherited and zealously cultivated during the whole course of its history. Dr. Neve: "If Schmucker and his friends had not made this mistake, now condemned by history, others would surely try to do so now. These men, therefore, have rendered our Church a service. We have learned much from their mistake." "Sic non canitur" — such indeed is the lesson which Lutherans may learn not only from the Platform movement, but also from the greater part of the history of the General Synod.

57. *Platform Theology.* — The Platform charges the Augsburg Confession with the following alleged errors: Approval of the ceremonies of the mass, private confession and absolution, denial of the divine obligation of the Sunday, baptismal regeneration, the real presence of the body and blood of the Savior in the Eucharist. Of the Augustana eleven articles are mutilated and eight (the eleventh and the last seven) entirely omitted. The following declaration takes the place of the Eleventh Article: "As private confession and absolution, which are included in this Article, though in a modified form, have been universally rejected by the American Lutheran Church, the omission of this Article is demanded by the principle on which the American Recension of the A. C. is constructed; namely, to omit the several portions which are rejected by the great mass of our churches in this country, and to add nothing in their stead." (11.) In all the articles the condemnatory sections are omitted. Even the deniers of the Trinity are not rejected. The Apostles' Creed is purged of "He descended into hell." The Athanasian Creed is omitted. The rest of the Lutheran symbols are rejected, on account of their length and alleged errors. (5.) The Platform declares: "The extraordinary length of the other former symbolic books as a whole is sufficient reason for their rejection as a prescribed creed, even if all their contents were believed to be true. . . . The exaction of such an extended creed is subversive of all individual liberty of thought and freedom of Scriptural investigation." (20.) Part II of the Platform, the "Synodical Disclaimer," contains a list of the symbolic errors with extracts from the Lutheran symbols, "which are rejected by the great body of the American Lutheran Church," to wit: 1. Ceremonies of the mass (A. C., Art. 24; Apology, Art. 12). 2. Exorcism (Luther's *Taufbuechlein*). 3. Private confession and absolution (A. C., Art. 11. 25. 28). 4. The denial of the divine institution and obligation of the Christian Sabbath (A. C., Art. 28). 5. Baptismal regeneration (A. C., Art. 2; Apology, Art. 9; Luther's Catechism; Visitation Articles, Art. 3). 6. The outward form of baptism (Large Catechism, Smalcald Art.). 7. Errors concerning the personal or hypostatic union of the two natures in Christ (Form of Concord, Art. 8). 8. The supposed special sin-forgiving power of the Lord's Supper (Apol., Art. 12; Catechisms). 9. The real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist (A. C., Art. 10; Apol., Art. 7. 8; Smalcald Art., Art. 6; Small Catechism; Form of Concord, Art. 7). According to the Platform, believers in exorcism, in private confession and absolution, and in the ceremonies of the mass should not be tolerated in the General Synod. To believers in the real presence, baptismal regeneration, etc., liberty was to be granted, provided that they regard these doctrines as non-essential, cooperate peacefully with members rejecting them, and adopt the Platform. Dr. Mann was right when he characterized the Platform as "the emasculated Augsburg Confession." (Spaeth, 178.)

58. *Spirit of "Synodical Disclaimer."* — While the first part of the Platform eliminates the distinctively Lutheran doctrines, the second part

emphatically condemns them and teaches the opposite tenets of the Reformed Church. On exorcism the Platform remarks: "In the American Lutheran Church it was never received, and is regarded as unscriptural, and highly objectionable, under the most favorable explanation that can be given it." (23.) On private confession and absolution: "How dangerous is the entire doctrine of absolution and forgiving power of the ministry to the spirituality of the Church and to the doctrine of justification by grace alone through faith in Jesus Christ, is clearly evident." "John 20, 23: 'Whosoever sins . . .' either refers to a miraculous power bestowed on the apostles to discern the condition of the heart, and to announce pardon of God to truly penitent individuals; or it confers on the ministry, in all ages, the power to announce, in general, the conditions on which God will pardon sinners; but it contains no authority for applying these promises to individuals, as is done in private absolution." (26.) On baptismal regeneration: "If Baptism is not a converting ordinance in adults, it cannot be in infants. . . . Of regeneration, in the proper sense of the term, infants are incapable; for it consists in a radical change in our religious views of the divine character, law, etc.; a change in our religious feelings, and in our religious purposes and habits of action; of none of which are children capable." Regeneration "must consist mainly in a change of that *increased* predisposition to sin arising from action, of that preponderance of sinful habits formed by voluntary indulgence of our natural depravity, after we have reached years of moral agency. But infants have no such *increased* predisposition, no *habits* of sin prior to moral agency, consequently there can be no change of them, no regeneration in this meaning of the term." "Baptismal regeneration, either in infants or adults, is therefore a doctrine not taught in the Word of God, and fraught with much injury to the souls of men, although inculcated in the former Symbolical Books." (30 f.) On the hypostatic union: "The chief error on this subject is the supposition that the human and divine natures of Christ, to a certain extent, interchange attributes. This, in common with all other Protestant churches, we regard as contrary to the Holy Volume." "The supposition that humanity in any case acquired some attributes of divinity tends to give plausibility to the apotheosis of heroes and the pagan worship of the Virgin Mary." The Platform emphatically condemns the doctrine of Article 8 of the Form of Concord: "Hence we believe, teach, and confess that the Virgin Mary did not conceive and bring forth simply a mere man, but *the true Son of God*; for which reason she is also rightly called, and *she is truly, the mother of God*. . . . He consequently now, not only as God, but *as man*, knows all things, is able to do all things. . . . His flesh is a true, vivifying food, and His blood is a true, vivifying drink." (35 f.) The Platform furthermore rejects the doctrine that the Lord's Supper "offers forgiveness of sins," and "that the real body and blood of the Savior are present at the Eucharist, in some mysterious way, and are received by the mouth of every communicant, worthy or unworthy." (38 f.) The Platform declares: "During the first quarter of this century the conviction that our Reformers did not purge away the whole of the Romish error from this doctrine gained ground universally, until the great mass of the whole Lutheran Church, before the year 1817, had rejected the doctrine of the real presence." (40.) With respect to the doctrine that the proper and natural body and blood of Christ are received in the Lord's Supper, the Platform remarks: "Now we cannot persuade ourselves that this is the view of a single minister of the General Synod or of many out of it." (42.)

We reserve further remarks on this important publication, especially on its unifying tendency, to its close.

VESPER SERMONS. Forty-two Sermons by Forty-two Lutheran Preachers on the Essential Doctrines of the Christian Religion. VIII and 335 pages. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. \$1.50.

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Connoisseurs of sacred music pronounce this a very good product.