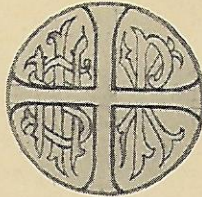


A Manual on Worship

Venite Adoremus!



By

Paul Zeller Strodach

With an Introduction by

The Rev. F. H. Knubel, D.D., LL.D.

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The United Lutheran Publication House

FOREWORD

The genesis and purpose of this book are not very difficult to state. Contact with numerous parishes and their ministers in the course of years has revealed a multiplicity of practices in connection with the Church's appointments for worship which vary from the extreme in one direction to the extreme in the totally opposite direction. One thing has always been evident and that is the lack of definite knowledge of the simplest things concerning these appointments, whether of the Liturgy itself, or of its interpretation or of the external means and surroundings. Another thing, possibly as a result of the first, has been a spirit of individualism in relation to these things which has injured their harmony and purpose. And a third is an almost total lack of uniformity in what may be called the common things of worship: where one might justly expect such a thing to be fairly wide spread on the basis of a common inheritance and a common Liturgy. One need not speak of the sad abuses or the distressing things which are prevalent, witnessing a variety of personal reactions on the part of either pastor or parish, except to hold them as one outstanding reason why an effort should be made to approach a normal use and a degree of uniformity in the practice of the same.

Therefore this book!—to the end that a fair amount of knowledge of the simplest things concerning the worship of the Church and a description of that worship as it may normally be conducted,—well within the possibilities of mission as well as large congregation; of beginner as well as long serving pastors,—may be at hand ready to teach, to serve, to aid, in what should be

the most sacred of all pastoral actions and where one should lose the personal attitude entirely and be inspired with the highest ideals, founded upon definite knowledge and appreciation.

Whatever has been written to this end has been done with but one objective in view: To reveal the possibilities of a normal use, one which is neither "low church" nor "high church" but the happy medium. Nor is this a matter of personal view or judgment, rather the outcome of direct contact with and study of the materials and phases of the Church's life and worship through the many years, particularly that which is peculiarly expressive of the spirit of the Church of the Reformation, for we need not go beyond the uses of our own Communion.

One of the unique inheritances of the Reformation is the fact that while matters of this kind come to us by authoritative appointment, nevertheless the spirit of liberty is such that the Church has always felt that such things permitted a degree of individual choice, appreciation and use, or non-appreciation and non-use as the case might be. But where there is common doctrine, common life, common heritage and let us hope common ideals and purposes,—and the welding together of the great group that forms the Communion is usually accomplished more successfully by practical things,—a spirit of liberty, which is interpreted as looseness, toward the most practical of all things which makes for common expression, the Liturgy, is, to say the least, unfortunate and really needs a Reformation of its own. Without withdrawing any of the privileges of Reformation liberty from any one or any congregation we may strive to approach some kind of uniformity or normalcy in our uses which will be expressive of the fact that we are one Church, one faith, and one life. This will be of inestimable value. Let it be understood very definitely

that this book is informative and suggestive and merely pointing to the possibilities in the hope of contributing to the glory of God in the worship of His children.

The illustrations tell their own story, but a word about them may be of interest. The effort has been made to show by picture the expression of the ideal as actually accomplished and now existing in some of our churches, both small and large.