

**A CATHOLIC ATLAS, OR, DIGEST OF
CATHOLIC THEOLOGY: COMPREHENDING
FUNDAMENTALS OF RELIGION, SUMMARY
OF CATHOLIC DOCTRINE, MEANS OF
GRACE, PERFECTION WITH ITS RULES AND
COUNSELS, WORSHIP AND ITS LAWS**

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A Catholic atlas, or, Digest of Catholic theology: comprehending fundamentals of religion, summary of Catholic doctrine, means of grace, perfection with its rules and counsels, worship and its laws by Charles C. Grafton

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CHARLES C. GRAFTON

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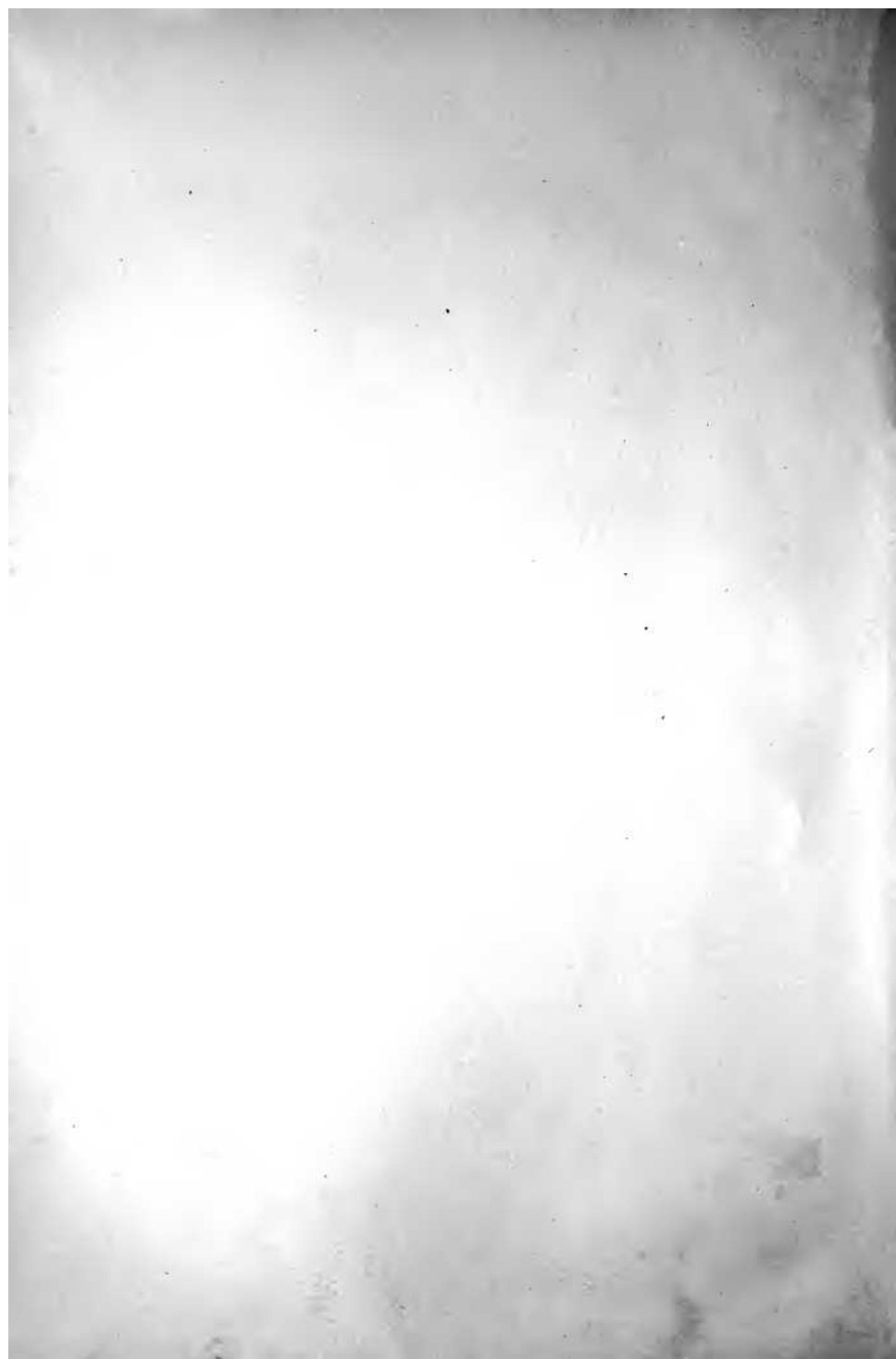
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TO OUR MOTHER
THE ECCLESIA ANGLICANA
AND IN GRATEFUL TRIBUTE TO HER THREE
GREAT THEOLOGIANS
PEARSON, HOOKER, PUSEY
THIS WORK IS INSCRIBED BY THE HUMBLEST
OF HER SONS



P R E F A C E

DEAR READER:—

Thou wilt find somewhat in this book that will disagree with thee. And in what it disagrees with thee thou wilt find thy most advantage. If it be not writ by the Spirit mayest thou be enlightened to the answering thereof to thy profit. What cometh of the Spirit will profit if thou hast that "gracious humility which hath ever been the crown and glory of a Christianly disposed mind."

There be many books of human making the author has consulted in forming this, but that whereby he has most profited is the Holy Scriptures, interpreted by the common consciousness of Apostolic Christendom and made vital by meditation and prayer. For all lovers of Jesus agree in this that the doctrine of the cross is best learnt in the companionship of those most closely united to Him and at the foot of the cross.

The dispositions of our time have engendered much disputation, and more indifference, along with widespread rejection of the Christian faith, which is a suggestive and peace-composing sign as betokening that the reign of evil is coming to an end, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

The three principal forms of assault wear the livery and mask of science, of higher criticism, and of modern thought; yet the truths for which two stand make them rather champions of the faith than its opponents.

As the discovery of the Copernican system was found not to contradict the Scriptures, so the discoveries of to-day in geology and of the process of evolution do not contradict them. As it was not declared in Scripture that the world was made in six days, for the sun and moon did not appear till the fourth, the word written in the rocks does not contradict that written in Genesis. The evolutionary process in the formation of the universe only implies method and the intelligence of the immanent Energy in directing it. The reign of law requires a lawgiver, whose laws, being of His own making, are His and not He their servant. They are but like the keys of an instrument on which the Divine Hand, bringing out new harmonies, plays. In the presence of the new knowledge that all matter is but the expression of electricity and any so-called element is changeable into another, the objections to certain miracles in the New Testament practically cease.

The modern study of Holy Scripture has revealed much concerning the authority and origin of certain books, the redactions, the employment of Babylonian material, the incorporation of folk-lore, and poetry into them. It has shown the human element of the writers in their style, limitations, and historical omissions. But the regular and orderly development of the types in the patriarchal stage and in the law, and the revealed providential guidance of the Hebrew race throughout its history, the unity and progressive unfolding of the great design of a promised Deliverer that runs through it, are witnesses to the fact that a Mind other than that of the writers guided their productions. The existence and evidences of the human element make by contrast more significant the presence of the divine.

The third opponent is modern thought, the most advanced form of which seeks no reconciliation with Christianity, but its overthrow. It holds that all religions are controlled by development and that this presupposes change, and so final dissolution. Christianity will therefore pass away. It rejects the supernatural or the possibility of miracles. It disbelieves in the inspiration of the Scriptures. As man's sinfulness is irreconcilable with modern philosophy, redemption, according to it, has no place in religion. It denies as worthless the Christian principles of self-denial and self-sacrifice, and the ideal of the Christian life. It adopts for its conduct the Epicurean philosophy of self-pleasing and self-indulgence. It does not believe in a future heaven, and lives for this life only. The vices recorded in the Old Testament are quoted without reference to the punishments visited by God upon them, while these advanced thinkers gloss over the immoralities of the gay Greek life which they commend.

This attack has nothing new in it. It omits to notice that Christianity is based on a Person in a way no other religion is, and has within it a supernatural and indestructible power that insures it from destruction. It is proved pragmatically to be the absolute religion because it has been found adapted to all men, of all nations. It is not a series of doctrines, but a system imparting spiritual gifts proved to be true by experiment and the experience of millions. We Christians know we have passed from a mere natural into a supernatural state of life. We have been illuminated by the Holy Spirit to the perception and reception of the faith. We do not merely believe in God, we have come to know Him. He dwells in us and we in Him. The Father and the Spirit make in us their abode. They fill us with strength of will and light of understanding, and with a joy and peace the world cannot give.

In a more modified form the modern thought shows itself within the church. It rejects authority. It disbelieves in most of the miracles. It does not hold the Bible to be God's word. It bases itself, or tries to do so, on facts. It begins with man's nature and its supposed needs. Its pro-

posed object is to give an uplift to humanity. Its means are the development of character and an altruistic spirit. It says scholasticism must give way to modern thought. It would not have dogmas imposed by church authority. If it recites the creed it puts its own interpretation upon it, denying the facts stated to be facts. It regards the creed as a banner or symbol of a religious cause which good men are not required to believe, but are invited to follow. It leaves men to believe as they please and only asks that they be moral men and love their fellows.

This system does not recognize the fact that the Christian religion was not the product of human thought, but a revelation, and therefore is not changeable. It is incompatible with the truth that the guardianship of this revelation was committed to the keeping of a church indwelt by the Holy Spirit. It does not realize that Christian character depends on an actual and not a mere moral union of the individual with the humanity of Christ. It does not see that dogma is like the walls of a well that protect the water from running to waste and yet do not hinder, within limits, the fresh free thought from rising up within. It says "give us religion but not dogmas," which is much like saying give us the heavenly bodies but not astronomy. Give us flora but not botany. Give us fauna but not zoölogy. Give us atoms and molecules but not chemistry. Theology is as much of a necessity of religion as the science of geology is of the earth. Moreover, the dogmas of the church are a protection to the unlearned and simple from the vagaries of the intellectual. Give up dogmas, and an undogmatic church would become a whirlpool of contradictory speculations and a mother of unbelief.

This phase of modern or broad church thought has been placed under the papal ban. There is a difference, however, between the condemnation by the whole church and by the papacy. It is not that the papacy represents only a portion of the Catholic Church, but as in the individual christian there is a human spirit and a divine spirit, so it is in the church. The difficulty with the papacy is that it, like modern thought, is the production of the human spirit. The contest between modern thought and the papacy is not therefore, as is ordinarily thought, one between rationalism and authority. Modern thought and the papacy are both manifestations of the human spirit in insubordination to the divine. For the papacy is defended by many on the theory of development, the same theory as that of modern thought.¹ But the method, the end, and the final result of its development show it to be the work of the human and not of the divine spirit.

(a) In the contributory means of its growth we find frauds and forgeries. Now God has no need of men's lies to carry out His plans.

(b) In the end reached by the development we have a double monarchy,

¹ For the Scriptural argument see "Christian and Catholic."