

**THE GROUNDS OF FAITH,  
FOUR LECTURES;  
DELIVERED IN ST. GEORGE'S  
CHURCH, SOUTHWARK**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649442812

The Grounds of Faith, Four Lectures; Delivered in St. George's Church, Southwark by Henry Edward Manning

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Cover @ 2017

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**HENRY EDWARD MANNING**

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THE GROUNDS OF FAITH.

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FOUR LECTURES

DELIVERED IN

ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, SOUTHWARK.

BY

HENRY EDWARD MANNING.



LONDON:

BURNS AND LAMBERT, 17 PORTMAN STREET,  
PORTMAN SQUARE.

1852.

*100. v. 102.*

LONDON :  
PRINTED BY ROSSON, LEVEY, AND FRANKLYN,  
Great New Street and Pettit Lane.

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## LECTURE I.

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### REVEALED TRUTH DEFINITE AND CERTAIN.

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ST. JOHN xvii. 3.

“ This is life everlasting, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.”

My purpose is to speak of the grounds of Faith; I do not mean of the special doctrines of the Catholic theology, but of the grounds or foundation upon which all Faith rests.

This is a subject difficult to treat: partly, because it is of a dry and preliminary nature; and partly, because it is not easy to touch upon a matter so long controverted, without treating it likewise in a controversial tone. But I should think it a dishonour to the sacredness of truth itself, if I could treat a matter so sacred and so necessary in a tone of mere argument. I desire to speak, then, for the honour of our Lord, and, if God so will, for the help of those who seek the truth.

To lay broad and sure the foundations on which we believe is necessary at all times, because as the end of man is life eternal, and as the means to that end is the knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ whom He hath sent, our whole being, moral, intellectual, and spiritual demands that we should rightly know, and by knowledge be united with, the mind and will of God. And what is necessary at all times is especially so at this. For this land, once full of light, once united to the great commonwealth of Christendom, and grafted into the mystical vine, through whose every branch and spray life and truth circulate, three hundred years ago, by evil men for evil ends, was isolated from the Christian world, and torn from the unity of Christ. Since that time, what has been the religious history of England? The schism which rent England from the Divine Tradition of Faith, rent it also from the source of certainty; the division which severed England from the unity of the Church throughout the world planted the principle of schism in England itself. England, carried away from Catholic unity, fell as a landslide from the shore, rending itself by its weight and mass. England, Scotland, Ireland, parted from each other, each with a religion of its own, each with its rule of faith. With schism came

contradiction; with contradiction uncertainty, debate, and doubt.

Nor did it stop here. That same principle of schism which rent asunder these three kingdoms propagated itself still further. In each country division followed division. Each Protestant church, as it was established, contained within itself the principle both of its creation and dissolution, namely, private judgment. And private judgment, working out its result in individual minds, caused schism after schism; until we are told by a writer, Protestant himself, that in the seventeenth century, during the high time of Protestant ascendancy, the sects of England amounted to between one and two hundred.

But there are causes and events nearer to our day which render it more than ever necessary to turn back again to the only foundations of certainty, and lay once more the basis of faith. The establishment so long by many believed to be a Church, a body with a tradition of three hundred years, upheld by the power of this mighty nation, maintained by the sanction of law and legislature, invested with dignity and titles of state, possessing vast endowments, not of land or gold alone, but of that which is more precious, of treasures which the Catholic Church had gathered,