

**A FIRST LATIN BOOK
FOR CATHOLIC
SCHOOLS**

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A First Latin Book for Catholic Schools by Roy Joseph Deferrari

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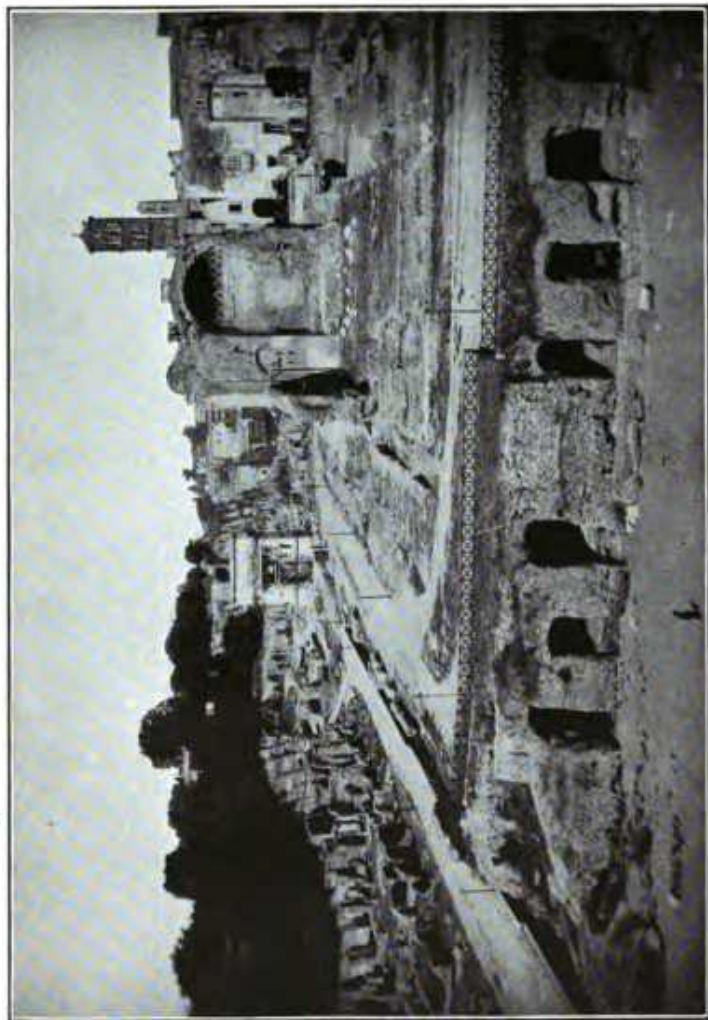
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ROY JOSEPH DEFERRARI

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The Catholic University Classical Series

Edited by ROY J. DEFERRARI, M.A., Ph.D.



ARCH OF TITUS AND TEMPLE OF VENUS AND ROME FROM COLOSSEUM.

A FIRST LATIN BOOK
FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

By

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PREFACE

In preparing the present book, the author has endeavored primarily to present all the essentials of Latin grammar in the simplest possible way.

By far the majority of first year Latin books completely ignore the order of subjects as treated in the Latin grammar and mingle the study of forms with the study of syntax. The reason for this, it is said, is to lend variety, and thereby an added interest to the work of the first year. In very recent years, too, beginners' Latin books have had a tendency to load their pages with an excess of material regarding the relationship between Latin and English. This, too, is done in the hope of increasing the interest of beginners in their early study of the language.

The purpose of all these innovations is worthy, indeed, but the real purpose of the beginners' book seems to have been forgotten. The first Latin book should aim to give the student a complete mastery of the forms and of the essentials of syntax, all within the compass of a year's work, in order that in the second year he may study intelligently such Latin as Caesar's "Gallic War," and may at the same time make a more detailed study of the Grammar. This is no easy task for a single year's work, and accordingly the utmost economy should be exercised in selecting the material for study, and the greatest care should be applied to procure the most effective arrangement of this material.

Thus only matters of the greatest importance have been presented here. At the same time we feel sure nothing really essential has been omitted. Since the Latin usually read in the second year is Caesar's "Gallic War," the vocabulary has been made up largely of the words most commonly found therein.

The reading of continuous prose should be started as early as possible, probably at Lesson 30. For this purpose, easy Latin selections with full notes will be found at the back of the book. These bits of prose have been taken from Nepos's "Lives" and Caesar's "Gallic War." Some prayers and hymns of the Church have also been included in this section. These may be read and translated very early in the year's work, and may be memorized very profitably, at least in part.

Since a large portion of the second year's work is a systematic study of the Grammar, the present volume has followed the order of the standard grammars, thereby familiarizing the student at once with the most important tool for his Latin studies. In this way the student will not have to adapt himself to a new system of Latin grammar study so soon after his struggle with the arrangement presented in the first Latin book.

Indeed, as he becomes familiar with the first year book, he at the same time learns the order and arrangement of the Grammar. The orderly arrangement of the Grammar has an intrinsic value in itself, the loss of which has never been counterbalanced by any new arrangement intended to lend increased interest. In the present book, just as in the grammars, the forms to be memorized are presented first, followed by the essentials of the syntax.

The student must have a thorough mastery of the forms before he can study and apply the rules of syntax intelligently. It is then much better to concentrate on this work of pure memory first, even to the distaste of the student, as the interest in the study of Latin will be greatly increased later when he realizes his proficiency in the elements of the language and sees his success in the actual application of these fundamentals.

Since this book has been prepared primarily for Catholic schools, it contains, besides Latin prayers and hymns, the principles of the Italian as well as the "Roman" pronunciation of Latin. It is not our purpose to discuss the merits of these two systems. The so-called "Roman" pronunciation is undoubtedly the nearest approximation to Latin as it was spoken in the classical period of antiquity. The Italian pronunciation has been advocated strongly by the Pope, in an effort to procure some uniformity in the spoken Latin of ecclesiastical gatherings. The various other methods of speaking this ancient tongue, known variously as "Continental," "Modern," etc., have nothing whatever to recommend them except, perhaps, their facility. They consist for the most part of the application of the principles for pronouncing one's own native tongue, whatever it may be, to the speaking of Latin.

Finally we wish to express our sincere gratitude to the Rev. Romain Butin, S.M., Ph.D., of the Catholic University of America, not only for many valuable suggestions, but also for his great interest and practical assistance in preparing the manuscript for the press. Thanks are due also to Rev. T. J. McGourty, Ph.D., and Rev. F. J. C6ln, Ph.D., both of the Catholic University of America, for having read the manuscript and for making noteworthy suggestions.

ROY J. DEFERRARI.

Brookland, D. C.

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