

**CONCERNING THE
BIBLE: ITS
USE AND ABUSE**

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Concerning the Bible: its use and abuse by John S. Vaughan

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JOHN S. VAUGHAN

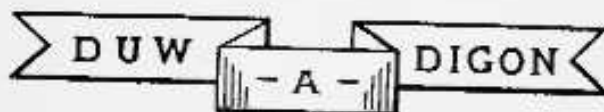
**CONCERNING THE
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CONCERNING THE
HOLY BIBLE

ITS USE AND ABUSE

BY THE RIGHT REV.
MONSIGNOR JOHN S. VAUGHAN
CANON OF WESTMINSTER

AUTHOR OF "LIFE AFTER DEATH," "FAITH AND FOLLY," "THOUGHTS
FOR ALL TIMES," "EARTH TO HEAVEN," ETC., ETC.



*"Thinkest thou that thou understandest what thou readest? How can I understand
unless some man show me?" (Acts viii. 31, 2)*

FIRST THOUSAND

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LETTER TO THE AUTHOR
FROM
HIS EMINENCE
CARDINAL MICHAEL LOGUE,
Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland.

ARA CŒLI, ARMAGH,
25th January, 1904.

MY DEAR MONSIGNOR VAUGHAN,

When I casually read, in the public press, the reports of some of your Discourses on the Holy Bible, it occurred to me that they deserved a wider and more continued circulation than they could possibly receive through the columns of a newspaper. I therefore took the liberty of suggesting to you that, if collected and published in book form, they would furnish most

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useful instruction to the people. Now that I have had the advantage of reading through the corrected proofs, I am more deeply convinced that, in republishing the Discourses, you will confer upon numerous readers the boon of a good, solid body of instruction upon a most interesting and absorbing subject. Your book furnishes quite sufficient knowledge, on leading points, to enable the people to read the Sacred Text with intelligence, appreciation and reverence. Though you evidently aim at conveying this knowledge in the simplest and most popular form, still no one can read your Discourses without feeling that they are the fruit of earnest and extensive study.

You are to be congratulated on the success with which you have treated your important subject. You have been judicious in selecting points of great interest, and have shown great skill in

their development. Your reasoning is clear and convincing, your illustrations apt and felicitous and your language lucid and precise. Hence I believe that, for the great body of our people, who have not the time or qualifications for consulting more abstruse works on Biblical Criticism, your book will supply a very obvious want at a very opportune time.

It is true Catholics do not rely on the authority of critics, higher or otherwise, as the foundation of their faith in the Sacred Writings. They rest secure in the conviction that He who, in His bounty, has vouchsafed a revelation to man, has been able, by His providence, to preserve it, whether through the agency of those to whom it was committed under the Old Law, or through the infallible authority of the Church under the New.

The Church, indeed, now as in the past, welcomes and encourages the labours of learned men who employ their vast stores of varied knowledge for the purposes of defending and explaining the Sacred Text ; but our belief in its authenticity and inspired character rests not upon their labours, but on the authority of the Church. We can therefore look on, if not without sadness, at least without fear, at the strife which is raging at the present day, wherein the system of private judgment is being driven on to its logical consequences—consequences which, unfortunately, involve the wreck of supernatural faith in the souls of many. We may also regard, with reverential awe, the mysterious ways of God's judgments. We see that the Catholic Church, now as in the past, is the faithful guardian and uncompromising defender of God's

Word, while so many outside her pale, who imagined that, in the Bible, they had an unfailing weapon wherewith to destroy her teaching and subvert her authority, are now engaged in pulling this same Bible to pieces.

But, beyond the sorrow with which charity inspires us to lament the misfortunes of our neighbour, we have no reason for fear or discouragement. We rest firm in the belief and confidence that when so many fanciful conjectures shall have proved groundless, as in the past ; when so many gratuitous suppositions shall have vanished ; when so many theories ingeniously built up to support a foregone conclusion, that the Bible, in whole or in part, is without supernatural sanction or Divine authority, shall fall to pieces from their intrinsic unsoundness ; when the names of the higher critics shall be a bare