

**PURGATORY, DOGMATIC AND  
SCHOLASTIC: THE VARIOUS  
QUESTIONS CONNECTED WITH  
IT CONSIDERED AND PROVED**

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Purgatory, dogmatic and scholastic: the various questions connected with it considered and proved by M. Canty

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**M. CANTY**

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# PURGATORY

DOGMATIC AND SCHOLASTIC

*THE VARIOUS QUESTIONS CONNECTED WITH  
IT CONSIDERED AND PROVED.*

BY THE

REV. M. CANTY, P.P.



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## PREFACE.



THIS is the only work in the English language, at least as far as I know, in which the existence and circumstances of Purgatory, and the other questions connected with it, are treated dogmatically and scholastically. Though the subject may not be found treated in a similar manner in English, I do not on this account mean to pretend that there is much originality of thought in what I have written. The subject is one that has been discussed by many celebrated theologians. I have endeavoured to lay before my readers the various points in connection with it, and the arguments by which they are sustained, in a simple and familiar style, suited, as I believe, to the circumstances of our time, in which people differ so much in language and in education, not to speak of race and country, from the readers of ancient theologians.

There are other excellent works on Purgatory written in English, in which the subject is treated ascetically. I may instance Father Anderdon's "Purgatory Surveyed," and "The Prisoners of the King" by Father Coleridge, both reverend authors of the Society of Jesus, which are so full of thoughtful reflections, calculated to move us to render succour to the souls that are in affliction. But in the present book, the very existence and circumstances of Purgatory, the utility of our prayers and other good works for the dead, &c., are proved, and the various arguments drawn from the Scripture, Tradition, and other sources, are laid before the reader.

In order to bring such subjects under the attention not only of the ordinary, but even of the most intelligent laity in this country, it is necessary to depart from the language of the Church, and to adopt the English in its stead. Otherwise they cannot be brought under the observation of Irish Catholics, who naturally desire to see the reasons for the faith they profess, and to be able to show these, if necessary, to others. In this age of inquiry, especially, intelligent laymen seize with eagerness every opportunity of learning the arguments by which the several points of Catholic teaching are sustained against the heretic and the unbeliever. I hope that the present



work may satisfy such a desire, as far as concerns the one subject on which it treats.

It appears to me also that many of my reverend brethren would consider it an advantage to be able to study such a subject in English. There is no doubt that it has more interest and attraction for them in the vernacular than in Latin. Though they are thoroughly conversant with Latin, and many of them have a far deeper knowledge of it than I can pretend to, still it may be said in general that there is no language in which a person finds it so easy and pleasing to study any subject as in his native one, or that which he uses in daily conversation.

In compiling this work I have consulted the most approved theologians. Where any question of doctrine was involved, I have carefully followed their opinions, as the reader will discern in the quotations from, and references to their works. I esteem this as my passport to the confidence of the public. Not often obtruding my own opinion, I have, I hope, faithfully reflected the opinions of the best and most reliable authors.

If in the following pages, which are in a great measure dogmatical, I have unintentionally advanced any opinion which is false or inexact, I unequivocally retract the same. I submit my work to the infallible judgment of the venerable

Pontiff who sits in the chair of Peter. If he disapproves or condemns anything in it, that I also disapprove and condemn.

I do not apprehend, however, that there is anything in it to call for censure. It has had the good fortune to be revised by the present learned and illustrious Lord Bishop of Limerick, the Most Rev. Dr. O'Dwyer, who, to the great joy of priests and people, was raised to the mitre of St. Munchin as the proof sheets issued from the press. His name, his brilliant talents, which found their triumph in his early elevation to the episcopate, and his scholarly attainments, are a sufficient guarantee to the reader for the accuracy of the opinions that I have put forward. I beg to publicly thank his Lordship for his great kindness in rendering such assistance to my humble effort.

This book was written during the hours that I endeavoured to snatch latterly from the duties of my calling. The life of a priest in a country parish is always a busy one, divided between many labours, and involved in many anxieties. It was during the time I could spare from such cares that I have written this treatise, which I now lay before the public, and ask a patient reading for. I beg of the readers to have forbearance with the imperfections which no doubt

they will discover in it; and to believe that I have been actuated by a desire to propagate the knowledge of an important point of doctrine wherein we differ from Protestants.

Finally, if my words will induce any one to be more impressed with the reality of Purgatory, and to render assistance to the souls that are suffering in it, I shall consider myself to have obtained ample reward for the time I have employed in writing the following pages.

M. C.

*Ardpatrick,*  
*All Souls' Day, 1886.*