

**ORIGEN AND  
GREEK PATRISTIC  
THEOLOGY**

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Origen and Greek patristic theology by William Fairweather

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**WILLIAM FAIRWEATHER**

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Origen and  
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By

Rev. William Fairweather, M.A.

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“Vir magnus ab infantia.”

JEROME.

“I love the name of Origen.”

NEWMAN.

“Like the influence of Socrates in Greek philosophy, so the influence of Origen in Church history is the watershed of multitudes of different streams of thought.”

FARRAR.





## PREFATORY NOTE



THIS volume cannot claim to be written in the popular style adopted in some other volumes of the series, for the simple reason that the subject scarcely admits of being popularised. At the same time I have tried to make the book readable, and to refrain as far as possible from undue technicalities of philosophical and theological language. It has been my aim to avoid on the one hand the Scylla of catering for a public which no art or device will ever induce to concern itself about Greek Patristic Theology, and, on the other, the Charybdis of scholastic pedantry. Rightly or wrongly, I am convinced that my task will be most usefully accomplished by furnishing a brief introduction to the study of a subject on which, in English at least, there are not too many easily accessible helps. In view of the impossibility of assuming any very intimate knowledge of Origen's writings on the part of the general reader, or even of the average theological student, I have further deemed it best, while not refraining from criticism where it seemed called for, to aim at being expository rather than critical.

In no sense does the book pretend to be a treatment of the third century. Any attempt to deal with the Church life of the period is debarred by the limits of

the present series. Such a method of treatment may sometimes have its advantages, but it necessarily throws into the background the personality of the individual. In the following pages it has been my endeavour to concentrate attention upon the life and writings, the doctrine and influence, of the great teacher of the Greek Church. Chapter I. is introductory, and intended to lead up to the main subject by showing to what extent the way had already been prepared for Origen. I regret that considerations of space do not admit of prefixing as Prolegomena a sketch of the birthplace and background of the Greek theology, and of the Apologists of the second century; but while this may be a desideratum from the point of view of the scientific student, the educated layman will probably count it no loss. Chapters XI.-XIV. form, so to speak, the epilogue, and indicate the nature and extent of Origen's influence upon subsequent theological thought.

I have deemed it advisable to devote a separate chapter to the life of Origen, instead of adopting the perhaps more scientific, but immensely more complicated plan of weaving in the biographical details with other matter in strict chronological sequence. Although in a monogram upon Origen more might, no doubt, be made of this aspect of the subject, I venture to hope that nothing very material has been omitted; but in any case it seems more important to make room for some adequate account of the writings and theology of one who did so much to "make Christianity a part of the civilisation of the world" than to tell with fuller detail the story of his life.

To those who may be inclined to question the utility