

Those who are determined to defend the truth against it must be equally active and strenuous in resistance. It must be encountered and vanquished on its own ground.

Albert the Great it was who first properly estimated the resources of the enemy and the means to checkmate him. He realized what a necessity there was of returning to the Greek philosophy and with its wisdom, clearness, and logical force to battle in defence of christianity and its truths. He foresaw that in this philosophy, corrected and purified by the light of Revelation, the Church would possess a scientific system of defence capable of resisting all attacks of man's proud intellect. Few at the time had the wisdom and foresight of Albert. His efforts in this direction were opposed and ridiculed; he was accused of attempting to mingle Paganism with the Faith. Such abuse and such charges would have deterred a weaker champion; they could not turn Albert from his course. More than this he imbued his disciples with his principles, which, as master of the schools, he diffused therein.

Albert was undoubtedly a great man. He was fated however to be eclipsed by one of his disciples, St. Thomas Aquinas. Fortunate was Albert in securing a mind able to appreciate his teachings: equally so, the saint in having a master who recognized and developed his unsurpassable talents. Religion and Truth, can never repay the debt they owe the saint for his writings, and Albert for laying the foundation of the same by his teachings.

At the time of the Angeiical's appearance there was a medley of strange ideas, some Greek, some Arabian and some Christian. The schools of Aristotle and Plato had always exerted a mighty influence on the minds of men. That of Plato is plainly discernible in the early Fathers of the Church. He by his nobleness and sublimity appealed to them more than the matter-of-fact and less religious Aristotle. But if Plato is the greater theologian and carries us along by his soaring, Aristotle is the greater philosopher and compels our assent by the exactitude and force of his reasoning. His intellectual strength and power of analysis make him great. His works are a wonderful armory, stored with weapons for attack and defence. It was the skilful use of these by the Saracens that made their defence of the Koran so strong and their