

**VINCENTIUS LIRINENSIS FOR THE
ANTIQUITY AND UNIVERSALITY
OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH
AGAINST THE PROFANE
NOVELTIES OF ALL HERETICS**

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ANONYMOUS

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VINCENTIUS LIRINENSIS

FOR THE

ANTIQUITY AND UNIVERSALITY

OF

The Catholic Faith

AGAINST

THE PROFANE NOVELTIES OF ALL HERETICS.

LATIN AND ENGLISH.

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PREFACE.

VINCENT was born in Gaul, and, like many of his contemporaries, after having lived in the world, felt drawn to the greater strictness of the religious life. He therefore sought and obtained admittance to the celebrated Abbey on the island of Lerins in the Mediterranean, opposite Cannes. Here he became a monk and was ordained priest, becoming also one of the foremost of that band of learned and laborious men who formed and trained so many bishops and leaders of the Church in the troublous times of the fifth century. His death took place about A.D. 450.

The accompanying treatise was written, as Vincent tells us himself, *c. i.*, "to refresh his weak memory" as to what he had read in the writings of the Fathers, whence the title "*Commonitorium*;" and, further, to set forth how "to find out the fraud of heretics, and to escape their snares." He mentions then "two manner of ways by God's assistance to defend and preserve his faith; first, *by the authority of the law of God* [i.e. Holy Scripture]; secondly, *by the tradition of the Catholic Church.*"

He points out the necessity of tradition, although Holy Scripture be perfect and "most abundantly of

itself sufficient for all things;" because every heretic expounds it after his own fashion.

The rule for ascertaining what to believe is to hold that which has been believed "*everywhere, always, and of all men*" (for that is truly and properly Catholic), following "*Universality, Antiquity and Consent*" [c. i. also chap. xxvii.].

He proceeds to touch upon various heresies, and sketches the Catholic doctrines of the Incarnation and the Holy Trinity. On the subject of the development of the Faith he lays down as a rule that there must be such, but "in such sort that it may be truly an increase in faith, and not a change" [chap. xxiii.].

These principles, being such as the Church of England has repeatedly upheld, have naturally led to Vincent's being often quoted by her greater theologians, some of whose utterances on these subjects are, as a matter of interest, given in the Appendix.

THE present edition is practically a reprint of the Latin and English texts published at Oxford in 1841. The two volumes appeared in a series of 'Oxford Editions,' as they were called, of certain Doctrinal and Devotional works chiefly by divines of the English Church, such as Laud, Andrewes, Bull, Patrick, Sherlock, Jeremy Taylor, &c., with one or two others, such as the "Imitation" by Thomas A. Kempis, the "Confessions of S. Augustine," and the *Commonitorium Vincentii Lirinensis*. The volumes were issued under the direc-

tion of different editors, and were published at the same time as, and in a manner supplementary to, "The Tracts for the Times." The "Vincent of Lerins," with some few of the others, so far as they had been published, were thus referred to in a notice appended to most of the recent Tracts in that Series:—

"The following works, all in single volumes or pamphlets, and recently published, will be found, more or less, to uphold or elucidate the general doctrines inculcated in these Tracts."

The English translation was issued without an editor's name, but the following account of it appeared in the preface:—

"The present translation is a revision of one published in 1651, and preserved in the Bodleian. (8vo. D. 261. Libc.) It has in parts been altered considerably, with the intention of bringing it nearer to the original. The extract from Bishop Beveridge has been placed in the commencement, instead of in its order in the Appendix, as forming a suitable introduction to the argument of Vincentius."

In reprinting it, little more has been done than verifying, and in a few cases augmenting, the texts of Scripture, and in revising the heads of the chapters so as to bring them into conformity with the Latin text.

The Latin text followed has been that which was issued at the same time as the translation. The headings of chapters omitted in that have been added according to the edition of Baluzius in 1663, which more recent editors, such as Klupfel, Hurter, &c., consider the best, his text having been compared with the chief MS. now in one of the Paris Libraries.

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