

**THE ORIGIN PERSECUTIONS AND
DOCTRINES OF THE WALDENSES
FROM DOCUMENTS, MANY
NOW THE FIRST TIME COLLECTED
AND EDITED**

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The Origin Persecutions and Doctrines of the Waldenses from Documents, Many Now the First Time Collected and Edited by Pius Melia

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PIUS MELIA, D.D.



LONDON:

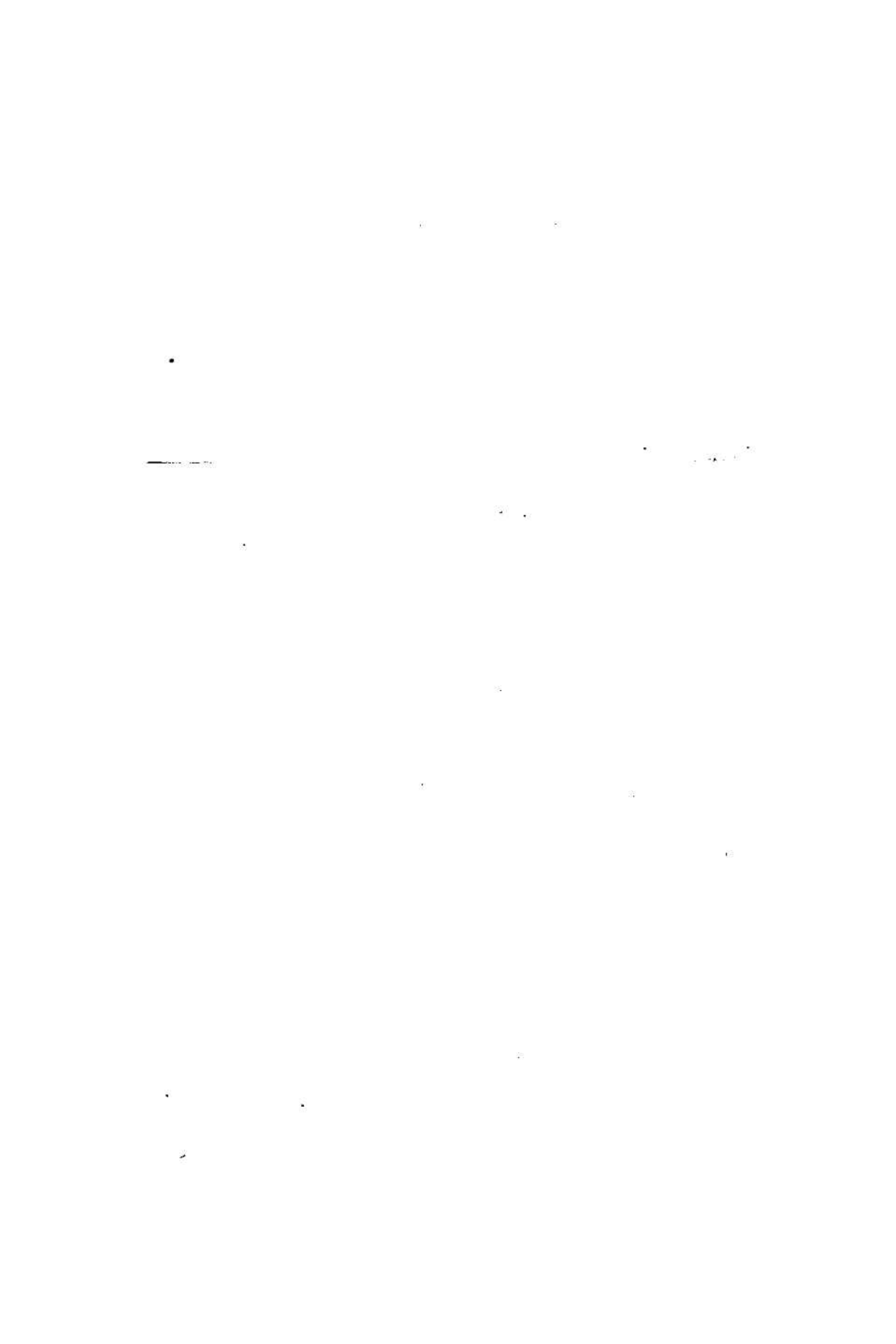
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1871, July 1.
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TO HIS HIGHNESS
PRINCE LOUIS LUCIEN BONAPARTE,
AS A TRIBUTE
TO HIS UNRIVALLED PHILOLOGICAL LEARNING,
THIS VOLUME IS,
WITH PERMISSION, DEDICATED
BY HIS
OBLIGED AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.





PREFACE.

IT was on the 30th April of last year, that in a leading article of a London newspaper (the "Daily Telegraph," 30th April, 1868), I read the following expressions relating to the Waldenses of Piemont. "For sixteen hundred years, at least, the Waldenses have guarded the pure and primitive Christianity of the Apostles. . . No one knows when or how the faith was first delivered to these mountaineers. . . Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, in the second century found them a church. . . These gallant hill-men have kept the tradition of the Gospel committed to them as pure and inviolate as the snow upon their own Alps. . . They have maintained an Evangelical form of Christianity from the very first, rejecting image worship, invocation of saints, auricular confession, celibacy, papal supremacy or infallibility, and the dogma of purgatory; taking the Scripture as the rule of life, and admitting no sacraments but Baptism and the Lord's Supper. . . No bloodier cruelty disgraces the records of the Papacy than the persecutions endured by the ancestors of the twenty thousand Waldenses now surviving. . . Never did men suffer more for their belief. . ."

The quoted expressions not being in accordance with

my former knowledge of the Waldensian history, I imposed upon myself the task of collecting as many books bearing on the subject as I could find, in order to ascertain whether my old impressions were wrong, or the greatest part of the above assertions unfounded.

The following are the principal books I have read through relating to this object: Jean Paul Perrin, "Histoire des Vaudois," Geneve, 1619; Alexander Ross, "ΠΑΝΣΕΒΕΙΑ," London, 1653; Samuel Morland, "The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piemont," London, 1658; Jean Leger, Pasteur, &c., "Histoire Generale des Eglises Evangeliques de Piemont," Amsterdam, 1680; P. Allix, D.D., "History of the ancient Churches of Piedmont," London, 1690; William Jones, "History of the Waldenses," London, 1812; Jean Rodolphe Peyran, Pastor, with appendices by Rev. Thomas Sims, M.A., "An Historical Defence of the Waldenses or Vaudois," London, 1826; Rev. J. L. Jackson, M.A., "Remarks on the Vaudois of Piemont," London, 1826; William Stephen Gilly, M.A., "Narrative of an Excursion to the Mountains of Piemont," London, 1827; "Recherches Historiques sur la veritable Origine des Vaudois, par Monseigneur Charvaz," Paris et Lyon, 1836; Robert Baird, D.D., "Sketches of Protestantism in Italy," New York—British edition, London, 1847; Antoine Monastier, "A History of the Vaudois, translated from the French," London, 1848; Alberto Bert, Ministro, "J. Valdesi, ovvero i Cristiani Cattolici secondo la Chiesa Primitiva," Torino, 1849; Alexis Muston, D.D., Pastor, "The Israel of the Alps, the Vaudois of Piemont," translated by Montgomery, A.M., Glasgow, 1857; E. Enderson, D.D., "The Vaudois, &c., Observations," London, 1858; F. M. "The Israel of the Alps: a History of the Waldenses," London, 1863.