

APPENDIX

The true sense of the Vincentian Canon

by

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Thesis concerning the true sense of the Vincentian Canon.

1. The Canon [or theological rule] of Saint Vincent of Lerins (*Commonitorium* Chapters 2, 4, 27 and 29) which assigns *universality, antiquity* and *consensus of faith* as characteristics of Catholic doctrine is perfectly true in the *affirmative* sense. In other words, a doctrine bearing these marks is certainly a dogma of the Catholic faith. It is not however true in the *exclusive* sense, i.e. if it be understood to mean that nothing can belong to the Catholic faith which has not been explicitly believed *always, everywhere* and *by all*.

2. In the context of the *Commonitorium* itself, the purport of the rule is simply to state two marks, either of which is sufficient to prove the *absolute antiquity, or apostolicity*, of a doctrine, viz: (a) the present consensus of the Church, and (b) the consensus of *relative antiquity*, i.e. as it stood before the controversy arose.

I

The Canon in question is stated by Saint Vincent of Lerins in the following terms: "Moreover, in the Catholic Church itself, all possible care must be taken that we hold that faith which has been believed *everywhere, always, by all*. For that is truly and in the strictest sense Catholic... This rule we shall observe if we follow universality, antiquity and consensus." (Chapter 2) Note first that the reference is not to any points whatsoever that are held and observed in the Church irrespective of the way in which they held. It is to those which are *believed*, i.e. held by *faith*. Now a thing can be believed in either of two ways: *explicitly*, or only *implicitly*. Whatever is contained in the deposit of objective revelation has certainly been believed at least implicitly *everywhere, always* and *by all* Catholics and nothing can be contained in the deposit of revelation which is not so believed. One would at once cease to be a Catholic if one were not ready to believe everything which has been sufficiently proposed to

one as divinely revealed—or if one's *habit of faith* did not extend to the assent to be accorded to everything included in revelation. But in this sense “to have been believed always and everywhere” cannot be given as a *criterion* and theological touchstone for recognising what is contained in revelation, for the objects of *implicit faith* are not in themselves known as revealed. And on the other hand, to investigate whether something has been at least implicitly believed everywhere, always, by all, is the same thing as investigating whether it is contained in objective revelation and Tradition; and it must therefore be established in the light of some other criterion—it cannot be itself a means of establishing it. So although it is true, both in the affirmative sense and in the exclusive sense, that everything belongs to the deposit of faith which has been at least implicitly believed *everywhere, always, and by all*, and that nothing belongs to this deposit which has not been so believed, nevertheless this cannot be the meaning of the Vincentian Canon.

It follows that the proposed criterion can only be understood of explicit faith. Now it has been established in the preceding theses that a universal consensus in recognising some dogma as a doctrine of faith, at whatever period this consensus may exist, is a definite criterion of divinely transmitted doctrine.⁹³ There is therefore no doubt that such an agreement or consensus in antiquity proves divine Tradition, and that the consensus of all ages does so most splendidly.⁹⁴ So whatever has been *believed always, everywhere and by all*, cannot but have been revealed and divinely transmitted.

However it has been no less established in the foregoing that certain points of doctrine *can* be contained in the deposit of objective revelation which were *not* always contained in the manifest and explicit preaching of the Church, and that for as long as they were not sufficiently proposed it

⁹³ See Theses V, n. iii; VIII, nn. I, ii; Corollary I to Thesis IX; Thesis XI, n. ii.

⁹⁴ See Theses XIV, XV.

was possible for them to be the object of controversy within the limits of the Church without loss of faith and communion.⁹⁵ So a given point of doctrine can be contained in objective revelation and can also, with the passage of time—when it has been sufficiently explained and proposed—come to belong to those truths which must necessarily be believed with Catholic faith, while yet this truth, though always contained in the deposit of revelation, has *not* been explicitly believed *always, everywhere and by all*; nor was there any necessity that it should be so believed. So although the marks listed in the Canon, if present, constitute manifest proof that the doctrine they relate to is a dogma of the Catholic faith, their *absence* by no means necessarily proves that a given doctrine was *not* contained in the deposit of faith; neither does it prove that a doctrine, which, for want of sufficient proposition at a given time, did not need to be explicitly believed, may not at some other time be the object of obligatory belief. So the Canon is true in the *affirmative* sense, but cannot be admitted in the *negative* and *exclusive* sense.

II

If the Canon is considered in context, and together with the explanations set forth by Saint Vincent, it appears that its meaning is as follows:

- a) The *absolute antiquity* or *apostolicity* of a doctrine is not proposed as a mark whereby to establish anything else; it is itself the very point being investigated.
- b) As marks by which the apostolicity of a doctrine can be known, two characteristics are proposed:
 - i) universality, i.e. the present consensus of the Church, and,

⁹⁵ See Corollary ii to Thesis IX and Thesis XXIII.

- ii) the consensus of antiquity,⁹⁶ to be understood in a relative sense, i.e. a consensus shown to have existed before the controversy arose.

By either of these two marks absolute antiquity can be known and inferred. For when, by virtue either of a solemn judgment of the authentic magisterium (whether of an ecumenical council or of the pope) or by the unanimous preaching of the Church, a universal present consensus is clear and manifest, this alone suffices of itself; but if, through the arising of a controversy, this consensus were to become less apparent, or were not acknowledged by the adversaries to be confuted, then—says Vincent—appeal must be made to the manifest consensus of antiquity, or to solemn judgements, or to the consentient convictions of the Fathers.

Finally, if, in some polemical altercation, the heretics were to go so far as not even to venerate the authority of the preceding Fathers, he admits that we have no remaining common principle between them and us save the authority of Scripture.

That the foregoing interpretation is the true one is clear from the entire context of Saint Vincent's *Commonitorium*.

- a) He says that one must hold "what has been believed everywhere, always and by all," without distinguishing whether it was so believed implicitly or explicitly (Chapter 2). But then he indicates marks by which we can come to know whether something was thus believed everywhere, always and by all, and these marks are: *universality*, *antiquity* and *consensus*. "This rule

⁹⁶ Vincent's apparently tripartite division in certain chapters: *universitas*, *antiquitas*, *consensio*, in fact contains not three but only two truly distinct parts, as is apparent from the author's own explanation., and in Chapter 29 (i.e. the *Recapitulation* which is all that survives of the second *Commonitorium*), he himself reduces the three to two: "Regard must be had to the consentient voice of universality equally with that of antiquity."

we shall observe if we follow universality, antiquity, consensus.” Hence, “what has been believed everywhere, always and by all” is not itself a criterion [of the duty to believe] but is rather something to be established by means of distinct criteria, namely *universality, antiquity and consensus*.

- b) What Vincent means by *universality* he explains straight away: “We shall follow universality if we confess that one faith to be true, which *the whole Church throughout the world confesses*.” Hence universality is the agreement of the entire Church, and, insofar as it is distinct from the mark of antiquity, it is the consent of the Church *at this present time* when the controversy has arisen. This is manifest from Chapter 3 in which Vincent contrasts universality, as the present consensus, which can be troubled by newly invented errors, with antiquity, i.e. the agreement of the previous age “which at this day cannot possibly be seduced by any fraud of novelty”. Moreover in the Chapter 29 he says that universal consent is to be followed “lest we...be torn from the integrity of unity and carried away to schism,” which he illustrates in Chapter 4 by the example of the Catholics in Africa, who “detesting the profane schism [of Donatus], continued in communion with all the churches of the world [which were at that time in agreement].”
- c) The mark of *antiquity* is understood by Vincent in the sense of *relative antiquity*, whereby *absolute antiquity* or *apostolicity* is to be inferred: this is clear from his entire manner of reasoning. For he invariably situates antiquity in the judgement of preceding Fathers or Councils—a judgement existing before the appearance of the heresy to be refuted or the controversy to be decided. “In antiquity itself..., to the temerity of one or of a very few, they must prefer, first of all, the general decrees, if such there be, of a Universal Council, or if there be no such, then,

what is next best, they must follow the consentient belief of many and great masters.” (Chapter 27)⁹⁷ And in Chapter 28 he

⁹⁷ There are no grounds for seeing in this or other passages from Saint Vincent of Lerins an error against the infallible authority of the definitions of the Roman Pontiff.

Saint Vincent’s intention is to set out criteria of doctrinal apostolicity not only for the benefit of Catholics, but also for polemical use against the novelties of heretics—criteria which no one shall be able to refuse.

- a) He offers these criteria against “only...those heresies which are new and recent, and that on their first arising.” (Chapter 28) So, given his supposition that no direct judgement has yet been made against them, he could not fittingly appeal to a papal definition either.
- b) The criteria which he adduces are entirely true. His choice of them does not imply that he denies and excludes other criteria that may be applicable according to circumstances.
- c) In the criteria which he sets forth, the authentic judgement of the Apostolic See is at least implicitly included. For when such a judgement exists, either it authentically declares the *antiquity* of the consensus, or else it most certainly brings about *universality*. Hence if there is an extant pontifical definition promulgated in antiquity...it will always be possible to appeal to “the consentient belief of many and great masters” (Chapter 27).
- d) For Vincent of Lerins, as for Irenæus before him, it is enough to appeal to the authority of the Apostolic See in order to establish the apostolicity of a doctrine. He makes this quite clear when Chapter 6: “It has always been the case in the Church, that the more a man is under the influence of religion, so much the more prompt is he to oppose innovations. Examples there are without number: but to be brief, we will take one, and that, in preference to others, from the Apostolic See, so that it may be clearer than day to everyone with how great energy, with how great zeal, with how great earnestness, the blessed successors of the blessed Apostles [i.e. the Roman Pontiffs] have constantly defended the integrity of the religion which they have

says that to ancient heresies one should oppose councils which took place before those heresies arose, while, if even these councils are condemned by the heretics, there remains only the common source of Scripture to use in argument against them.

d) Finally, Saint Vincent of Lerins everywhere clearly teaches that *either one* of these two marks—i.e. *universal consent* and *the agreement of antiquity*—suffices to demonstrate the apostolicity of a doctrine. Thus in Chapter 3 he writes:

i) “What then will a Catholic Christian do if a small portion of the Church have cut itself off from the communion of the universal faith? What, surely, but prefer the soundness of the whole body to the unsoundness of a pestilent and corrupt member?” Here universal consent is opposed to local error.

ii) “What, if some novel contagion seek to infect not merely an insignificant portion of the Church, but the whole? Then it will be his care to cleave to antiquity.” Here antiquity is appealed to in the event that

once received.” He then recounts the innovation of the re-baptisers from Agrippinus of Carthage, before pursuing in the following terms: “When then all men protested against the novelty, and the priesthood everywhere, each as his zeal prompted him, opposed it, Pope Stephen of blessed memory, Prelate of the Apostolic See, in conjunction indeed with his colleagues but yet himself the foremost, withstood it, thinking it right, I doubt not, that as he exceeded all others in the authority of his position [“*loci auctoritate superabat*”], so he should also in the devotion of his faith. In fine, in an epistle sent at the time to Africa, he laid down this rule: *Let there be no innovation—nothing but what has been handed down...* What then was the issue of the whole matter? What but the usual and customary one? Antiquity was retained, novelty was rejected.”

contemporary controversies should have muddied the waters and made it hard to establish for the time being the belief of the universal Church.

There can therefore be no doubt that the true sense of the Vincentian Canon is the sense explained in our thesis. Any doctrine which is supported by *neither* of these two marks must be considered as being, at best, not yet sufficiently proposed to Catholic faith; and a doctrine which is repugnant to *either* mark must be considered to be a profane novelty.

Publishers' Note. The foregoing text appears as Thesis XXIV in Franzelin's masterpiece *De Divina Traditione et Scriptura* (Rome, 1875).

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THESIS XXIV.

De vero sensu canonis Vincentiani.

« Canon s. Vincentii Lirinensis (Commonit. n. 3. 4. 38. 41.), quo characteres doctrinae catholicae assignantur *universitas, antiquitas et consensus fidei*, si 1^o. per se spectetur, verissimus est sensu *affirmante*, quod doctrina hisce characteribus insignis est certe dogma fidei catholicae; non tamen verus est sensu excludente ita, ut ad depositum fidei nihil pertinere possit, quod non *ubique et ab omnibus semper* explicite creditum sit. Si autem 2^o. sensus regulae in contextu ipsius Commonitorii quaeratur, nihil aliud exhibetur quam duplex nota, utraque sufficiens ad dignoscendam *antiquitatem absolutam* seu *apostolicitatem* doctrinae, consensus videlicet praesens Ecclesiae et consensus antiquitatis relativae existens ante exortam controversiam. »

I. Canonem de quo agimus, Lirinensis enuntiat his verbis. « In ipsa item catholica Ecclesia magnopere curandum est, ut id teneamus, quod *ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus* creditum est. Hoc est etenim vere proprieque catholicum... Sed hoc ita demum fiet, si sequamur *universitatem, antiquitatem, consensionem* » n. 3. Agitur itaque de capitibus, quae non quomodocumque in Ecclesia tenentur et observantur, sed quae fide sunt *credita* (1). Creditum esse potest aliquid dupliciter, *explicite* scilicet vel *implicite* tantum (cf. th. XXIII. n. I.). Quidquid continetur in deposito obiectivae revelationis, sine dubio *ubique, semper, ab omnibus* catholicis creditum est saltem *implicite*, nec quidquam potest in deposito contineri, quin ita sit creditum; desineret enim iam esse catholicus, qui promptum non gereret animum ad credenda omnia, quae sibi tamquam divinitus revelata fuerint sufficienter proposita, seu cuius *habitus fidei* non extenderetur ad assensum praestandum omnibus in revelatione comprehensis. At hoc sensu *semper et ubique creditum esse* non potest dari velut criterium et regula theo-

(1) Extenditur quidem non modo ad divinas sed etiam ad mere apostolicas Traditiones regula ab Augustino de Bapt. l. IV. c. 24. et alibi proposita: « quod universa *tenet* Ecclesia, nec Conciliis institutum sed semper *retentum est*, non nisi auctoritate apostolica traditum rectissime creditur; » sed latius patet semper *retentum esse* apud Augustinum, quam semper *creditum esse* apud Lirinensem. Cf. supra p. 15.

logica ad discernenda ea, quae in revelatione continentur; obiecta enim fidei implicite dumtaxat credita non cognoscuntur in se ipsis tamquam revelata. Sed immo quaerere, utrum aliquid sit ubique, semper, ab omnibus saltem implicite creditum, est idem ac quaerere utrum aliquid in obiectiva revelatione et Traditione contineatur, quae res est inquirenda per aliud, non autem nota ad aliud inve-niendum. Quamvis ergo verum sit tam sensu affirmante quam excludente, id omne pertinere ad depositum fidei quod *ubique, semper et ab omnibus* saltem implicite creditum est, et nihil ad depositum pertinere, quod ita creditum non sit; non potest tamen haec esse significatio regulae Vincentianae.

Intelligi itaque criterium propositum non potest nisi de fide explicita. Iam vero constat ex thesibus superioribus, consensum universalem in aliquod dogma ut doctrinam fidei, quovis tempore is existat, esse criterium certum doctrinae divinitus traditae (th. V. n. III; th. VIII. n. I. II; Coroll. 1. ad th. IX; th. XI. n. II.). Ergo sine dubio talis consensus *antiquitatis*, et splendidissime consensus universalis omnium aetatum demonstrat Traditionem divinam (th. XIV. XV.). Quod ergo *ubique, semper, ab omnibus creditum est*, non potest non esse revelatum et divinitus traditum.

At vero ex superioribus pariter constat, posse aliqua doctrinae capita contineri in deposito obiectivae revelationis, quae non semper erant in manifesta et explicita praedicatione ecclesiastica, et quae proinde quamdiu sufficienter proposita non erant, intra ipsos fines Ecclesiae in controversiam vocari poterant citra iacturam fidei et communionis (coroll. 2. ad th. IX. et th. XXIII.). Ergo potest aliquod doctrinae caput contineri in obiectiva revelatione, et potest etiam successu temporis, facta sufficiente explicatione et propositione, pertinere ad veritates fide catholicae necessario credendas, quod licet semper contentum in deposito revelationis, non tamen *semper, ubique, et ab omnibus* explicite erat creditum aut necessario credendum. Quamvis ergo characteres in canone enumerati si adsint, evidenter demonstrent, doctrinam cui competunt, esse dogma fidei ca-

tholicae; non tamen si desint, eo ipso iam constat, doctrinam non contineri in deposito fidei, aut doctrinam hoc ipso quod aliquo tempore ob defectum sufficientis propositionis non erat explicite credenda, nullo tempore esse credendam. Canon ergo verus est sensu *affirmante*, non tamen potest admitti sensu *negante* et *excludente*.

II. Si canon spectetur in contextu et una cum explicazione, qua declaratur a Vincentio, apparet sensum eius esse sequentem. a) *Antiquitas absoluta* seu *apostolicitas* doctrinae non proponitur ut nota, per quam aliud inquiratur; sed est ipsa res quae inquiritur. b) Tamquam notae, per quas apostolicitas doctrinae cognoscenda sit, proponuntur duae proprietates: *universitas* quae est *consensus praesens Ecclesiae*, et *consensio antiquitatis* (1), relativae scilicet, i. e. consensus qui demonstratur exstitisse ante exortam controversiam. Ex utraque harum duarum notarum cognoscitur et infertur *antiquitas absoluta*. Quando enim sive per solemne iudicium magisterii authenticum (Concilii oecumenici vel Pontificis) sive per unanimem praedicationem ecclesiasticam consensus praesens *universitatis* est clara et manifesta, haec sola per se sufficit; si vero orta iam controversia consensus hic esset minus perspectus, vel ab adversariis confutandis non agnosceretur, tum ait Vincentius appellandum esse ad *consensionem antiquitatis* manifestam vel solemnibus iudiciis vel conspirantibus sententiis Patrum. Postremo si in disputatione polemica haeretici eo progredierentur, ut neque eam antecedentium Patrum auctoritatem venerarentur, non aliud remanere fatetur commune nobis et illis principium quam auctoritatem Scripturae. Veritas huius nostrae interpretationis elucet ex contextibus omnibus ipsius Commonitorii Vincentiani.

1°. Iubet tenere id, « quod ubique, semper, ab omnibus

(1) Quod n. 3. 4. 38. a Vincentio videtur dici tribus membris: *universitas*, *antiquitas*, *consensio*, revera non tria sed duo tantum membra continet realiter distincta, ut apparet ex ipsius auctoris explicazione; et n. 41. (h. e. in recapitulatione, quae sola nobis superest ex secundo Commonitorio) ipsemet illa tria contrahit in duo membra: « diximus, inquit, *universitatis* et *antiquitatis consensionem* spectari oportere. »

creditum est, » nihil discernens utrum ita creditum fuerit explicite an implicite (n. 3.). Tum vero proponit notas, ex quibus perveniamus in cognitionem, utrum aliquid ita ubique, semper, ab omnibus sit creditum, quae notae sunt *universitas, antiquitas, consensio*. « Sed hoc (ut teneamus id, quod ubique, semper, ab omnibus creditum est) ita demum fiet, inquit, si sequamur *universitatem, antiquitatem, consensionem*. » Ergo *ubique, semper, et ab omnibus creditum esse* est res cognoscenda per aliud, non vero nota et criterium cognitionis; notae autem sunt *universitas, antiquitas, consensio*.

2°. Iam vero Vincentius quid intelligat nomine *universitatis*, ita continuo declarat: « sequemur autem *universitatem* hoc modo, si unam fidem veram esse fateamur¹, *quam tota per orbem terrarum confitetur Ecclesia*. » Est itaque *universitas* consensio totius Ecclesiae et quidem, quatenus distinguitur a nota *antiquitatis*, consensio Ecclesiae *hac praesenti aetate*, qua oritur quaestio. Id manifestum est ex n. 4, ubi *universitatem* tamquam consensionem praesentem, quae ab aliquibus turbari potest inventis novis erroribus, confert cum *antiquitate* tamquam consensione aetatis praecedentis, « quae prorsus iam non potest ab ulla novitatis fraude seduci. » Praeterea ibidem n. 4. ait, sequendam esse *universitatis consensionem*, « ne ab *unitatis integritate* in partem schismatis abrumpamur, » quod deinde n. 5. exemplo illustrat catholicorum in Africa, qui « detestato schismate (Donati) *universis mundi Ecclesiis* (utique in praesenti consentientibus) *adsociati sunt*. »

3°. *Antiquitatem* quatenus nota est, intelligi a Vincentio *relativam*, ut ex ea inferatur *antiquitas absoluta* seu *apostolicitas*, constat ex toto modo disputandi. *Antiquitatem* enim semper constituit in praecedentium Patrum vel Conciliorum sententia, quae fuerat ante ortum haereseos confutandae vel controversiae decidendae. « Item in ipsa vetustate, inquit n. 38, unius sive paucissimorum temeritati primum omnium generalia, si qua sunt, universalis Concilii decreta praeponant; tunc deinde, si id minus est, multorum atque magnorum consentientes sibi sententias

magistrorum » (1). Et n. 39. antiquis haeresibus vult opponi Concilia facta iam ante illas haereses exortas, aut si haec etiam ab eis haereticis contemnantur, tum demum polemica contra eos remanere ut communem fontem Scripturas.

4^o. Denique utramvis notam vel scilicet *consensionem*

(1) Ne quis forte ex hoc et aliis hisce similibus locis Lirinensem accuset erroris contra infallibilem auctoritatem definitionum Romani Pontificis, haec animadvertenda sunt. 1^o. Lirinensi propositum est non solum pro catholicis, sed etiam polemica contra novitates haereticorum exhibere notas apostolicitatis doctrinae a nemine recusandas. 2^o. Proponit has notas contra « haereses novitias recentesque tantummodo, quam primum scilicet exoriuntur » n. 39. Hinc supponendo nullum adhuc contra eas nuper exortas *directum iudicium* prodiisse, neque poterat commode ad definitionem Pontificis appellare. 3^o. Notae quas *affirmando* adfert, sunt omnino verissimae; sed non propterea *negat et excludit* notas alias pro diversitate rerum et adiunctorum. 4^o. In iis ipsis notis quas proponit, authenticum iudicium Apostolicae Sedis saltem implicite includitur. Quando enim huiusmodi iudicium exstat, illud *universitatem* aut *antiquitatem* consensionis authenticae declarat, vel *universitatem* certissime efficit. Adeoque si antiquitas edita exstat definitio Pontificis (de *antiquitate* enim in hoc numero 38. immediate agit), semper etiam potest provocari ad « multorum atque magnorum consentientes sibi sententias magistrorum. » 5^o. Lirinensi non secus ac pridem Irenaeo satis esse provocare ad auctoritatem Sedis Apostolicae, ut innotescat apostolicitas doctrinae, ipsemet non obscure indicat n. 9. « Mos iste semper in Ecclesia viguit, ut quo quisque foret religiosior, eo promptius novellis adinventionibus contraheret. Exemplis talibus plena sunt omnia. Sed ne longum fiat, unum aliquod, et hoc ab Apostolica potissimum Sede sumemus, ut omnes luce clarius videant, beatorum Apostolorum beata successio (Romanos Pontifices dicit) quanta vi semper, quanto studio, quanta contentione defenderit susceptae semel religionis integritatem. » Narrata deinde innovatione rebaptizantium inde ab Agrippino Carthaginensi, in haec verba prosequitur. « Cum ergo undique ad novitatem rei cuncti reclamarent, atque omnes quaquaversum sacerdotes pro suo quisque studio reniterentur; tunc beatae memoriae Papa Stephanus Apostolicae Sedis antistes cum ceteris quidem collegis suis, sed tamen prae ceteris restitit, dignum, ut opinor, existimans, *si reliquos omnes tantum fidei devotione vinceret, quantum loci auctoritate superabat.* Denique in epistola quae tunc ad Africam missa est, *his verbis sanxit, nihil novandum, nisi quod traditum est.... Quis ergo tunc universi negotii exitus? Quis utique, nisi usitatus et solitus? Retenta est scilicet antiquitas, explosa novitas. »*

universitatis praesentis vel consensionem antiquitatis sufficere ad demonstrandam apostolicitatem doctrinae, luculenter docet Lirinensis locis omnibus. « Quid igitur tunc faciet Christianus catholicus, interrogat n. 4, si se aliqua Ecclesiae particula ab universalis fidei communiione praeciderit? » « Quid utique, respondet, nisi ut pestifero corruptoque membro sanitatem universi corporis anteponat? » Si vero de praesenti consensu ob ortas perturbationes esset dubitatio, alterum restat: « tunc item providebit, inquit, ut antiquitati inhaereat. »

Non potest igitur dubitari, quin is sit genuinus sensus s. Vincentii, quem in thesi enuntiavimus. Doctrina autem cui desit utraque nota, debet censi catholicae fidei saltem nondum satis proposita; doctrina repugnans alterutri consensioni debet censi novitas profana.

THESIS XXV.

*De munere coniuncto custodum atque doctorum fidei,
et de modo explicationis depositi.*

« Ex dictis infertur propriisque argumentis confirmatur, infallibiles »
» fidei custodes esse etiam infallibiles *fidei doctores*, ut in obiectiva re-
» velatione Scripturae et Traditionis *implicita explicent, ambigua defi-*
» *niant*, minus diserta *instantiori praedicatione proponant*, erroribus
» *impugnata defendant*; qua in functione licet elemento humano in-
» *sitionis et scientiae suus sit locus*, infallibilitas tamen explicationis
» *et definitionis a promissa assistentia et directione Spiritus veritatis*
» *repetenda est*. Falsum est igitur, quod recens quaedam schola asseruit,
» *in explicatione dogmatum hoc unum esse munus Ecclesiae docentis*
» *sub assistentia Spiritus Sancti, ut identidem ferat iudicium, quatenus*
» *inter plures diversas intelligendi dogmatis rationes pro quolibet*
» *scientiae stadio ceteris potior habenda sit.* »

I. Ut in superioribus declaratum est, conceptus Traditionis divinae non eo absolvitur, quod summa aliqua formularum fidei conservatur; sed essentialis ratio Traditionis posita est in perpetua infallibili conservatione veri sensus ac verae intelligentiae depositi fidei ac doctrinae revelatae (cf. th. XI. n. II.). Porro in deposito fidei possunt contineri et continentur veritates, quae sunt implicitae in aliis, quae