



St. Vincent de Paul

the

Friend of the Poor

BY
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I.

THE chief work in the life of Vincent de Paul was the reformation of the clergy of France, the greater number of whom were, in his day, unworthy of their high calling. Incidentally he did a marvellous work for the help of the poor and it is as a sociologist that he will be considered in this short sketch. His work is of particular interest at the present moment for then, as now, there were vast multitudes needing to be cared for. The country was devastated by war and it was Vincent who was one of the chief pioneers of that organized ambulance work that we now associate with the efforts of the Red Cross Society.

Vincent de Paul was the son of a poor peasant living at Puy in Gascony. The father, by dint of great sacrifices, made the boy a priest putting him with the Franciscan Fathers. Vincent was early noted for great piety, brilliant mental gifts and charming manners. When only 12 years old he held the post of tutor to the sons of a lawyer. He lived some years with this family and later spent seven years at the University of Toulouse. He became sub-deacon