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THE SCRIPTURES OF THE EARLY FRENCH PROTESTANTS.  
A Study in Historic Origins.

by

RUTH URE

B.A. Wilson College

A THESIS

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All that remains of the palace at Nérac,  
where Marguerite, sister of Francis I, welcomed  
and protected Calvin and Clément Marôt.

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## INTRODUCTION

It has been said that a return to the original flame of the Scriptures inevitably results in a rekindling of vital Christian experience, and that without such recourse to the sources there can be no vitality - a challenging conclusion which has not always been accepted. It is my purpose in this thesis to take this hypothesis into the laboratory and test it through a consideration of one specific instance, a study of the influence of acquaintance with the Bible, particularly in the vernacular, on that awakening of spiritual fervor, that re-appraisal and restatement of religious thought, which we term the Reformation in France. To what extent is Protestantism justified in claiming that a return to the original records of the faith brought it to the birth; or conversely, may its opponents assert that it is a religion of a book? Dr. George P. Fisher, in his volume on the Reformation, maintains that "the new type of religion, deeply rooted though it was in subjective impulses and convictions, owed its being to the direct contact of the mind with the Scripture"; he says further:- "The new spiritual life had consciously its fountain-head in the writings of the Prophets and Apostles. There was no pretense of devising a new religion, but only of reforming the old, according to its own authoritative standards."(1) Whatever we may say with regard to the other countries involved in this ecclesiastical upheaval,

1. Fisher, The Reformation, p. 10.

was this verdict true of France? That is our problem. The writer hopes that by an impartial survey of the field of Biblical knowledge in that kingdom, with occasional references to the closely allied situation in French-speaking Switzerland, in the early sixteenth century, it may be possible to estimate the effect of such knowledge upon the French Reformatory movement. The plan, therefore, of the study is biographical and social, with a view to the establishment of the principles of interpretation and belief as arrived at by the reformers.

Perhaps less has been written about the share of France in the Reformation than about any other phase of the movement. The history of Germany and England in this critical period has been minutely dealt with; France, whether it be due to her slowness or her diversity of manifestation or her lack of one outstanding leader, has received much less attention. This particular aspect, of the preparation made by diffusion of the Bible, has not to my knowledge been singled out for individual consideration, although it is given place in all the general works in the field, notably Imbart de la Tour, *Origines de Réformation*; d'Aubigné, *History of the Reformation*; Baird, *The Rise of the Huguenots*; and others. Outstanding among the writings on the French translations is the comprehensive and admirable book of Pétavel-Olliff, entitled *La Bible en France*. For a study of the pre-Reformation era in this aspect Samuel Berger is justly recognized as an authority. The more highly specialized collection of Bonnard might also be mentioned.

However, by far the most interesting and instructive research along this line lies in the realm of primary sources. Foremost is the Correspondance des Réformateurs, the collection of letters edited by Herminjard, which, together with his valuable footnotes, contribute richly to the understanding of life at the dawn of the modern age. The perusal of the sixteenth century Bibles and Psalters affords much enjoyment, as well as the fragments of Scriptural literature preserved from former ages. But it is especially the theological essays of the reformers themselves - the confessions of faith, the introductions to translations, regulations for public worship, such expressions of the heart as are found in Farel's work entitled De Vrai Usage de la Croix de Jesus Christ, the delightful self-revelations of Marguerite d'Angoulême - these are the writings which enlist one's sympathy for great souls conscious of a mission to the world. One cannot refrain from expressing a sincere appreciation of the likability, the character, and the force of these pioneers, however else one may estimate their successes and failures. The privilege of associating with them in thought and understanding by reading such very human documents in the language in which they were written is the most valuable byproduct of such a project as this thesis. Moreover, the search for authority which occupied these spiritual ancestors of so large a portion of Christendom, when the prop of their heritage had been removed, is one which may well claim the study of such an inquiring age as

ours.

The method of procedure shall be to survey the translations and versions of the Bible which were in use at the beginning of the Reformation, both those accepted by the church and those of the reformers, studying particularly the latter with regard to the need which called them forth, the men who produced them, and the nature of their reception. We shall then endeavor to determine what movements during the later Middle Ages led toward this interest in the Scriptures. Lastly, by means of the Protestant creeds and other source materials, we shall attempt to trace the influence of acquaintance with the Bible as affecting the Reformation in its various aspects of doctrine, worship, and life.

In the case of quotations from French sources the translations, unless otherwise indicated in a footnote, are the writer's own. The original passages from which the translations have been made are to be found in the Appendix at the end of the thesis.

CHAPTER I

TRANSLATIONS AND VERSIONS IN USE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE  
REFORMATION.

Accepted Church Versions

At the opening of the Reformation, and indeed from the very beginning of the Christian era, there had never been any question as to the place assigned to the Holy Scriptures. They were always declared to be the final and infallible authority in all matters of faith and practice. Moreover, they were the sole court of appeal; for it remained for the Council of Trent in 1546 to promulgate the doctrine of the equal rights of the writings of the Fathers. The Middle Ages recognized the Word of God alone as the basis of all its theology and rendered it due homage.(1)

To the Church, however, belonged the sole privilege of interpretation, a privilege universally recognized and universally accorded. And Rome's method of treatment of her trust tended increasingly toward the usage of tradition. Farel, in speaking of the Lord's Supper, put the matter strongly, "for all is now done and said according to the tradition, ordinances, and pleasure of men, and that which is declared by the Word of God, and that which Jesus has instituted, is trodden underfoot"(2). At least three clearly defined steps may be discerned in this progress, the

1. Lindsay, History of the Reformation, V.1, p. 454.
2. Farel, La Manière et Fasson qu'on Tient, p. 44.

last two undoubtedly hastened through the critical situation engendered by the Reformation. The fourth Council of Constantinople recognized the tradition of the fathers as a "secondary article" (1); this sufficed as an official pronouncement embodying public opinion until the Council of Trent declared that in addition to the Bible proper it "receives with an equal feeling of piety and reverence the traditions, whether relating to faith or to morals, dictated either orally by Christ or by the Holy Spirit, and preserved in continuous succession within the Catholic Church" (2). This decision was not without protest, in spite of the vagueness of conception of who were the Fathers and what the Church, which uncertainty automatically vested the Pope with final decision. The climax of the dogma was reached less than twenty years later, 1564, in the creed of Pope Pius IV, to which all high functionaries were obliged to vow allegiance:- "I also admit the Scriptures, according to the sense which the Holy Mother Church has held, and does hold<sup>d</sup>, to whom it belongs to judge the true sense and interpretation of Scripture; nōr will I ever take and interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers"(3). Now the early Christians had been extremely fond of allegorizing; this method persisted; the Church saw in every passage four senses, - literal, moral, allegorical,

1. Rowe, History of Reformatory Movements, p. 338.

2. Quoted in Lindsay, op. cit., V. 2, p. 573.

3. Translated by Charles Butler, a Catholic, quoted Rowe, op. cit., p. 338.

and anagogical - and considered the mystical meanings of isolated texts rather than the personal values in connected portions. Lefèvre's reaction was:- "There are men in these days who teach the people a foolish piety in place of the doctrine of Jesus Christ". (1)

Such teaching, nevertheless, was not wholly the fault of the clergy. A vast ignorance of the Book was characteristic of all classes. Illustrative stories abound similar to the German tale told by Eberlin of a parish priest who, finding that his parishioners are reading the Scriptures and then asking him questions which far surpass his wits to answer, feels that he must study a bit for himself; he is advised to begin with Timothy and Titus, and is horrified to find that priests ought to be "husbands of one wife", etc.(2) The famous printer Etienne has left this record of the biblical attainments of the doctors of the Sorbonne;- "When I asked them in what part of the New Testament some matter was written, they used to answer that they had read it in St. Jerome or the Decretals, but that they did not know what the New Testament was, not being aware that it was customary to print it after the Old. What I am going to state will appear almost a prodigy, and yet there is nothing more true nor better proven; not long

1. Grag, Essai sur la Vie et les Écrits de Jacques Lefèvre,  
p. 75.
2. Retold in Lindsay, op. cit., V. 1, p. 305.

since a member of their college used daily to say, 'I am amazed that these young people keep bringing up the New Testament to us. I was more than fifty years old before I knew anything about the New Testament!'" (1) It was found that some of the clergy and many of the congregations were unable to repeat so much as the Ten Commandments, There did not even exist a map of Palestine, though the Wittenberg professors searched diligently for one. (2) Actual hostility existed in some quarters; "the New Testament", said one monk, "is a book full of serpents and thorns" (3); while the faculty of theology at Paris openly declared: - "Religion is ruined if you permit the study of Greek and Hebrew" (4), honestly feeling that heresy alone could grow out of such research. Not all were ignorant and hostile; Budé, one of the king's librarians, speaking of the proposed return to sacred study, exclaimed:- "Grâce à ces études, la vérité revient de l'exil!" (5) Perhaps the most vital testimony, bearing witness both to the deplorable situation and also to the clear vision of certain theologians, is the plaint of Josse Clichtow of Paris, writing in 1515:

"So profound an ignorance has been introduced into the Church of God..... those who are engaged in ministering at the altar and in singing the divine praises, have fallen into such folly that there are to be found among them only a very few who understand exactly and fully

1. Baird, Rise of the Huguenots, V.1, p.57.
2. P. Smith, Age of the Reformation, p.29.
3. d'Aubigné, History of the Reformation, V.1, p.69.
4. Ibid, p.70.
5. Herminjard, Correspondance des Réformateurs, V.1, p.27.

what they read and sing. Thence it results that the majority of them have withered hearts and souls like ice, and are in the carrying out of their ministry so lukewarm that, while their lips murmur the sacred songs, their hearts, where no longer burns the ardor of the divine spirit, remain without any understanding of the words which come from their mouths".  
(1)

Like clergy like people, might run an adaptation of the old proverb; the laity under such circumstances had small chance of actual contact with the documents of their faith. Not that there was any lack of copies; before the invention of printing a copy of the Bible cost from two hundred to three hundred dollars, since it took an expert copyist ten months labor to produce one (2), and was hence inaccessible to all but the rich; but now multiplication of versions appeared in printed form. Ninety-two editions of the Vulgate were published before 1500; and France with her vernacular New Testament in 1477 and her whole Bible a decade later was but in step with Germany, Spain, Italy, Bohemia, and the Netherlands. (3) The "chaining" of the Scriptures lay less in withholding actual volumes than in clamping the irons of decreed interpretation. Moreover, there was only one version sanctioned by Rome - though the hard and fast dogma attesting its finality was not promulgated until the Council of Trent, which met in 1545 - namely the Vulgate, translated by Jerome in the fourth century from the Septuagint plus the Hebrew. The idea of its primacy was generally

1. Ibid, p.20.

2. Smiles, The Huguenots, p.4.

3. Walker, History of the Christian Church, p.332.

accepted and enforced; but perforce only the learned could read. Concerning vernacular translations there had been various rulings. As early as 1229 the council of Toulouse issued the following decree;- "We forbid also the permitting of the laity to have the books of the New and Old Testaments, unless any should wish, from a feeling of devotion, to have a psalter or breviary for divine service. But we most strictly forbid them to have the above-mentioned books in the vulgar tongue" (1). This was merely a local prohibition, resembling, however, many others; Pétavel-Olliff cites ten Bulls menacing with excommunication and death all readers of Scripture among the laity (2). It is small wonder that common folk were content to rest secure in the Church without the sacred books.

A religion deprived of its sources of knowledge must supplement itself with novelty of some sort. Hence the rapid growth of superstition among the populace. Relics, of which Calvin has left an inventory, including the hair of the blessed Virgin, the sword of Michael, and two entire bodies of St. Dionysius, fourteen nails wherewith our Lord was crucified, the arm of St. Anthony and the brain of St. Peter (respectively the bone of a deer and a piece of pumice!), (3) "enough wood of the true cross to make a ship" (4); miracles, such as the turning of white wine to red,

1. Council of Toulouse of 1229 e XIV, trans. Rowe, op.cit. p. 338.
2. Pétavel-Olliff, La Bible en France, p.26.
3. Oeuvres françoises de Calvin, 1543, quoted in Baird, op.cit. p.49.
4. Erasmus, quoted P. Smith, op.cit. p.26.

the ghost of Orleans, and various impostures (1); the wholesale belief in indulgences and in those who preached "brimful of pardons, come from Rome all hot" (2); all these things bore witness to a longing search for a place of authority in which to feel secure. For there was a deep underlying current of piety in the midst of all the corruption, a spiritual persistence manifesting itself in what Lindsay calls the "non-ecclesiastical religion", which kept alive in hearts and homes the true Christian faith and prepared the way for revival.

New Versions

-the Producers

Gradually there became crystallized a sense of the need for something beyond the unfamiliar Vulgate and the forbidden vernacular translations which were available; spiritual thinkers began to wonder how it was possible to obey the command to carry the Gospel to "every people" unless that Gospel were in the common tongue. Lefèvre summarized the need in his "épître exhortatoire", the introduction to the edition of the Gospels, 1523:—"in order that the ordinary members of the body of Jesus Christ, possessing it in their own language, may be just as certain of the evangelical truth as those who have it in Latin". (3)

One cannot understand the sensing of this lack nor the subsequent efforts to meet it without some knowledge

1. Baird, p.157.
2. Chaucer, The Pardoner.
3. Herminjard, op.cit.V.1, p.122ff.

of the famous group of Meaux, that illustrious gathering which constituted the real leadership of the early phases of the Reformation in France. Under protection of the court of Marguerite d'Angoulême, a mystical spirit whose enthusiasm for the Scriptures knew no bounds, though she remained always a Catholic outwardly, and an enjoyer of frivolity - under her patronage gathered three or four men with far vision, more vision perhaps than courage, but assuredly enough of both to help turn the nation upside down. The technical leader of the group was William Briçonnet, the bishop of Meaux, a fine gentleman of noble blood who bent all his efforts toward reforming his parish and especially the morals of his clergy. On being introduced to the Bible by Lefèvre in 1512 he was charmed with it; "such is the sweetness of this divine food," he said, "that it makes the mind insatiable; the more we taste of it the more we long for it." And again, "the eyes of all men are insufficient to receive the whole light of this great luminary."

(1) The sincerity of this impression was given ample proof in the good Bishop's provision of asylum for his translator friend, and in the generosity wherewith he later distributed the Gospels among his people.

In 1521 Briçonnet invited Jacques Lefèvre to join him in his program of reform. Lefèvre was a man of nearly seventy, physically unattractive, but with remarkable intellectual endowments which had made of him a distinguished

1. Lettres de Marguerite, reine de Navarre S.F.337, as quoted d'Aubigné, V.3, p. 402.

Humanist and an outstanding professor in the University of Paris. He was an ardent Churchman, going through all the forms of his faith with complete devotion. This combination of piety and learning led him to conceive the project of arranging a calendar of the lives of the saints and martyrs. But suddenly he found the Bible, and all was changed. "For a long time",....."I was devoted to the study of things human and had hardly tasted with the tip of my lips the study of things divine..... but already in the distance a light so bright struck my gaze that human learning seemed to be as darkness compared with the divine studies, while the latter appeared to me to breathe forth a perfume which nothing on earth could equal in sweetness". (1) This was the man who gave to France the first Reformation translation of the Word of God; who also first propounded the Reformation doctrines, for in St. Paul he discovered, while Luther was still in obscure darkness, the principle of justification by faith alone. On I Corinthians VIII he commented:- "It is almost profane to speak of the merit of works.... an error for which the Jews are especially condemned..... our only hope is in God's grace." (2)

The third illustrious person in the group was William Farel, the boldest of them all, for which characteristic and the persecution resulting therefrom he eventually found himself in Geneva, laboring there as the first preach-

1. Herminjard, V.1, p.3 note.
2. Quoted P. Smith, p.53.

er to that congregation over which Calvin was later persuaded to become head. Farel was brought up in a strictly religious home, becoming Romanist of the Romanists. He speaks of himself as

"a very Pantheon, full of intercessors, saviors, and gods, of whom his heart might have passed for a papal register or a martyrology....."

"in truth the papacy was not and is not so papal as my heart has been..... for he had so blinded my eyes and perverted my being that anyone approved by the pope was to me as God.... ~~even~~ the Pope, I believe, possessed not at all so much in himself and in his followers, as he possessed in me." (1)

Then came the contact with Lefèvre, with whom despite the difference in ages he was very intimate. Problems began to arise. He sought help in the Scripture but found Holy Writ to be in direct contradiction to the life around him.

"I do not well understand these things," he sighed. "I must give a very different meaning to the Scriptures from that which they seem to have. I must keep to the interpretation of the Church and indeed of the Pope." (2) A certain doctor sharply warned him against reading the Bible, and Farel obediently stopped, confessing himself then "the most miserable of men, shutting my eyes lest I should see."

(3) This situation, however, was not destined to continue; through the teachings of Lefèvre and through a turning to the Epistles of St. Paul Farel saw the light and was con-

1. *Épistre a tous Seigneurs et Peuples*, p. 164ff., quoted Baird, p. 69-70.

2. Herminjard, *Farellus Natali Galeoto*, V.3.

3. *Ibid.*

vinced. "He plunged into the Scripture with zeal and thirst for truth; studied the Greek and Hebrew; found the prevailing worship more and more absurd and idolatrous." (1) Now he was ready for Lefèvre's famous prophecy:- "Gulielme, oportet orbem mutari, et tu videbis." - "God will renovate the world and you will be a witness of it." (2)

A very different type of man was Clément Marôt, to be classed with the ardent evangelicals at Meaux only in that he too claimed the patronage of the Queen of Navarre. Marôt was the court poet, as his father had been before him; perhaps it is enough to say that he was essentially just that. Morley's description of him is:- "Marôt, with a quietly religious nature, joined the quick sensibilities of a poet to the spirit of independence that became a citizen of Cahors." (3) He began to read the Bible at the persuasion of Marguerite, and his poems then took on a more religious note. He even wrote verses directly attacking the wickedness of the priests, and on dogmatic subjects; these Douen judges to be inferior in poetry and thereby greater in spirit because the artist was willing to sacrifice his art. (4) The "Sermon" is probably the outstanding of such works, a poem containing the main ideas of Biblical

1. Piper, Lives of Leaders of the Church Universal, p.327.
2. Herminjard, Correspondance, V.1, p.481.  
Translated in Fisher, p.244.
3. Morley, Clément Marôt and other studies, p. 57-8.
4. Douen, Clément Marôt et le Psautier Huguenot, p. 102.

theology and incorporating much New Testament phraseology.

(1) Marôt was accounted a heretic and forced to flee the country more than once; and yet he is scarcely to be counted one of the leaders of the Reformation; the Scriptures took hold of him and he passed part of them on to large multitudes, but nevertheless the impression persists that the man was primarily aesthetic rather than spiritual, that he dealt with the Psalms because they attracted him with beauty and not because he yearned to impart the teachings of Jehovah.

Other men might be mentioned: Mitchel d'Arande and Antoine Saunier, the preacher Roussel, the translator Beza, each of whom played a part in the mighty drama; but Marôt and the group at Meaux, together with Pierre Olivetan, a cousin of John Calvin, composed the little circle who in reality began the Reformatory movement in France and who had most to do with the translation and diffusion of the Bible in the French tongue.

#### The Products.

Each member of this company had found a vital influence in his contact with the Scriptures, with which book each one met in a time of questioning and stress and through which each had seen a new light. Olivetan alone of the group has left no verbal testimony to such an experience;

1. Douen, op.cit. p. 136.

perhaps it is not unfair even without such testimony to fathom something of his attitude from the fact that he bequeathed to his nation the Biblical translation which has been of the early French versions the most popular. But in the case of the others it is established that their own experience, their own living knowledge, led to the feeling that all should have the same opportunity; then they themselves met that demand by laboring upon vernacular translations.

Last in point of time but probably foremost in popular interest was the appearance of Marôt's metrical version of the Psalter. The Hebrew poetry offered a powerful appeal to the French poet, as also through him to his compatriots of every age and rank, and beginning with Psalm VI he translated the majority of the hundred and fifty. There had been other versions of the Psalms, and other "pseaumes" which had been in common use in such congregations as the Reformed Church in Neufchâtel since 1533 (1); there is a record of a letter in which the "Évangéliques de Payerne" ask those of Geneva to send the song on the Ten Commandments composed by Saunier. (2) It seems by no means certain that Marôt had no hand in these others; indeed, the dating of his work is a question under dispute. The best way to harmonize the varying viewpoints seems to be to date the first edition in 1541, as do Herminjard, following

1. Lindsay, V.2, p.107.

2. Herminjard, op.cit. V.2, p.431.

Brunet (1), and Lindsay \* Paris edition 1541, Geneva 1542-  
(2). Douen agrees in naming 1541 as the year of the edict  
permitting their publication (3). Possibly Morley was then  
right that the work was begun in 1538 just after Marôt's  
return from exile. (4) Smedley maintains that the first  
fifty Psalms were printed in 1540 (5), Bayle that the  
Strasburg edition appeared in 1545 (6). Haag's 1554 doubt-  
less referred to a fuller collection (7). This leaves  
still unexplained the passage of Bulaeus (8) dated Dec. 17,  
1531:- "et eo die vetitum legere Psalmos Davidicos gallice  
versos a Maroto." Although Marôt is considered one of the  
fathers of French verse, the poetry in these Psalms is not  
excellent, not measuring up to his usual standard. It is  
more of a jingle than true melody, Indeed, the poet's  
principle was much that of the Salvation Army, to take popu-  
lar tunes of the stage and of the streets, vaudeville and  
ballad style, and make rhymes easily adaptable. The words  
were "so plain and prosaic that every peasant might easily  
understand and memorize them". (9) The labor had been in-  
stigated by Vatable, who translated word for word from the

1. Manuel der Libraire, 5me edit. t.3, col. 1461 - dis-  
cussion in Herminjard, V.4, p.163.
2. Lindsay, V.2, p. 107.
3. Douen, op.cit., p.291.
4. Morley, op.cit., p. 57-8.
5. Smedley, History of the Reformed Religion in France,  
V.1, p.48.
6. Bayle, Dictionnaire Historique et Critique, article on  
Marôt.
7. Haag, La France Protestante.
8. Hist. Univ. Paris VI, p.234, quoted Herminjard, V.4, p.163.
9. Smedley, op.cit. p.50.

Hebrew, then Marôt versified and the result was set to music by Gudimel and Bourgeois, the best musicians of the century. (1) The Sorbonne diligently found errors in the verses and protested till the king had to yield to a prohibition of them, though he himself kept right on singing. (2) On the other hand, in 1561 Charles IX caused the translation to be examined by persons learned in Scripture and languages, who found it to be faithfully done according to the Hebrew, whereupon the king expressed his approval and granted permission for its publication and use. (3) How popular these songs were we shall see later; they served as somewhat of a leaven in the hearts of the multitude, though they were by no means distinctively Protestant, the Paris edition containing also among other selections the angel's salutation to the Virgin (4). Marôt did not complete his work; in the decade between 1550 and 1560 - 1562 according to Kelley; (5) - Beza took it up and finished it, in a style far more ponderous and decidedly inferior to his predecessor, and the combination was appended to the Catechism of Geneva. During the same year, 1560, twenty-six different editions of the Psalter were published by the Calvinists, and the following year fourteen editions, while in 1564 there appeared ten more.

Lefèvre's version was the first volume, really

1. Doin, Musée des Protestans Célèbres, p. 95.
2. Ibid.
3. Bayle, op.cit.
4. Lindsay, V.1, p.173.
5. Kelly, French Protestantism, P.77.

belonging to the Reformation. Humanism had taught him certain principles, among them the basic law of returning to the original sources. He was struck to find that there existed many discrepancies among the current versions and determined to ferret the matter out. His first publication of the Scriptures was the *Psalterium Quincuplex*, done at St. Germain des-Près in 1509 under the patronage of Briçonnet, a book which Preserved Smith describes as "the first treatise on the Psalms in which the philological and personal interest was uppermost," (1) as contrasted with former dry commentaries. The scheme of this work was to put in parallel columns the Hebrew, Vetus, Vulgate, Gallic and Conciliatum and thus to find out what was really said. In 1512 he treated with like emphasis on the personal element the Epistles of St. Paul, using the original Greek as his authority. In this he was forced to defend himself against the charge of disrespect to Jerome; he assured his patron that he was merely using the same earlier version that Jerome himself had employed. (2) Thus was modern scholarship brought to bear on the Bible. But behind this soon grew another desire:- "to popularize the Holy Books, by sketching for the elite a spiritual interpretation, by translating for the common people the authentic text, and thus to put souls into direct contact with the Word of God." (3)

1.P. Smith, op.cit. p.52.

2. Herminjard, V.1, p.8.

3. Quoted in de la Tour, *Origines de Réformation*, p.123.

Such an achievement, he felt, would by the method of education avoid revolution in those stirring times, hence haste was required, haste also in order to take advantage of the existing friendliness of the court. (1) Three items belonged to the method of Lefèvre:- the revision of the Greek text, the restoration of the actual scene by the use of historical and geographical imagination, and brief annotations on the variance of versions. (2) So Lefèvre set to work to put into his own language the whole Bible. The Gospels he translated first, "à la gloire de Dieu d'abord, puis, dans le but de faire connaître la vérité évangélique et pour l'utilité commune," (3) publishing them June 8, 1523. The same year followed the Epistles and Apocalypse, till in November the New Testament was complete. In 1530, the tenth of December, the entire Bible was published by him in French -(this is Herminjard's date, though he speaks also of the version of the Bible by Lefèvre published at Anvers at the house of Martin Lempereur in 1528 (4), compare Smith's dating, 1532 (5) -. These translations were based chiefly upon the Vulgate, though carefully compared with the Greek. There is some indication that a degree of foundation work had been laid for him in the labors of Gérard Roussel, who wrote that he intended to translate "integra

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

3. Lefèvre, comm. init. cf. d'Aubigné's date, Octo. 30, 1522, - V.3, p.428.

4. Herminjard, V.1, p.415.

5. P. Smith, p. 196.

Biblia, non ex vulgata editione, sed consultis hebraeis, graecis, et iis quae in germanicam linguam translata sunt, ..... quod opus, ut magni laboris, ita puto magnae futurum aedificationi;" (1) no work like this being existent it is thought that the effort was utilized by Lefèvre. There are various estimates of his volume. Some say that because of the Vulgate basis Catholic elements pervaded, to the displeasure of the more radical in the reforming group. (2) Others would agree with Weiss, that this New Testament of 1523 was the point of departure of all succeeding French revisions. (3) Certainly there were many reproductions of it, notable the one published at Neufchâtel by Pierre de Wingle in 1534; (4) and many revisions of it, among which should be mentioned that made by theologians of Louvain in 1550 at the order of Charles V. (5) Equally certain is it that the language of other versions surpassed that of Lefèvre; his purpose was clarity, and beauty sometimes lacked. But to him belongs the honor of being a pioneer.

It was due to the Vaudois that Olivetan's Bible, the greatest French translation, was made. Quaint testimony to this fact lies in a mediocre poem included at the end of the volume, the series of first letters of each successive word being found to spell out:

1. Herminjard, V.1, p.415.
2. P. Smith, P. 196.
3. Weiss, "Réforme et Préréforme", in *Révue de Théologie* Metaphysique et de Morale, p.647, Paris 1918, 25.
4. Herminjard, V.3, p.349.
5. Hallam, *Literary History*, V.1, p.338.

"Les Vaudois, peuple évangélique,  
Ont mis ce trésor en publique." (1)

("The Vaudois, an evangelical people, have  
made this treasure accessible.")

The pastors of the Valleys, under counsel of Saunier, had mapped a plan for such a translation, to be worked out in two columns, French in large print, Latin in small, with a margin left for notes, and with no verse divisions within chapters. This revision was entrusted to Farel, but had to be postponed for indefinite reasons. Probably during the second half of 1533 it was decided to omit the Latin text, and to hand over the work to Olivetan. (2) To defray the cost of printing the Vaudois provided a very considerable sum, as well as money wherewith to establish a press for religious books. (3) Olivetan addressing them mentioned evils which resulted from the ignorance of the Word of God, and said that though examples of the Old and New Testament in vulgar tongue had long been with them it was necessary to repurge the Bible according to Hebrew and Greek. (4) He labored carefully for at least one whole year in a concentrated effort, (5) fulfilling meanwhile the duties of a pastor (6); his translation appeared June 4, 1535. With such haste he was dissatisfied; at this time his relative John Calvin paid him a visit and evinced much inter-

1. Baird, V.1, p.233.
2. HerminJard, V.1, p.401.
3. Ibid, V.2, p.81 and p.453.
4. Ibid, p.453.
5. Ibid, V.3, p.45.
6. Ibid, p.290

est and assistance in the work; subsequently revisions came out, in 1536 and 1538, with "many happy corrections, but we do not know whether we must attribute them to Calvin."

(1) Olivetan wrote to propogate his theology, of which there are tokens in the substitution of such terms as "evêques" for "prêtres" and "surveillants" for "anciens", words whose connotation Lefèvre had not questioned. (2) This has been called "the first and nearest approach to a national Protestant version for France:" (3) it was clear and fluent, and upon it most of the succeeding versions have been based. In 1582 a recension of this translation of Olivetan's was made from that of Lefèvre; but most revisions of that century, of which there were many, used Olivetan alone; his influence can be clearly discerned in the French Bibles of today.

The Psalter of Marôt, the Bibles of Lefèvre and Olivetan, together with the tens of others founded on them - these were the Scriptures of the early French Protestants.

#### Diffusion.

There were stormy seas for these volumes to weather. The counter movement against such books had already manifested itself. Earnest orthodox adherents of the Church of Rome were horrified, sharing the opinion

1. Ibid, p. 348.

2. de la Tour, op.cit. p.493.

3. Catholic Encyclopedia, article on Versions, French.

that "all the new paraphrases of Scripture are heretical and blasphemous; the study of languages and of the humanities is the source of all the evils." (1) The following wrathful poem well expresses the current feeling of opposition:-

"Au feu, au feu cest hérésie  
Qui jour et nuyt trop nous grève!  
Doibz-tu souffrir qu'elle moleste  
Sainte Éscripture et ses édictz?" (2)

As early as 1521 the Sorbonne had demanded from Parlement that no book of religion be allowed without special authorization. (3) In 1523 all translations were forbidden. (4) Two years later the king and his mother sent preachers through all parts of France to combat the teachings of Luther. (5) That same summer Parlement passed an interdict against the New Testament of Lefèvre, (6) and his book was condemned and burned. (7) Erasmus' proposition that all should read the Bible in their own tongue was condemned in 1527. (8) From the history of 1533 there is an interesting record of the favorable action of the Council of Geneva with regard to Pierre de Wingle:-

Die Martis, 18 Feb. 1533 (Pierre Wingless imprimeur

1. De Burigni, Vie d'Érasme, V.2, p.405, quoted Herminjard, V.1, p.437, note.
2. Herminjard, V.3, p.58.  
"To the fire, to the fire with this heresy  
Which day and night so burdens us!  
Ought you allow it to disturb  
The Word of God and its decrees?"
3. Douen, op.cit. p.294.
4. Ibid.
5. Journal de Louise de Savoie, p.187.
6. Weiss, "La Réforme Française", Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale, Paris 1918,8.
7. Herminjard, V.1, p.40.
8. Douen, p. 294.

est entré) exponens sicut Dominus Procurator fiscalis prohibuit ei ne a modo imprimeret, et jussit quod civitatum evacuet..... Fuit resolutum quod ipse debeat afferre exemplum rei per ipsum imprimendae.....

D.5M. Fuit lectum consilium habitum super libro dicto Union et Biblia gallice imprimenda.....Remittitur.

D.13 M. Negocium Bibliopolae fuit propositum..... Bibliam Gallicam posse imprimi, - fuit resolutum quod dictus Petrus de Wingle possit Bibliam imprimere super illis quae Antverpiae excussae fuerunt, non tamen addere aut minuere. Quod si secus repertum extiteret, perdetur opus.

D.27 Maii. Oratores Bernenses (petierunt) quod permittatur quod Librarius vendat suos libros Veteris et Novi Testamenti, quia juris est. (1)

Herminjard gives us the story of a man actually in prison for the mere possession of a copy of Olivetan's version (2) In 1540 Toulouse forbade public lectures on the Scriptures two years later the Parlement of Paris declared itself against all books containing new and heretical doctrines; while Toulouse redoubled its efforts. (3) Even Marguerite and her nobles were influenced in 1535 by the desire of pleasing the king to desert for a time the study of the Bible. (4) 1561 saw the restrictive measures drawn even tighter, for letters of the king to Parlement forbade the printing of any work without the permission of both king and Parlement; (5) but it was in vain to attempt to check the infraction of this law when there existed two thousand one hundred and fifty Protestant Churches. (6) The Papal

1. Herminjard, V.3, p.30note.

2. Ibid, V.4, p.173.

3. Douen, p.294.

4. Beza, History of the French Reformed Churches, p.14.

5. Kelly, French Protestantism, p.77.

6. Beza, op.cit. p. 104 (This census is open to question.)

Ban of 1599 not only indicated that the stern opposition remained at the end of the century, but when in its inclusion of all Bibles in modern languages it enumerated forty-eight editions and put sixty-one printers under the ban, (1) it thus bore involuntary witness to the wide diffusion already accomplished.

For despite all legal and ecclesiastical action to the contrary, a great popularity welcomed the proffered Book. Neither warnings nor warrants could halt its triumphal march. Indeed, the popular perusal of the Scriptures was the distinguishing feature of the French Reformation. Lowest artisan joined king on his throne in one outburst of music, the Psalter, and in one fascinating study, the Bible - multitudes of sincere Protestants defying multitudes of equally sincere Catholics.

The city of Meaux naturally stood first in this reception. As soon as Lefèvre's translation appeared Bishop Briçonnet ordered copies distributed to all in the diocese who wished to possess and understand them; so great was the demand that soon more had to be printed. All from the least to the greatest allied themselves with the new and inspiring pastime of Bible reading, as many testimonies aver; "There was a first home for Evangelicism.....in this diocese of Meaux, where were to be seen the artisans, such as wool-carders, combers, and fullers, while working with their hands, discussing the Word of God." (2) Crespin said:

1. Smiles, op. cit. p.21.

2. Buisson, "note additionnelle sur la Réforme Française",  
Révue de Métaphysique et de Morale, p.708, Paris 1918, 25.

"Holidays and Sundays were spent in reading the Scriptures and inquiring into the good will of the Lord; to such an extent that are seen in this diocese a shining vision of a church revived." (1) And Lefèvre himself wrote to Farel, July 6, 1524: "You would not believe with what great ardor God has inspired the souls of the simple folk, in many places, since the publication of the New Testament in French .....Now in all our diocese, holidays and especially Sundays, the Epistle and the Gospel are read to the people in this vulgar tongue, and if the minister has something to say, he adds it to one or the other or both." (2)

Similar enthusiasm was manifested wherever the Bibles went. And they went everywhere, through the efforts of two eager groups: the printers, prominent among whom were Pierre de Wingle, Simon de Colines, Etienne Dolet, Lempereur, Simon du Boys, men who knew that the publication of the Word of God endangered not only their business but their very lives and the lives of those to whom they sold their wares,<sup>(3)</sup> but also behind whom were ranged other men, merchants of standing, such as Vaugris, who guaranteed to Farel that he would import if necessary the proper type for printing the translations; and second, the colporteurs. This latter secret band was even more heroic. They were simple and pious pedlars of all classes, many of them young

1. Petaval-Olliff, op.cit. p.28.

2. quoted Weiss, "Réforme et Préréforme," *Révue de Métaphysique et de Morale*, p.647, Paris 1918,25.

3. Smiles, p.17.

men theologically trained at Geneva or Strassburg. (1) In Basle as early as 1524 there was a tract society and the "portes-panniers" were organized into an association. (2) In their knapsacks they carried, hidden by the innocent merchandise which provided their excuse for hawking, evangelical literature, prominently including Bibles, which had purposely been edited in small compass so as to be easily packed. (3) The Psalters they used to put, according to the account of Florimond de Rémond, in the bottom of packages of trinkets sold to ladies, expecting them later to bear fruit. (4) So they travelled, staff in hand, through all sorts of weather, to many provinces, knocking at every door, always in danger of their lives, and often reaping as reward an auto da fé. Largely to the devotion of these nameless itinerating hawkers belongs the credit for obtaining the entrance of the Scriptures into the homes, noble and humble alike.

Bibles thus received were read not only by individuals but in family groups and in larger secret gatherings. Lindsay takes from this fact his summary characterization of the period:- "Before 1555 the protestants of France had been for the most part solitary Bible students, or little companies meeting together for common worship without any organization." (5) These assemblies had often to be

1. Lindsay, V.2, p.152.
2. D'Aubigné, V.3, p.492.
3. Herminjard, V.3, p.320.
4. Douen, V.1, p.7.
5. Lindsay, V.2, p.165.

held at night and in utmost secrecy, hidden in barns or wellars or caverns. The leader in some cases kept in readiness cards and dice to throw upon the table to conceal the object of the meeting if surprized. (1) The ordinary procedure consisted in asking the more learned to read the Bible aloud and sometimes to expound from it. Nor was this practice confined to the lowly classes; in 1544 the rich merchants of Aubigny were gathering together for Scripture reading and prayer. (2) Other assemblies were held to sing Psalms, these being less secret by their very nature, and because Psalm singing was not necessarily distinctively Protestant. It was universally popular. At the court of Henry II it was fashionable for each courtier to select a favorite Psalm and call it his own, according to which custom the huntsman king characteristically chose "as the hart panteth after the waterbrook". (3) Quite spectacular were the gatherings in the Pré-aux-Clercs, where more than five thousand persons met nightly for nearly a week to sing Marôt's compositions; of this a quaint account is given by Laval, writing in 1737:-

"it happened that the people took a fancy to sing in the Clerk's Meadow, (a place where the Parifians used to resort for the pleasure of walking), Marot's Psalms in Metre, that were set to very fine musical tunes; which novelty at first was so pleasing that a vast Multitude of People joined themselves with them to sing together. The next day the King and Queen of Navarr went thither themselves with several Lords and Gentlemen, both Natives and Foreigners, and walked singing with the People; but the

1. de Felice, History of the Protestants of France, p. 76.
2. Beza, p. 21.
3. Lindsay, V. 2, p.172.

clergy was terribly alarmed at it, they made use of all their credit to have those Assemblies Suppressed..... gave the king to understand..... that they had assembled together to an incredible number with pistols and other Arms..... he issued a Proclamation forbidding all such meetings, under pain of being punished as seditious, and disturbers of the public Peace....."(1)

The children in the school of Guyenne daily sang Psalms in an open court, while the Protestants collected outside the grating to listen. (2) And when the religious war came the Protestant army was known always at the sound of the words of David and their rousing tunes; in vain did the trained generals attempt strategy, enthusiastic privates insisted on revealing their whereabouts by a lusty chant of the armies of Israel, till their opponents learned to make ambush by a free use of the Psalter. Social gatherings, schools, war - all these were affected, and more as well; theatres began giving Scriptural plays; (3) even inn-keepers received their share, for in Geneva among the rules for inns were the following:-

"The host shall be obliged to keep in a public place a French Bible, in which anyone who wishes may read, and he shall not prevent free and honest conversation on the Word of God to edification, but shall favor it as much as he can.

He shall not allow indecent songs or words, and if anyone wishes to sing Psalms or spiritual songs he shall make them do it in a decent and not in a dissolute way." (4)

But the most important part of this general diffusion was through preaching services themselves. At Meaux

1. Laval, History of the Reformation in France, p.98.
2. Douen, V.1, p.8.
3. Hallam, p.218.
4. P. Smith, p.173.

each Sunday there were three great preachers delivering expository sermons on either the Epistle or the Gospel for the day, Briçonnet, and Caroli at the Cathedral, and Mazurier at St. Martin. (1) In 1524 Briçonnet organized public readings of the Bible, and every morning for an hour sponsored simpler expositions than sermons given by Gérard Rousel, a custom which spread to other communities. (2) So also in French-speaking Switzerland; in 1527 the magistrates of Berne ordered the pastors in that territory to preach openly the doctrine contained in the Holy Scriptures; (3) and in 1541 the Genevan magistracy decided to take advantage of the sacred songs "the better to call the people to pray and to praise God. At first..... they will teach the small children, then in time the entire Church may follow." (4)

Even to royal circles the interest spread. One finds Marguerite recording as the typical procedure of a day among her nobles and ladies the greater part of the morning spent in reading of the life and work of Jesus, and a similar private devotional hour before supper. (5) Even the queen mother submitted to being read to by d'Arande, as early as 1522; (6) and the king joined with his sister and mother for a time. Later, theology became the mode at court; Scripture reading was stylish, and Psalms decidedly in vogue, though while sung jovially in the Louvre they

1. de la Tour, p.162.
2. de la Tour, p. 162.
3. Herminjard.
4. Picot, Histoire de Genève, t.2,p.9, quoted Doin, p.169.
5. Marguerite d'Angoulême, Heptameron, Prologue, p.13.
6. Doin, p.95.

became heretical on the other bank of the Seine. The king could be prevailed upon to abolish them, but he himself continued to sing. (1)

Thus did the verse and the prose of the Bible win its way into the hearts and lives of both common people and nobility, becoming familiar to all, thereby losing something of sacredness but gaining much in opportunity. To some the Scriptures were the style, to be cast aside when popularity waned; to others they were the word of life, to be cherished even in sight of the scaffold, to be guarded as the one jewel for which all else is given up. But whether of folly or of sincerity, they were spread rapidly and widely, till even the hostile Venetian ambassador was impressed by the number of messengers and the singleness of message; - more than fifty others who are called ministers were summoned from various parts of France to travel and teach and preach the 'Word', for thus they term the Gospels, and their own doctrines." (2)

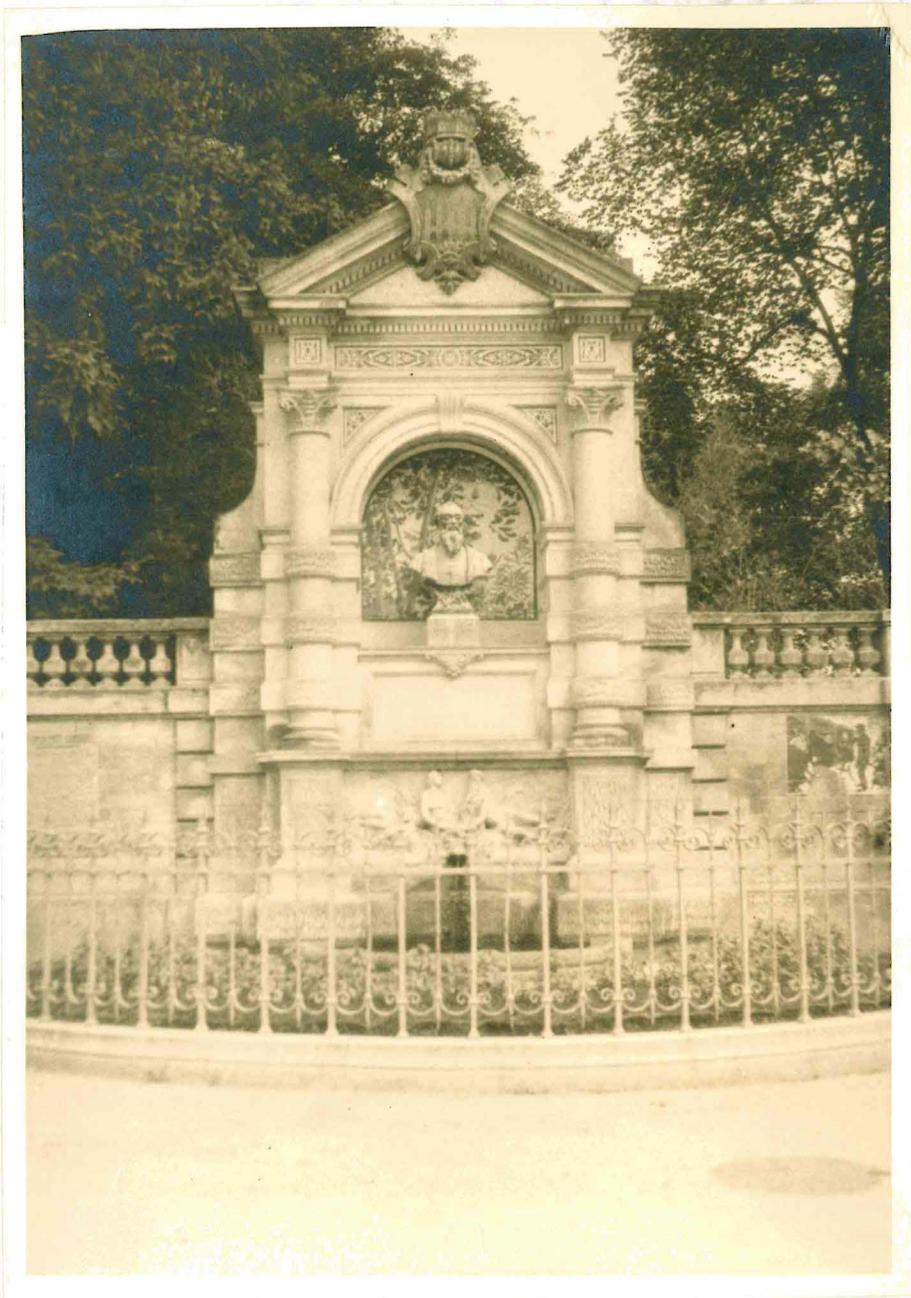
Long before this the reformers had rejoiced; Farel saying, "Notre France reçoit déjà avec la plus grande joie la parole de Dieu!" (3) and Toussain, "Dans toutes les Gaules la parole de Dieu progresse de jour en jour!" (4) Their heart's desire was being accomplished.

1. Doin, p.95.

2. Kidd, Documents illustrative of the Continental Reformation, p.679.

3. Herminjard, num. 97.

4. Ibid, num. 109.



The memorial to the poet Clément Marôt,  
at Cahors, his birthplace.

CHAPTER II.

THEIR ANCESTRY.

The Earlier Vernacular Translations.

The sixteenth century French versions of the Bible were but the full flowering of a plant that had long been struggling toward the light. One of the major characteristics of history is continuity, each trend and each event claiming vital and inseparable relationship with all other trends and events; the Reformation, revolutionary as it was, was not a bolt from the blue; its ancestry and backgrounding are traced through several centuries of thought and effort. Thus the movement toward vernacular translations found source and gained impetus from at least three distinct fields. Of these the most important was the great body of similar literature already existing.

There was no lack of such literature, rather a surprising abundance. (A representative list of such works is to be found at the close of the bibliography of this thesis.) M. le Roux de Lincy counted sixty volumes of pre-Reformation translations of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries only, in the imperial library of Paris; it follows that other libraries would probably reveal similar possessions. (1) In the fifty years preceding Lefèvre's work Eys reports more than twenty different editions. (2) Of

1. Pétavel-Olliff, p.16.

2. Eys, Bibliographie des Bibles en Langue Française XV et XVI siècles.

the whole period previous to Lefèvre Berger says: "All the French-speaking countries, all classes of society, brought their own individual contribution to the work of translating the Bible." (1) moreover, "the history of the French Bible, in effect, is an entirely different thing from a mere survey of manuscripts and texts, it is the history of a literature both religious and, so to speak, living, it has its beginnings, its growth, its maturity, even its old age, when the Bible is no longer more than a pretext for magnificent pictures and priceless bindings."

(2) Along the same line Pétaval-Olliff comments:- "the labors of Jacques Lefèvre, of Robert Olivetan, and of the Reformers, in general, was by no means so much the undertaking of innovators as it was the crowning of an ancient edifice founded in the very heart of the historic ground of France." (3)

Familiarity with and taste for the Scriptural stories were evoked by circulating them in popularized form contemporaneously with the actual translations. In 820 Otfride of Wissembourg prepared a harmony or concordance of the four Gospels, exemplifying one way of appeal. (4) Two centuries later Thibaut de Rouen wrote in dialect the lives of the saints. (5) In more or less the same class

1. Berger, La Bible Française au Moyen Age, p.109.
2. Ibid.
3. Pétaval-Olliff, p.19.
4. Lincy quoted in Pétaval-Olliff, p.21.
5. Archinard quoted in Pétaval-Olliff, p.21.

were Charleville's "Moralités" sur la Bible. (1) In 1137 there appeared a work on the New Testament with legends appended. About the same time Herman de Valenciennes picked out from the Bible the stories which were short and dramatic, especially the miraculous, and put forth a collection entitled "Histoire de la Bible". (2) This proved a favorite method, a famous example of it being the "Historia Scholastica" the combining of the story of the four Gospels - written by Pierre Comestor or Menquer, before 1178 in popular style in Latin and later translated into French to become part of the "Bible Historiale" of Moulins. (3) Others might be added of the same type:- "la Bible des sept estaz du monde," done by Geffroi de Paris in 1243; the "drame d'Adam," "histoire de Joseph," the paraphrase of the Exodus. (4) There were also the picture books, called Biblia Pauperum, made up of illustrations of Bible scenes with as little writing as possible. (5) All these legends and stories which were outside the pale of literal presentation of the Scripture helped to pave the way and create the demand for the latter.

Three names stand out prominently in this work of translation proper:- Guiar des Moulins, Raoul de Prèsles, and Jean de Rély, though they by no means comprise the whole mediaeval history of French Biblical translation. As

1. Bonnard's collection, Les traductions de Bible en vers français.
2. Ibid.
3. Pétaval-Olliff, p.58.
4. Bonnard.
5. P. Smith, p.26.

early as the seventh century there appeared versions of the Psalter and the Apocalypse and a metrical rendering of the books of Kings. (1) The Psalms were always the portion most frequently selected, usually endowed, however, with the Church interpretation; translations were circulated in 1070 and 1080, in the reign of Philippe the First soon after the Romans de Rou, (2) and again in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The book of Proverbs was singled out by Simon de Nantuil, Genesis by Evrat, while the Song of Songs received three translations. (3) In 1100 the disciples of Lanfranc in the south of England translated the Psalms into their French, a production which proved very popular. (4) Fifty years later the Apocalypse was put into the vernacular, and the Kings in poetic measure. This was the half century of the labors of Waldo on the whole Bible. About the same time is dated the anonymous "Quatre Livres des Rois." (5) In addition to such works on single books, which, it is interesting to observe, were principally from the Old Testament, there are known at least two French preparations of the portions of Scripture to be read every Sunday in public worship: that of Robert de Gretham in the thirteenth century dealing with the Gospels; and that of the next century, including also the Epistles, trans-

1. Catholic Encyclopedia, article on Versions.
2. Archinard quoted in Pétaval-Olliff, p.21.
3. Included in Bonnard's collection.
4. Berger, preface p.3.
5. See Le Roux de Lincy's discussion of this work in his book entitled Les Quatre Livres des Rois.

lated by Jean du Vignay. (1) The Count of Angoulême, Marguerite's father, counted among his books one described as "Les Paraboles de Salomon, les Epistres Saint Jehan, Les Epistres Saint Pol et l'Apocalypse, le tout en ung volume, escript en parchemin et a la main, et en francoys, couvert de velous changeant et a deux fermoeres, l'un aux armes de mon dict Seigneur et l'autre aux armes de ma dicte dame." (2)

The first complete French Bible was translated under Louis in 1250 at the University of Paris. (3) This thirteenth century version marked a triple milestone. It bore witness to the unification and centralization of the kingdom, with Paris its capital and the University its guide to learning; no longer did each individual part of the country contribute isolated attempts, for the interest was now national and unified. Secondly, the monarch himself authorized the work and gave the sanction and protection of his throne to Biblical research, as indeed Charlemagne had done before him. (4) Finally, though all parts are not equally well translated, the value of the unity of the Bible was recognized in that it was no longer treated piece-meal but represented as a whole. However, excellent as was the project, its application was vastly hindered because such a large majority of the people were unable to read, and because only the rich could afford an object of luxury such

1. Berger, p.224.

2. Appendix to 1853 edition of the Heptameron, quoted Baird, V.1, p.78.

3. Berger, preface p.3.

4. Petaval-Olliff, p.28.

as this book. It fell short also in style, being in some portions decidedly long and encumbered with comments of no value. (1) The second outstanding volume appeared in the last decade of the same century. (2) Its author was Guiars des Moulins, who seems to have combined, put into juxtaposition a free translation of the *Historia Scholastica* of Pierre Comestor, plus Job and Proverbs, and 1250 version of Paris. (3) Technically, therefore, it was not a translation of the Bible, but in popularity and influence it deserves high rank. This was added to and revised by others, a series of attempts crowned by the work of Jean de Rély. In 1377 appeared a translation by Raoul de Prèsles, (4) copies of which Charles V distributed among the lords and ladies of his court. In 1487, (5), ten years after the publication at Lyons of a New Testament modified from the work of Guiars, and simultaneously with an anonymous Psalter, the complete Bible was again presented in France. This was the result of the labors of Jean de Rély, a member of the Sorbonne and the confessor of Charles the VIII, under whose direction the task was undertaken. Its foundation was the mingled product of Comestor and Guiars, and the new version was known as "The Great Bible," to distinguish it from the Bible for the Simple People, a briefer Old Testament history

1. Berger, p.146.
2. According to Pétaval, p.58 1289, Bonnard, Intro. p.4 1294, Baird, V.1, p.78, 1297.
3. Bonnard, Intro, p.4 and Berger, p.157.
4. Bonnard's date, but 1380 acc. to Berger, 1.249.
5. The generally accepted date, but Eys stands for 1496.

which ran through six editions. (1) This work of Rély's underwent twelve editions before 1545, (2) a testimony to the enthusiastic reception accorded it↓

Such, then, was the background of the Reformation volumes. Rome, although at first failing to realize that the diffusion of the Bible would be ruin for her, by 1180 had seen the danger and endeavored to repress the movement, as a letter of Innocent III concerning the bibliocentric group at Metz reveals. (3) Already the people, claiming that the Scripture was a treasure to be possessed, were in opposition to the papal denial of such possession. In 1486 a Bull was spread abroad forbidding vernacular translations of the Bible, but at that very time Jean de Rély was at work upon his revision. Moreover the kings were the powerful allies of the translators: Charlemagne, Robert Le Pieux, of whom it is written:- "il aimerait mieux être privé de la couronne que de la lecture des Livres Sacrés," the Louis of 1215-70 who took his Latin Testament with him to the Crusades, Jean le Bon, Charles V. and VI, Madeline, Anne de Britagne, Charles VIII. (4) The royal family remained almost constantly the assured protectors, even the aggressive promoters, of the projects; and with them the popes could not successfully interfere. Therefore the literature continued to increase. But it had two drawbacks:- one within itself, the

1. Catholic Encyclopedia, Versions.
2. Ibid.
3. Pétaval-Olliff, p.23.
4. Pétaval-Olliff, p.30.

cumbersomeness of much of its style, at times even unintelligible, and often containing outright mistakes, partly perhaps because derived not from the originals but from the work of Jerome; the other drawback in the public, who could not afford to buy, and could not have read even had they possessed. However, both these difficulties were stepping-stones in the path to the Reformation. Because of the imperfections which existed a great longing was aroused for a better and purer translation. And the conviction grew that even the unlearned should somehow be introduced to Holy Writ; wherefor one finds in the preface to the 1521 Genevan edition of the Bible of Guiars:- "not for the clergy; but for the laity and the simple-minded and solitary religious folk who are not as learned as they ought to be; also for other good persons who live according to the law of Jesus Christ; who by means of this book, will be able to feed their souls with sacred history and teach many simple and ignorant people." (1) The most direct influence of all was the actual first-hand contact of the translators with these older versions. Lefèvre's close relationship with Jean de Rély is noteworthy, (2) while Olivetan depended in some measure on the Paris version of 1250.

Hence the pre-Reformation translations, not merely by priority in time, but through providing some degree of familiarity with the Scriptures, arousing the sense of need

1. Ibid, p.59.

2. Berger, p.308.

for something better, and serving as the basis for future work, may truly be looked upon as precursors of the translations of the Reformation.

### Humanism

No less closely related, though in a different realm, was that great revival of the love of learning, strictly speaking, and in its larger sense, of the appreciation of the value in man, known as Humanism. Under Louis XII and Francis I France kept a vital intercourse with Italy, the land where the humanistic tendencies sprang up. Soon the University of Paris became impregnated with the new learning and began training its own representatives; while from other countries, Germany and Holland, came the influence of such men as Reuchlin and Erasmus; till the principles underlying the movement became common property among the educated leaders in every line. To a large extent the humanist principles determined the course of the Reformation in France, fashioning it according to earnest and reverent scholarship of the Bible, and imbuing it with that dread of the "tumult" which caused the longing for quiet natural growth however slow rather than fiery combats.

The foremost emphasis of Humanism was on the desire, indeed the necessity, of returning to original sources for correct understanding and evaluation. "Passion for antiquity" took possession of scholars, made easy of satisfaction by the trade and cultural conditions of the century; the literature of the golden ages of Greece and Rome

was eagerly sought and studied, untrammelled by commentaries and monkish arguments, - sought for its own sake and its intrinsic value. This was not in any way hostile to Christian doctrines; d'Aubigné analyzes their attitude as:- "finding in the Bible much more than in the works of theologians the beauties that charmed them in the classic authors the humanists were fully inclined to place the Bible above the doctors. They reformed the taste and thus prepared the way for a reformation of the faith." (1) Having come into possession of these ancient works, unadorned by any since the original authors, the adherents of the new learning shrank from the scholastic method of manufactured interpretation; they sought solely and honestly to search out by their own sound reason the historical sense of the texts, what idea the writer meant to convey and to what purpose - not what was said about Aristotle but what Aristotle said, not scholastic subtleties but primitive sources. And this idea was the starting point, the initial dynamic, for the reformed treatment of the Scriptures. Reason was enthroned, and brought to bear on matters of the faith; recourse was had to sources, and authors were made the interpreters of their own writings. Lefèvre was a devoted Humanist, a disciple of Pico della Mirandola (1462-94); he applied the new method first to Aristotle, for he felt that the common dislike of the Peripatetic was due to the offenses of translators and commentators, and labored to restore the

1. d'Aubigné, V.1, p.111.

true text; he dealt similarly with the Church Fathers; but he came to the climax of the principle when, discarding commentaries, he tried to see what the text of the Bible actually said. (1) His teacher had done the same thing before him; approaching the Bible in the simple literary way indicated by classical study, Pico really rediscovered some of the teachings of the New Testament". (2) Fisher summarizes the movement in saying:- "The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, the primitive documents of the Christian religion, were brought forward in the original tongues, to serve as a touchstone by which the prevailing doctrinal and ecclesiastical system must be tested." (3) Raw contact with the materials, this was the method advocated by Humanism, which when applied by the Reformers to the Bible revolutionized their thinking and practice.

But another step was required, In order to read in the original languages must be studied. This was the greatest contribution of Reuchlin (1455-1522), who had been a student at Paris, who was recognized as the foremost Hebrew scholar, whose excellent Hebrew grammar and dictionary, approved by Rome, made accessible to many the means of pursuing the policy of original research. A Latin dictionary and a Greek grammar also came from his hand, but his fame was primarily due to his Semitic studies. Erasmus accomplished quite a little to revive pure Latin; Lascari

1. P. Smith, p.52.
2. Ibid, p.51.
3. Fisher, p.61.

in Florence did his share for the Greek language. Each of these was received with acclaim. In 1524 Jean Canaye said he was studying Greek and Latin "verbo Dei intelligendo maximum". (1) There was some talk of founding a college just for the triumvirate of classical speech; in all the universities the old curriculum was broadened out to include Greek and Hebrew, chairs in these languages being permanently established. Immediately students realized that there were discrepancies and glaring variations among versions and translations of the same passages. Even in the first half of the fifteenth century Valla wrote his "Annotations on the New Testament", published in 1505 by Erasmus, in which he took three Latin and three Greek manuscripts, pointing out, sometimes in very important passages, differences and mistranslations, not shielding the Vulgate. (2) Erasmus printed a Greek text which departed considerably from the Vulgate; "students now saw plainly that what for centuries had been the Bible of western Christendom was only a translation, and not always a trustworthy translation, of what the inspired writers had penned." (3) It was in trying to reconcile differences that Lefèvre first became interested in a scientific study of the Scriptures. So the search for reconciliation of variants lured ever on and on to higher accuracy and knowledge. But involved study was not all that languages meant to Humanists;

1. Herminjard, V.1, p.240.
2. P. Smith.
3. Plummer, p.75.

Dante, often counted the first of the group, set an example of the use of the simple vernacular which later writers were eagerly to follow.

Erasmus most clearly states the purpose of all this, probably because of all the men who did not openly side with the reformers he was nearest and most sympathetic to them. Though their mutual influence was large, a mote ever lay between them. Nevertheless, in aim they agreed, negatively a war against superstition, positively a creed based on the "plain truths contained in Scripture". (1)

"The most exalted aim in the revival of philosophical studies," said Erasmus in a letter, "will be to obtain a knowledge of the pure and simple Christianity of the Bible ..... I am firmly resolved to die in the study of the Scriptures; in them are all my joy and all my peace." (2) True Christianity according to him was inner and not outer, and he longed for the restoration of a pure religion. To that end, as Luther said, "he has introduced the classical languages and withdrawn us from godless studies." (3) One may believe he would like to have been more constructive in his message. In the preface to the first edition of his New Testament, 1516, a section entitled Exhortation to the Study of the Christian Philosophy, he said:-

"I utterly dissent from those who are unwilling that the sacred Scriptures should be read by the unlearned, translated into their vulgar tongue, as though Christ had

1. Quoted Fisher, p.68.

2. Ad Servatium, in d'Aubigné, VI, p.130.

3. Plummer, p.82.

taught such subtleties that they can scarcely be understood by a few theologians, or as though the strength of the Christian religion only consisted in men's ignorance of it. The mysteries of kings it may be safer to conceal, but Christ wished his mysteries to be published as openly as possible. I wish that even the weakest woman should read the Gospels, should read the Epistles of Paul; and I wish that they were translated into all languages, so that they might be read and understood, not only by Scots and Irishmen, but also by Turks and Saracens. I long that the husbandman should sing portions of them to himself as he follows the plough, that the weaver should hum them to the tune of his shuttle, that the traveller should beguile with their stories the tedium of his journey." (1)

How thoroughly the Reform movement with which he refused to ally himself carried to fruition these highest longings of the Humanism which envisioned the worth of all mankind is interesting to remark.

Fellowship because of the common foe of ignorance and because of a common struggle for freedom, greater familiarity with the Bible through Greek and Latin editions, a new method of interpretation and exegesis, more adequate instruments for research, a looking toward simplicity in Christ - method, means, and purpose, such was the equipment which Humanism handed on to its junior, the Reformation, whence the former may be seen in many respects as a legitimate forerunner of the vernacular translations in French.

### Mysticism

A third blood relation in the ancestral line of the Scriptures was mysticism, that yearning outreaching of

1. Ibid, p.76.

the individual for a personal fellowship and union with his God. Cowan says of the mystics that they "sought to attain highest and purest knowledge through direct communion with God. Scholasticism climbed the heights of theology on the ladder of reason; Mysticism soared thither on the wings of devotion..... Earnest souls were driven to satisfy their spiritual cravings in private religious exercises." (1) Every period of Church History has something to reveal concerning the mystical element, often from such saints as Augustine and Bernard; it was the constantly recurring general revolt against a materialized Church. Its emphasis was on personal religion as contrasted with institutional, though it sheltered itself always under the wing of the established Church; hence it was a lay movement, insisting on the importance of the individual man, and denying the necessity of a mediatorial priesthood. The whole religious conception was simplified to the one idea of direct communion with God through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the possibility of which was attained through Bible study and prayer, and enriched by the Sacrament of the Eucharist. Widespread and enduring as was the movement, by its very nature it could not become organized, but remained always intensely personal, never satisfied till the soul was lost in God Himself.

Such a spirit kept alive through the centuries, such an insistence on freedom from bondage to form and cere-

1. Cowan, Landmarks of Church History, p.138.

mony, such a longing for the heart of religion, could not fail, however unconsciously, to prepare the ground for the organized revolt against ecclesiastical authority. The pre-Reformation era was characterized by a definite revival of mysticism. Denys the Areopagite and Cusanus, whose writings Lefèvre had studied and published, Ricin, Gerson, - many men were advocating the simple life with God. The majority of them were German, though Eckhart lived for a time in Paris, (1) but their influence spread throughout Christendom. Of them all Tauler was the most practical, who went about as an evangelist, preaching in the vernacular, and proclaiming direct access to the Father through the Bible and prayer. The Brethren of the Common Lot, founded in the second half of the fourteenth century by Gerard Groot, maintained a similar emphasis. They were the leaders in the educational realm, for both picked students and the mass. They were concerned to advance study of the classics, but even more to promote a knowledge of the mother tongue. They engaged in copying manuscripts of the Scriptures and the Fathers; they gathered together into praying circles; they invited friends to come to their schoolrooms to listen to expositions of parts of the Bible in the vernacular as well as of other religious books, using somewhat of the Socratic method of instruction with these popular audiences. As soon as the art of printing was invented they circulated as widely as possible portions of Scripture with their

tracts. Thus they breathed into the religion of the times a vital interest, a personal element, a Scriptural basis which bore fruit in renewed consecration of life. Thomas à Kempis was allied to them in thought and devotion; he put into words their highest representation of method of Bible study in all its simplicity and power:-

"Truth, not eloquence, is to be sought for in Holy Scripture.

Each part of the Scripture is to be read in the same spirit in which it was written.

We should rather search after profit in the Scriptures than after subtle arguments.

...let the love of pure truth draw thee to read.

Our own curiosity often hindereth us in reading the Scriptures, when we will examine and discuss that which we should rather pass over without more ado.

If thou desire to profit, read with humility, simplicity, and faith; nor ever desire the reputation of being learned." (1)

The mysticism of the sixteenth century was roughly divided into two schools, each represented by an outstanding character in the French Reformation. One group of mystics was known as speculative, the Hebraist, marked in their treatment of the Bible by a love of allegorizing, finding symbolism in every word. Of these was Lefèvre. Honest as was his searching for truth, in his commentary on Matthew III he bore witness to one of his ruling principles of interpretation: "L'Évangile est presque tout entier une parabole." (2) (The Gospel is almost totally a parable.) The same element crept into his theology; he

1. Thomas à Kempis, Imitation of Christ, chap.5.

2. Lefèvre, comm. init. on Matt. XIII, fo 68: 126, quoted de la Tour, p.125.

loved the thought of God's incomprehensibility, and conceived a system of a hierarchy of beings and of degrees in the spiritual life. (1) This was opposed by Luther, in fact, the mystical influence was the chief basis of difference between Luther and Lefèvre. The German reformer dwelt on the inescapability of sin, the realization of which demanded faith; the French based everything on love and the mystical relation, from which, they said, works naturally followed and in turn called down grace. "La grâce," declared Lefèvre, "sera donnée à ceux qui font le bien." (2) In one respect, therefore, a fundamental chasm separated the stirrings in France from the Reformation in Germany; the French clung to many Romanist tenets; it was not until the Lutheran literature began to flood the country and Farel became head in place of Lefèvre that the French movement became more than potentially Protestant in formulated doctrine. (3)

The second type was moral mysticism, Marguerite d'Angoulême being its best known exponent. Aspiration was the major note; all life was simplified into one longing of the soul for contact with God. In the Mirror of the Sinful Soul this aspiration is beautifully voiced, belonging to the realm of Protestant theology, but being the fruit of the medieval mystic tendency:-

"for what thing is a man....before that he hath

1. de la Tour, p. 141.

2. Lefèvre, comm.init. Matt., in de la Tour, p.147.

3. de la Tour, pp. 145-151.

received the gift of grace?

I do feel the strength of sin to be in me...  
yet the power to remedy it doth not lie in me, and power  
have I none to cry help

humbly I do confess that, as for me, I am much  
less than nothing  
with his spirit he doth make a willing within my  
heart

there is neither man, saint, nor angel for whom  
the heart of a sinner will change... I ought to give no  
thanks for my salvation but only unto thee, to whom I owe  
the praise for it, as to him which is my savior and creator."

(1)

Whence Marguerite gained such a philosophy, such an exper-  
ience, she tells through the advice of a holy woman in  
the prologue to her famous, if questionable, tales. The  
aged Christian had been asked how she cured ennui, where-  
upon she responded:-

"Having sought the remedy all my life, I have  
never found but one, which is the reading of the sacred  
writings, in which are found the true and perfect joy of  
spirit from which come repose and health of body. And if  
you ask me what recipe keeps me so joyous and so wholesome  
in my old age, it is that when I rise I take the Holy  
Scripture and read it, both seeing and reflecting on the  
goodness of God." (2)

Briçonnet was her spiritual guide; it was he who  
urged her to read the Scriptures; and he too expressed the  
mystical ideal, not with regard to the Bible, for he said:  
"toute l'Écriture Sainte est ou spirituelle seulement  
sans intelligence littérale, ou littérale sans la  
spirituelle": (3) but concerning the end and aim of life,  
in the sentence: "les pauvres brebis errantes sont en  
Luy, par Luy et pour Luy". (4) (the poor wandering sheep

1. Marguerite d'Angoulême, Mirror of the Sinful Soul.
2. Marguerite d'Angoulême, Heptameron, Prologue p.13.
3. Herminjard, V.1, p.110.
4. Herminjard, V.1, p.477.

are in Him, through Him and for Him.)

In general, mysticism bequeathed to the Reformation three main emphases:- the value and rights of the individual soul, thereby authorizing personal freedom in investigation and aspiration; the use of the vernacular for study and instruction; and a prominent position for the Scriptures as the channel of friendship with God. Each one of these things smoothed the road for the reformers, and heralded the day when France should be filled with volumes of the Bible for every man and woman to read intelligently and receive according, not to the Church, but to the leading of the Spirit in the individual heart.

#### Summary of Ancestry

After all, ancestry is only ancestry. None of these three important movements was the Reformation. None of them contemplated a break from the established Church. In all probability they would vehemently have disowned the radicalism which sprang from the loyal seed they sowed. The Reformation was a jump, a genuine mutation, but it carried with it distinguishing features, an heredity of which it might well be proud. As Fisher says, "the stars were not alone accountable for the spread of the Reformation".

(1) The labor and vision of many who were never Protestant made possible, even entered into, the travail from which Protestantism was born. In this sense translators, humanists, mystics, prepared for the Reformed use of the Scriptures.

CHAPTER III.

THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE REFORMATION

Acquaintance with the Scriptures, both through the preparatory influences of the later middle ages, and through the work of the reformers themselves, the French people of the sixteenth century assuredly possessed; but what bearing had this fact on the Reformation? Was it merely incidental, either resultant or unrelated? Was the part played by the Bible in the establishment of Protestantism in France large or small? Is it possible to trace directly its influence in the new Church?

It is significant in this connection to notice the titles applied to those of the early Reformed faith. "Les Bibliens," then "les Christandins," finally "Évangé-  
liques" (1) distinguished them from Catholics; first of all "Bibliens", while always their leaders called themselves "ministres de la Parole," and it was the "Word" they preached. Names are revealing; if both friends and enemies agree in bestowing them one may be sure they indicate the truth. When there is added to this witness the inescapable observation that the Reformation confessions abound in Scriptural references and quotations employed as bases for the entire structure, and that in letters and sermons and treatises the French Protestants continually stated such principles as that laid down by Farel in the preface to the *Manière et Fasson*:- "affin que tout soit faict et dit en icelle

1. Buisson, Note addit., p.708,

selon la pure parole de Dieu" (1) (to the end <sup>that</sup> all be done and said in this according to the pure Word of God), the evidence justifies close research into just what the Bible did mean to them and just how far it affected their doctrines, their worship, and their life.

On Doctrine - the Scriptures themselves

It was through a discovery and study of the Bible that each of the French reformers found spiritual light and became a reformer, according to their own testimonies; for the Bible, its translation and even mere possession, they risked their lives, actually suffering banishment and daring the last cost, martyrdom, which many of their number were forced to pay. Why? What did they think of this book that they let it transform and then imperil their lives? Their answer to this question came out again and again as they endeavored to state the value of their charter. They thought of it first as the direct message from God. The confession of faith of the first General Assembly said:- "We believe that the word which is contained in these books has proceeded from God, from whom alone it takes its authority and not from men. And forasmuch as it is the rule of all truth, containing all that is necessary for the service of God and our salvation....."(2) Thirty years earlier Lefèvre had seen in the vernacular version the "need of

1. Farel, Manière et Fassung, preface.

2. Confession de Foi, 1559, pt. 5, quoted in Kidd, documents Illustrative, p. 665.

the Christian people, this long time, severed from the word of Christ, the command of God Himself who wished the Gospel to be announced to all, the traditions of the Jewish priesthood which caused the Law to be known and read, of the evangelists and apostles who wrote for the people, of the early Church which made translations into the diverse languages of its day, analogous attempts in other countries."

(1) But the simplest and loveliest testimony is Lefèvre's brief argument:- "Qui defendrait aux enfants de avoir, veoir, et lire le Testament de leur Père?" (Who would deny to the children the having, seeing, and reading the Testament of their Father?) (2) As to contents, Erasmus summarized:- "il ne faut chercher dans la Bible qu'une seule chose, Jésus Christ." (3) With such a conception of the nature of the Scriptures as will from the heavenly Father naturally commanded an assent to it as a source of authority, as an all-sufficient spiritual transmitter. The key-word was :- "Verbum dei sufficit. Hoc unicum satis est ad vitam"; (4) "La parole de Dieu suffit!".... "Whatever does not reflect the splendor of the Word, not only is not necessary but is absolutely superfluous;" (5) "To know nothing apart from the Gospel, this is to know all." (6) It was the one way - "la foi est par l'ouye de la Parole

1. de la Tour, p.127.

2. Lefèvre, Epistre Exhortatoire, de la Tour, p.127.

3. Herminjard, V.1, p.19 note.

4. Preface to Latin commentary on Gospels, Lefèvre.

5. Lefèvre, commentarii initiatorii in quatuor Evangelica, 1522, In Herminjard, V.1, p.89.

6. Ibid.

de Dieu," (1) (faith is by the hearing of the Word of God).

It took its place as a double touch-stone. Doctrines and faith were tested upon it. Thus in the Confession of Faith:-

"Since God has sufficiently declared his will through the Prophets and Apostles, and even by the mouth of his son, our Lord Jesus Christ, we owe this honor and reverence to the Word of God not to add anything of ours; but to conform ourselves entirely to the rule which is there prescribed for us. And since the Roman Church, departing from the usage and custom of the early Church, has introduced new commandments and a new form for God's service; we consider it very reasonable to prefer the commandments of God, who is truth itself, to the commandments of men, who by nature are inclined to lying and vanity." (2)

Similarly in 1530 the Protestants invited those of different persuasion to compare doctrines, retaining all in harmony with Scripture and rejecting all else, with the principle laid down:-

"in this disputation no writing shall have authority nor faith except the Old and New Testament which is called the Bible and the Word of God. This each one shall allege, proving from it the import and meaning, comparing that which is obscure with that which is plainer, rejecting all sacred senses, judgments, opinions, fables of all men and doctors. Moreover, there shall be no other judge in this present disputation but the Holy Scripture, which itself judges, which alone is the rule, the rod, the judge, the foundation of the holy faith." (3)

Farel went even further in his attribution of sufficiency:-

"using unhesitatingly the words of Holy Scripture, avoiding not only the sentences and modes of speech which are not in Scripture and of Scripture, but also the words which Scripture does not use." (4) But when the belief of minds

1. Farel, Writings, à tous les amateurs de la sainte parole, 1532, p.191.
2. Confession de Foi, 1559, Prefatory address to the King.
3. Herminjard, V.2, p.57.
4. Ibid, V.2, p.461.

and lips had been judged, the Word of God went beyond and became also the touch-stone for the true Christian life.

"Ceux-là seulement sont des Chrétiens, qui aiment notre Seigneur Jésus Christ et sa parole avec une parfaite pureté."

(1) Speaking of the Bible in a letter to Briçonnet Lefèvre remarked:-

"one finds there more signs of the spiritual life and more of true nourishment for the soul.... so that one is forced to recognize the fertilizing property descended from above and He from whom it truly comes, and itself forces one, after having recognized it, to follow Him with all the purity of heart and all the piety of which one is capable, since this is the sole way of approaching Him who doeth all in all." (2)

One or two notes of another type entered into this estimate. Despite the vast importance of the Bible for each Christian, the understanding of its meaning was recognized to be a great difficulty. Marguerite begged her pastor for an explanation, bemoaning the fact that "la moindre parole qui y soit est trop pour moi, et la plus clere m'est obscure;" (3) (the least word there is too much for me, and the plainest is to me obscure); while Lefèvre put into his preface to the Gospels:- "le Christ ne nous propose point l'Évangile pour le comprendre, mais pour le croire." (4) (Christ did not offer us the Gospel to understand but to believe). Farel added that not all passages were of equal value; that the Mosaic customs, for instance,

1. Comm. init., Herminjard, V.1, p.89ff.
2. Herminjard, V.1, p5.
3. *Ibid*, p.108.
4. de la Tour p. 124.

were not binding on Christians. (1) But whatever the difficulties the first evaluation remained unshaken - Verbum dei sufficit! - very little different, on the whole, from the highest Catholic conception.

It was in method of treatment that the reformers veered from their ancestors, becoming in turn the ancestors of modern critical science. Their methods would not wholly be approved today, in at least three respects. They failed to lose the inbred love of symbolism. They preached a new legalism, most notable in Calvin's attempt "to use the Bible as a rigid moral law to be fulfilled to the letter." (2) They, against their saner judgement, read with biased mind. Smith says:- "the elucidation of the text was not proportional to the amount of labor spent on it. For the most part it was approached not in a scientific but in a dogmatic spirit. Men did not read it historically and critically, but to find their own dogmas in it. Nevertheless the foundations were laid for both the textual and the higher criticism." (3) Again Calvin is an example:- "He who makes himself master of the method I have pursued will surely understand what he should seek for in Scripture." (4) In these errors, however, they were with the established Church.

They began to diverge from Rome in the logical

1. Letter to Berthold, 1533, Herminjard, V.3, p.24.
2. P. Smith, P. 165.
3. Ibid, p.563.
4. Plummer, Continental Reformation, P. 166.

conclusion to the high estimate placed upon the nature and purpose of the Bible, in that they thereupon claimed for Holy Writ a transcendence over all else. The first item in their treatment was a separation in essence from all other authority, making the Scriptures the sole court of appeal, the sole basis of teaching. The Church, the Fathers, no one, could add, diminish, or change in any way; to this law they rigorously adhered.

"Christians, for the honor of God our gracious father, have no regard for customs nor times nor years, nor men, nor the multitude, nor the appearance which all can have, whether in knowledge, virtue, learning, holiness, or authority, even though it be an angel from heaven, but only think, consider, and diligently examine what the good savior Jesus has ordained and commanded, of whom the father said: This is my beloved son, hear ye him." (1)

"First, we protest, that for the rule of our faith and religion, we wish to follow Scripture alone, without including anything which has been invented by the mind of men, without the Word of God; and we do not intend for our spiritual government, to receive any other doctrine than that which is taught us by this word without adding or diminishing, just as our Savior commands." (2)

"It is not lawful for men, nor even for angels, to add to it, diminish, or change. From which it follows that neither antiquity, nor customs, nor the multitude, nor human wisdom, nor judgments, nor decisions, nor edicts, nor decrees, nor councils, nor visions, nor miracles, may be placed before this Holy Scripture, but, on the contrary, everything must be examined, regulated, and reformed according to this." (3)

Lefèvre put the whole matter into two sentences:- "Je ne connais qu'une théologie, faite de cette foi vive que donne Dieu et que l'homme ne peut atteindre. Le Christ et sa parole sont tout; qui connaît celà, connaît toutes choses."

1. Farel, Manière et Fasson, Forward.
2. Article on La Parolle de Dieu, in the confession of faith for Geneva, 1537, later replaced by Calvin's confession. Writings of Farel, p. 195.
3. Confession of Faith, 1559, Art. 5.

(1)

A second ground of difference was the Protestant insistence that all alike should be entrusted with "the Testament of their Father," and, as a corollary, that every believer was privileged and qualified to study and interpret as an individual Christian. Farel, in the preface to the Confession, urged that each examine for himself what "our good Savior Jesus has instituted and commanded." (2) The goal was to make it possible "au simple peuple de lire l'Évangile souventes fois en la maison"; (3) denying this privilege to anyone was called "diabolical wickedness." (4) One of the propositions of Caroli condemned by the Sorbonne in 1525 read:- "The Holy Scripture is better understood at present than it was in time past, and in time past it was not well interpreted... ..I say that everyone, Doctor or not Doctor, Bachelor or not Bachelor, may preach and dispense the Holy Scripture..... A poor holy woman can understand the Holy Scripture more perfectly than they can." (5)

Among the principles of interpretation laid down by the reformers several stand out prominently. The law

1. Lefèvre, comm. Jean III, fo 138:25, quoted de la Tour, V.3, p.119.

"I know only one theology, made of that living faith which God gives and which man cannot attain. The Christ and his word are all; he who knows this, knows everything."

2. Trans. Baird V.1, p.343.

3. Buisson, p.708.

4. 1562 edition of Bible, Au Lecteur.

5. Herminjard, V.1, p.378.

of proper approach, though sometimes broken, demanded that the student come with the unbiased mind of a learner. It is said of Farel that he amply illustrated the method of which he was an exponent:- "He knew only one rule, one supreme law in religious and ecclesiastical matters: the Word of the Gospel. He read and studied this word without any scholastic prejudice, and applied it to men and to things with an imperturbable courage;" (1) as in the Sommaire he himself exhorted:- "in considering the Holy Scripture you will recognize more in it by the revelation of God. But take care in reading it, that you do not wrest it to your opinion, making it serve your desires while you trample under foot the pasture of the sheep."

(2) The law of viewing a passage in its context and in the atmosphere in which it was written was propounded by Lefèvre, begging that the reader should observe the words preceding and following, to determine of what and to what they speak, at what time and for what cause, maintaining that the circumstances of Scripture are no small introduction to them. (3) Nevertheless an unprejudiced historical attitude on the part of the student is not in itself powerful; "in vain would we know all the verses of Scripture, in vain also would we amass the commentaries, the corrections, and the variants, it would remain for us the enigma of a

1. Avant propos to Manière et Fasson, p. XVI.
2. Farel, Sommaire, p. 207.
3. Preface to 1530 edition of Bible.

a dead language;" (1) God alone gives intelligence to understand through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. And finally, there is the law of aim, for each man "with a faithful heart believing in them (the Scriptures) to seek and search for not the glory of men, not the curiosity of science, but the glory of God with the edification and profit of his neighbor." (2)

Thus they had arrived at and formulated the doctrine of the right of private interpretation. How? Evidently by the universal path of experience; as individuals the leaders, dissatisfied, had found in the Bible, through their own reading, in its simple surface sense, the satisfaction of their souls' longing for God. And what they had found they felt that all must have, and so they spread abroad the "Word," preaching Christ from the sources."

#### Other Doctrines

The Bible once restored to a place higher than the authority of the Church, changes were bound to occur. That conference of 1530 which invited the opponents of Protestantism to compare doctrines, retaining all in harmony with the Scriptures and rejecting all else (see above p.57) was one of the many markers on the road to a purified faith and practice. It was discovered that the tenets of the Roman Church failed to tally with Biblical

1. de la Tour, p.125.
2. Preface to 1530 edition.

teachings, and vice versa. Berquin, "having had occasion to read the Bible.... found there nothing on the invocation of the Virgin Mary, nothing on many of the dogmas considered fundamental in the Roman Church. He was astonished on the contrary, to find there important items of which Rome hardly made mention in her formulas." (1) This discovery wrought revolutions in doctrines. As early as 1512 Lefèvre in working over Paul's Epistles discovered the doctrine of justification by faith. (2) By 1523 Arnould de Bronoux, a monk, had read Romans and as a result preached strongly against works of satisfaction and prayers for the dead, though later obliged to retract. (3) Briçonnet, preaching on the cult of the Saints, "admonesta.... le peuple qu'il prist garde de ne déferer à la creature, ce qui appartient à Dieu seul." (4) The first martyr, Jean Leclerc, died singing from the Psalms "Leurs idoles sont or et argent, ouvrage de main d'homme," (5) (Their idols are gold and silver, the work of man's hands.) Caroli claimed:- "God has no regard for the works... of men in bestowing his grace, but considers only his goodness, which is infinite." (6). Group thinking followed that of the individuals. Among the fifty-nine articles in the dispute concerning religion decreed by the government in Berne, 1527, were these:-

1. Abelous, Les Pères, p.176.
2. P. Smith, p.52.
3. de la Tour, p. 181.
4. Régistre de Lhermitte, Bretonneau, p. 198, quoted de la Tour, V.3, p. 177 note.
5. Douen, V.1, p.2.
6. Herminjard, V.1, p.378,

"The Holy Church.... is born of the Word of God  
the Church of Christ makes no laws of statutes  
without the Word of God  
the mass... is contrary to the Holy Scripture  
no purgatory in the Bible  
to make any images... is against the Word  
marriage is not prohibited by the Holy Scripture."  
(1)

The 1537 Confession rebelled against intercession and  
priesthood in these terms:- "on the contrary, we reject  
the intercession of saints, as a superstition invented by  
men contrary to the Scripture  
(of ministers) we do not attribute to them any  
other power or authority, except to lead, rule and govern  
the people of God committed to them, by that Word, in which  
they have power to command, defend, promise, and threaten,  
and without which they cannot and must not attempt anything."  
(2)

That of 1559 touched upon both these and other matters:-

"we believe that all our justice is based on the  
remission of our sins..... That is why we reject all other  
means of being able to justify ourselves before God, and  
without presuming on any virtues or merits, we hold our-  
selves simply to obedience of Jesus Christ.

it is not permitted to us to pray except accord-  
ing to the form which God has prompted by his Word; that  
all that men have imagined concerning the intercession of  
Saints is only the delusion and deception of Satan, in order  
to redeem themselves toward God, as derogatory to the sac-  
rifice of the Death and Passion of Jesus Christ. Finally,  
we hold Purgatory to be an illusion proceeding from that  
same business, from which also are come Monastic vows,  
indulgences, and all other such things, by which they think  
to merit grace and salvation." (3)

The confession of faith drawn up at Merindol in protest at  
the persecution in 1541 - a document which caused one of  
the doctors of theology in the group appointed to examine  
it to say that he hadn't learned so much Scripture in all

1. Ibid, V.2, p.59.
2. Writings of Farel, p.195.
3. Kidd, Documents,

his life as in looking up the references therein mentioned

(1) - contained this generalization:-

"we do not retain any human doctrines violating the Word of God, such as satisfaction for sins by our works, the constitutions commanded without this Word of God with a wrong idea of obligation and merit, and all superstitions customs, such as the adoration of images, pilgrimages, and the like." (2)

Thus in France in every case a change in doctrine or ecclesiastical practice was born out of a new contact with the original documents of Christianity and regulated by them. Either by silence - one searches in vain for mention of the saints or of purgatory in the writings of Marguerite - or by open disputation, or by acts of violence such as the mutilation of the image of the Virgin and the posting of the placards, the old faith was purged. It was what Ullmann calls "the reaction of Christianity as Gospel against Christianity as law." (3) As de la Tour puts it:- "The diffusion of the Bible, of which the editions multiplied, those especially of the Psalms and of St. Paul, prepared spirits for a change, A new theology, simpler, clearer, freed from the barbarism of words, from a litter of questions, a religion, more alive, and more free, less fettered by practices, observances, regulations, that is what the highest consciences demanded." (4) Superstition was being abolished; the essence of Christianity was being freed from the yoke which had bound it with traditionalism;

1. Beze, p.27.

2. Ibid, p.25ff.

3. Ullmann, Reformatoren vor der Reformation, 1 p.XII, quoted Fisher, p.9.

4. de la Tour, V.3, p.21.

and doctrine in general was molded from the living experience which had come out of the return to the Scriptures.

### On Worship

Together with the abolition of superstition went a great simplification in common worship, this also growing out of Bible study. In fact, the very first Reformation Church of Paris was formed by a little group whose meetings had been solely for Bible reading and prayer until the birth of a child made imperative the demand for an ordained minister qualified to administer baptism.(1) The man chosen was one of their own number, a layman; similarly everywhere the mediatorial priesthood was discarded; the idea of the Church itself was placed on a different level; - "la vraie Église... comment la connaitra-t-il, sinon seulement par les Écritures?" (how shall the true Church be known except only by the Scriptures?) asked Beza. (2) Church government also underwent a change; Le Sueur wrote:- "by the authority and example of Scripture, that the Church would be more happily governed by the laws of Christ than by those of the Gentiles." (3) The former rites and appurtenances of worship were swept away:-

"Any place whatever under heaven, which is the true tabernacle of God, is more seemly and appropriate in which to pray to God and make sacrifice to him.... than places made by the hands of men.... the benediction and the sprinkling of holy water accomplishes nothing. - As

1. Kidd, p.663.

2. Beze, V.1, p.362.

3. Herminjard, no. 102, quoted de la Tour, V.3, p.187.

for the candles and the lighted tapers around the altars, the oblations and sacrifices that are made in the Church, the honor of God is not at all increased. There is nothing which diverts and separates us from the knowledge of God like images." (1) A new liturgy was instituted, in which the Psalms of Marôt figured largely, partly for the purpose of teaching prayer (2), and into which whole portions of the Bible were incorporated, as for instance the Decalogue in the baptismal sacrament and the First Corinthians account in the Lord's Supper. (3) As for the ordinary preaching service, it has been described for us by Farel:-

"after the prayer, the preacher begins to take a text from the holy scripture, which he reads plainly, as our savior did in Nazareth, and after the reading he proclaims word for word, without skipping, bringing forward the scriptural passages which contribute to the said proclamation which he sets forth without going outside of holy scripture, to the end that he does not jumble the pure word of God..... keeping faithfully to the word, and speaking only the word of God... he exhorts and admonishes .... according as the text implies." (4)

In such manner the ministry, ecclesiastical government, Church buildings, and order of service - each of these felt upon them the transforming touch of the new knowledge of the Scriptures.

#### On Life

But after all, the primary interest of the reformers was neither the right of private interpretation of the Bible nor the abolition of superstition from worship; they were seeking a life, which could only be attained

1. Herminjard, V.1, p.378.
2. de la Tour, p.29.
3. See la Manière et Fasson.
4. Manière et Fasson, de la cene, p.44.

and maintained through direct access to God. Even "le retour a l'Évangile n'est qu'un moyen. Le but, c'est posséder la vie.... vivre, c'est s'unir à Dieu, "(1) ("the return to the Gospel is only a means. The goal, that is to possess the life... to live, that is to unite oneself with God.") "simply a religion, not a reasoning but a feeling: that of our misery, of the benefactions of God, of our Redemption, of grace, of the love of Jesus and his Evangel, - and, in a word, a trust, a joy which enlarges the soul, an inner, individual, renewal: the peaceful penetration of the Gospel into the soul." (2)

Immediately following the rediscovery of the Scripture this life came into being. The whole manner of living of the people was metamorphosed. They welcomed the Bible gladly; it is chronicled that "there was engendered in many so ardent a desire of knowing the way of salvation, that artisans, fullers, and woolcombers took no other recreation, as they worked with their hands, than to talk with each other of the word of God, and to comfort themselves with the same. Sundays and holidays especially were devoted to the reading of Scripture and inquiring into the good pleasure of the Lord." (3) They were willing to suffer martyrdom for it, almost invariably going to death with the chant of Psalms upon their lips. (4) What came of it all, these secret gatherings to study passages together, this

1. de la Tour, p. 132.

2. Ibid, p. 119-121.

3. Act. des Mart., p.182, quoted d'Aubigné, V.3, p.429.

4. Douen, V.1, p.3.

memorizing Psalms, this pervading interest in the Word?

In a phrase, it transformed life. Geneva, of course, is the outstanding instance of the change, having placed itself completely under the rule of the Word of God, its people joining in simple worship, pure living, and a practical theocracy; other groups were similarly affected. It brought primarily a new relationship to God. Buisson stated the core of the matter when he said:-

"Thence also (return to the sources), by the most natural consequences, this need of simplification, this thirst for direct contact with Christ... finally, this foremost role attributed to faith, not to a dogmatic and formal faith, but to a faith which lives, buoyancy of heart, vital illumination of the soul which introduces us to the life divine in liberating us from superstitions, in freeing us from slavery to the letter by the joyous liberty of the Spirit." (1)

1689 | Lefèvre felt that when one read one must needs "louer, adouer, admirer la haultesse et incomprehensibilité de la sapience de Dieu." (2) on the other side there was a more personal note - the faith "which is to believe the things of the Bible by trusting oneself to the promises which God has made... the one who believes in God with trust and hope is quickened to life." (3) On the social side of life there came an equally marked change. The use of Marôt's Psalms abolished licentious verse. (4) Morals were raised, women given more honor, the poor offered an opportunity for the fulness of religion, all believers equalized.

1. Buisson, p.708.
2. de la Tour, p.128.
3. Caroli, Herminjard, V.1, p378.
4. Lorimer, Protestant Church of France, p. 18.

"For the Word of God not only was preached there, but also practiced; considering that all works of charity were exercised there. Customs were reformed from day to day, and superstitions slipped away." (1)

### Summary of Influence

In summarizing, one must attribute to acquaintance with the Scriptures a large influence in preparing the way for and moulding the shape of the French Reformation. The origins, the aims, the methods of the spiritual awakening were biblical in both spirit and letter. Without the return to the Bible there might have been a great religious movement, but it would not have partaken of the nature of that which did occur.

To describe the situation fancifully, the Scriptures might be pictured as the great highway of the French Reformation. Various bypaths had united to form the road, which Rome had barred with a heavy gate of prohibitions. When, thanks to the reformers, the way was again open, though fraught with dangers, people gladly thronged it. From it branched many ends: social reform, purer doctrine, clerical morality, - in some way it reached to all the foundations of civilization, the Church, the school, business, the home; but always it led to the goal of God. Some there were who walked part way upon it but, never exploring its branches, or arriving only at the reformation in life and morals and not at that in worship and

doctrine, continued to be staunch Catholics.

In other words, acquaintance with the Bible did not infallibly lead to the Reformation and yet was undeniably prerequisite to it, being the distinguishing feature of its early phases, and the central force, centrifugally scattering its vitality to all realms of living, centripetally attracting all to itself as the touchstone. The dynamic, the principles, the spread of the reformed faith in France - all were inextricably bound up with the return to the documents of Christianity; in the words of the sixteenth century slogan:- "Verbum dei sufficit!" The Word of God sufficed to open their eyes to what existed of wrong in Church and creed and life; it revealed also what ought to be; it pointed the way to the power by which Truth might be established. It alone stimulated and guided the reformers, it alone captivated the people, it alone was found to meet the needs of that day. Thus it may truly be said that the contact with the original flame of the Scriptures resulted in that great rekindling of vital Christian experience which resolved itself into the Reformation in France.

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## APPENDIX.

### The Original French of Quotations Used.

- P. 9,n.1. "Une si profonde ignorance se fût introduite dans l'Église de Dieu.... ceux qui sont employés de servir l'autel et à chanter les louanges divines, sont tombés dans une telle ineptie, qu'il ne s'en trouve qu'un bien petit nombre qui comprennent exactement et complètement ce qu'ils lisent et ce qu'ils chantent. Il en résulte que la plupart d'entre eux ont le cœur desséché, une âme froide comme la glace, et apportent dans l'accomplissement du ministère sacré une telle tiédeur, que, tandis que leur lèvres murmurent les saints cantiques, leur cœur, ou ne brûle plus l'ardeur de l'esprit divin, reste sans aucune intelligence des paroles qui sortent de leur bouche."
- P.11,n.3. "affin que les simples membres du corps du Jésuschrist, ayans ce en leur langue, puissent estre aussi certains de la verité évangéliques comme ceux qui l'ont en latin."
- P.13,n.1. "Pendant longtemps," he says in the preface to his commentary on the Psalms, "je me suis attache aux études humaines et j'ai a peine goute du bord des lèvres des études divines... mais déjà dans la lointaine une lumière si brillante à frappe mes regards que les doctrines humaines m'ont semblé des ténèbres en comparaison des études divines, tandis que celles-ci m'ont paru exhaler un parfum dont rien sur la terre n'égale la douceur."
- P.14,n.1. "pour vray la papaute n'estoit et n'est tant papale que mon cœur l'a este... car tellement il avoit aveuglé mes yeux et perverti tout en moy, que s'il y avoit personnage qui fût approuvé selon le pape, il m'estoit comme Dieu.... le Pape mesme, comme il y en avoit en moy."
- P.20,n.3. "vulgarizer les Livres Saints, en esquisser pour l'élite une interpretation spirituelle, en traduire pour les simples le texte authentique, mettre ainsi les âmes en contact direct avec la parole de Dieu."
- P.25,n.1. "toutes les nouvelles paraphrases de l'écriture sont heretiques et blasphematoires; l'étude des langues et des humanités est la source de tous les maux."

- P.27,n.2. "Il y eut un premier foyer d'Évangélisme ... dans le diocèse de Meaux, où l'on vit les artisans, comme cardeurs, peigneurs, et foulons, en travaillant de leurs mains, conférer de la Parole de Dieu."
- P.28,n.1. "Fêtes et dimanches étaient employés à lire les Écritures et à s'enquérir de la bonne volonté du Seigneur; en sorte qu'on voyait en ce diocèse reluire une image d'Église renouvelée."
- P.28,n.2. "Tu ne saurais croire de quelle grande ardeur Dieu a enflammé les âmes des simples, en plusieurs lieux, depuis la publication du Nouveau Testament en français.... Maintenant dans tout notre diocèse, les jours de fêtes et surtout le dimanche, on lit au peuple l'Épître et l'Évangile en langue vulgaire, et si l'officiant a quelque chose à dire, il l'ajoute à l'une ou à l'autre ou à chacune des deux pericopes."
- P.32,n.4. "pour mieux inviter le peuple à prier et à louer Dieu. Pour le commencement... on apprendra les petits enfans, puis avec les temps toute l'église pourra suivre."
- P.35,n.1. "Tous les pays de langue française, toutes les classes de la société, apportent leur contribution toute individuelle à l'œuvre de la traduction de la Bible".
- P.35,n.2. "l'histoire de la Bible française, en effet, est tout autre chose qu'une simple revue de manuscrits et de textes; c'est l'histoire d'une littérature religieuse et, pour ainsi dire, vivante; elle a ses origines, sa croissance, sa maturité, sa vieillesse même, lorsque la Bible n'est plus qu'une prétexte à des peintures magnifiques et à des reliures hors de prix."
- P.35,n.3. "l'œuvre des Jacques Lefèvre, des Robert Olivetan, et des Réformateurs, en général, ne fut point tant une entreprise d'innovateurs que le couronnement d'un édifice anciennement fondé dans les entrailles du sol historique de la France."
- P.41,n.1. "non pas pour les clercs; mais pour les laïcs et simples religieux et hermites qui ne sont pas lettrés comme ils doivent; aussi pour autres bonnes personnes qui vivent selon la loi de Jésus-Christ; lesquels par le moyen de ce livre, pourront nourrir leurs âmes de divines histoires et enseigner plusieurs gens simples et ignorans."

P52,n.2.

"Aiant cherché le remède toute ma vye, n'en ay jamais trouvé que ung, qui est la lecture des faintes lectres, en laquelle se trouve la vraie et parfaicte joie de l'esprit, dont procede le repos et la fauté du corps. Et si vous me demandez quelle répte me tient si joyeuse et si faine fur ma vieillesse, c'est que incontinent que je fuy levée, je prens la sainte Escripiture et la lys; et en vuiant et contemplant la bonté de Dieu."

P.55,n.2.

"Nous croyons que la parole qui est contenue ences livres est procedee de Dieu, duquel seul elle prend son autorité et non de hommes. Et d'autant qu'elle est reigle de toute vérité, contenant tout ce qui est nécessaire pour le service de Dieu et nostre salut..."

P.56,n.1.

"Besoin du peuple chrétien, depuis trop longtemps, sevré de la parole du Christ, ordre de Dieu même qui a voulu que l'Évangile fût annoncé a tous, traditions du sacerdoce juif qui faisait connaître et lire la Loi, des évangelistes et des apôtres qui ont écrit pour le peuple, de l'église primitive qui a traduit dans les langues diverses du temps, tentative analogues dans les autres pays."

P.56,n.5.

"Tout ce qui ne réfléchit pas l'éclat de la Parole, non seulement n'est pas nécessaire mais est absolument superflu."

P.56,n.6

"C'est que ne rien savoir, en dehors de l'Évangile, c'est savoir tout."

P.57,n.2.

"puisque Dieu nous a suffisamment déclaré sa volonté par ses Prophetes et Apôtres, et mêmes par la bouche de son fils, nostre Seigneur Jésus Christ, nous devons cet honneur et reverence a la parole de Dieu de n'y rien aioutter du nostre; mais de nous conformer entièrement a la reigle qui nous y est prescrite. Et pour ce que l'Église Romaine, laissant l'usage et coustume de la primitive Église, a introduit nouveaux commandemens et nouvelle forme du service de Dieu; nous estimons estre tresraisonnable de préférer les commandemens de Dieu, qui est la vérité même, aux commandemens des hommes, qui de leurs nature sont enclins à mensonge et vanité."

P.57,n.3.

"en ceste disputation autre escripture n'aye n'autorité ni foy fors que le Vieux et Nouveau Testament qu'on appelle la Bible et la Parole de Dieu. Cecy ung chascun alliguera, provant de la son sens et intelligence, conferant ce qui sera

obscur avec ce qui est plus clair, rejectés du tout faintz sens, jugemens, opinions, fables de tous hommes et docteurs. Si, n'y aura autre juge en la presente disputation que la Sainte Escripiture, laquelle se jugera soy-mêmes, laquelle seule est la regle, le filet, le juge et fondement de la sainte foy."

P.57,n.4. "usant tout proprement des voix de la Sainte Escripiture, fuyant non-seulement les sentences et façons de parler qui ne sont en l'Escripiture et de l'Escripiture, mais aussi les motz desquelz l'Escripiture n'use."

P.58,n.2. "on y trouve plus de signes de vie spirituelle et plus de vraie nourriture pour l'âme - qu'on devrait reconnaître la vertu fertilisante descendue d'en-haut et Celui duquel elle procède véritablement, et s'efforcer soi-même, après l'avoir reconnu, de Le suivre avec toute la pureté de coeur et toute la pieté dont on est capable, puisque c'est l'unique moyen de s'approcher de Celui qui opere tout en tous."

P.60,n.1. "Chrésiens, pour lhonneur de Dieu nostre très bon pere, ne regardez les coustumes ni le temps et années, ni les hommes, ni la multitude, ni l'apparence que tout peult avoir, soit en science, vertu, doctrine, sainteté, ou autorité, mêmes quant ce seroit ung ange du ciel, mais seulement pensez, regardez, et diligemment examinez ce que le bon sauueur Jésus a ordonné et commandé, duquel le père dit: Cestuy est mon filz bien aymé, ouyez le."

P.60,n.2. "Premièrement, nous protestons, que pour la règle de nostre foy et religion, nous voulons suivre la seule Escripiture, sans y mesler aucune chose qui ayt esté controuvé du sens des hommes, sans la Parole de Dieu; et ne pretendons pour nostre gouvernement spirituel, recevoir aucune doctrine, que celle qui nous est enseignée par icelle parolle sans y adiouster ni diminuer, ainsi que nostre Seigneur le commands."

P.60,n.3. "Il n'est loisible aux hommes, ni même aux Auges, d'y adiouster, dimimuer, on changer. Dont il s'ensuit que ne l'antiquité, ni les costumes, ni la multitude, ni la sagesse humaine, ni les arrests, ni les édicts, ni les décrêts, ni les conciles, ni les visions, ni les miracles, ne dorvent estre opposés à icelle écriture sainte, mais au contraire, toutes choses dorvent estre examinées, reiglus et reformées selon icelle."

- P.61,n.5. "La Sainte Éscripture est mieux entendue à present qu'elle n'a esté le temps passé, et au temps passé n'a esté bien interpretée.... Je dys que ung chacun, Docteur ou non Docteur, Bacchelier ou non Bacchelier, peult prescher et administrer la Sainte Éscripture plus parfaite-ment qu'ils ne font."
- P.62,n.1. "il ne connaît qu'une seule règle, une seule loi supreme en matière religieuse et ecclésiastique: la parole de l'Évangile. Il lit et il étudie cette parole sans aucune préjugé scolastique, et il l'applique aux hommes et aux choses avec une courage imperturbable."
- P62,n.2. "en regardant la sainte Écriture plus en cognoistrez par la revelation de dieu. Mais donnez vous garde en la lisant, que ne la tiriez à vôstre sens faisant servir à vos affections en foullant la pasture des brebis."
- P.63,n.1. "vainement saurions-nous tous les versets de l'écriture, vainement aussi aurions, nous entassé les commentaires, les corrections, et les variantes, elle resterait pour nous l'egnigme d'une langue morte."
- P.64,n.1. "ayant eu l'occasion de lire la Bible..... n'y trouva rien sur l'invocation de la Vièrge Marie, rien sur plusieurs des dogmes réputés fondamentaux dans l'Église romaine. Il fût étonné, au contraire, d'y rencontrer des articles importants dont Rome fait à peine mention dans ses formulaires."
- P.64,n.6. "Dieu ne regarde point les oeuvres et mentes des hommes pour bailler sa grace, mais seulement regard sa bonté, qui est infinie."
- P.65,n.1. "la Sainte Église.... est née de la Parolle de Dieu  
l'Église de Christ ne fait aucunes loys ni statutes sans la Parolle de Dieu  
la messe.... est contraire à la Sainte Éscripture  
aucune purgatoire en toute la Bible  
faïres aucunes images.... est contre la Parolle  
mariage n'est deffendu par la Sainte Éscripture."
- P.65,n.2. "au contraire, nous rejeçtons l'intercession des saints, comme une superstition inventée des hommes contre l'Éscripture

(of ministers) ne leurs attribuons aultre puissance ne autorité, synon de conduire, régir, et gouverner le peuple de Dieu à eulx commis, par icelle Parolle, en laquelle ils ont puissance de commander, déffendre, promettre, et menasser, et sans laquelle ils ne peuvent et ne doivent rien attenter."

P.65,n.3.

"Nous croyons que toute nostre justice est fondée en la remision de nos pechez.... C'est pourquoy nous rejectons tous autres moyens de nous pouvoir justifier devant dieu; et sans presumer de nulles vertus ni merites, nous nous tenons simplement a l'obeissance de Iésus-Christ.

il ne nous est pas permis de prier sinon selon la forme que Dieu nous a dictée par sa Parole; que tout ce que les hommes ont imaginée de l'intercession des Saints n'est qu'abus et fallace de Satan, pour faire denoyer les hommes de la forme de bien prier. Nous rejectons aussi tous autres moyens que les hommes presume avoir pour se racheter envers Dieu, comme dérogeans au sacrifice de la Mort et Passion de Jésus-Christ. Enfin, nous tenons le Purgatoire pour une illusion procedée de cette mesme boutique, de laquelle sont aussi procedés les voeux Monastiques, les Pélérinages, les défenses du Mariage, et l'usage des viandes, les Indulgences, et toutes autres telles choses, par lesquelles on pense mériter grâce et salut."

P.66,n.2.

"nous ne retenons aucunes doctrines humaines contrevenantes à la parole de Dieu, comme satisfaction des pêches par nos oeuvres, les constitutions commandées sans cette parole de Dieu, avec une mauvaise opinion d'obligation et mérite, et toutes coûtumes superstitieuses, comme l'adóration d'images, pélérinages, et choses semblables."

P.66,n.4.

"La diffusion de la Bible, dont les éditions se multiplient, celles surtout des Psaumes et de St. Paul, dispose les esprits à un changement. Une théologie nouvelle, plus simples, plus claire, affranchie de la barbarie des mots, du fâtras des questions, une religion, plus vivante et plus libres, moins entravée de pratiques, d'observances, de règlements, voila ce que les consciences les plus hautes reclament."

P.67,n.3.

"par l'autorité et l'exemple de l'Écriture, que l'église sera plus heureusement gouvernée par les lois de Christ que par celles des Gentils."

- P.68,n.1. "Quiconque lieu sous le ciel, qui est le vray tabernacle de Dieu, est plus propre et convenable pour prier Dieu et pour luy faire sacrifice.... que les faicts par les mains des hommes;.... la benediction et aspersion de l'eau benoiste n'y fait riens. - Pour les chandelles et cierges allumez entour les autels, oblations et sacrifices qu'on fait en l'Eglises, l'honneur de Dieu n'est point augmenté. Il n'y a rien qui plus nous eslonge et separe de la congnoissance de Dieu que les images."
- P.68,n.4. "apres l'oraison, le prescheur commence de prendre quelque texte de la sainte escripture, lequel il lit plainement, comme nostre seigneur fist en Nazareth, et apres la lecture il declare mot à mot, sans saulter, amenans les passaiges qui sont en l'escripture servans à la déclaration diceluy qui expose sans sortir hors de la sainte escripture, affin qu'on ne brouille point la pure parolle de Dieu, avec lordure des hommes portant fidelement la parolle, et ne parlant que la parolle de Dieu.... il exhort et admoneste .... selon que le texte porte."
- P.69,n.2. "simplement une religion, non un raisonnement mais un sentiment: celui de notre misere, des bienfaits de Dieu, de notre Redemption, de la grace, de l'amour de Jesus et de son Evangile, - et, d'un mot, une confiance, une joie qui dilate l'ame.... une renovation interieure, individuelle: la penetration pacifique de l'evangile dans les ames.
- P.70,n.1. "De la aussi (retourne aux sources), par les plus naturelle des consequences, ce besoin de simplification, cette soif de communication directe avec le Christ.... enfin ce role preponderant attribue à la foi, nonpas à la foi dogmatique et formaliste, mais à la foi vivante, elan de coeur, vive illumination de l'ame qui nous initie à la vie divine en nous liberant des superstitions, en nous affranchissant de l'esclavage de la lettre par la joueuse liberte de l'esprit."
- P.70,n.3. "qui est de croire les choses de la Bible en se confiant es promesses que Dieu a promis... cestuy-la qui croit en Dieu avec une confiance et une esperance est vivifie."
- P.71,n.1. "Car la Parolle de Dieu non-seulement y était prechee, mais pratiquee; attendue que toutes oeuvres de charite s'exerçaient la. Les moeurs se reformaient de jour en jour, et les superstitions s'en allaient bas."