



JACQUES LE FEBVRE

E. de Rouillon sculp.

THE CONTRIBUTION OF JACQUES LEFEVRE D'ETAPLES
TO THE REFORMATION IN FRANCE.

by

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A T H E S I S

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I N M E M O R I A M

This work is an imperfect expression of appreciation of the instruction and example of a former teacher, whose faithfulness and sympathy are the inspiration of my study hours and whose high Christian scholarship is the ideal to which not only I, but all those who were privileged to study under him, strive to attain.

Dr. James Coffin Stout.

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THE CONTRIBUTION OF JACQUES LEFEVRE D'ETAPLES
TO THE REFORMATION IN FRANCE

Introduction

The century from 1450 to 1550 is a period filled with interest to all students of history. In these years that section of life that we call western civilisation awoke to a new existence. Such movements as the Renaissance, the era of discovery, the beginnings of nationalism, the break up of feudalism, the disintegration of the temporal power of the Papacy, the decline of the Holy Roman Empire and the Reformation, all fall within this period. To a student of church history this century is of particular interest. The break of the Protestant bodies from the mother church is a subject so full, so rich, as to always reward those who are willing to go below the surface in the search for new information on this great movement.

This period brings into review a galaxy of great and near great men of many countries and of many occupations. Louis XI, Louis XII, Francis I of France; Charles V of Spain; Henry VII and Henry VIII of England are a few of the outstanding kings of the time. Alexander VI, Julius II, Leo X sat upon the papal chair. The great masters of art and architecture, Michel Angelo, Raphael, Titian, Da Vinci and their lesser contemporaries; the great scholars Petrarch, Dante, Boccaccio, Erasmus, Bude, More, Ficino, Pico, Barbaro and Melancthon; the explorers Columbus, Vasco da Gama, and Magellan; and finally the reformers

Luther, Savonarola, Calvin, Zwingli and Loyola are some of the men who attract the student to the study of this great century.

Accompanying these more famous men is a great number of lesser lights, to whom history has not given such detailed treatment. But if a great movement is to be thoroughly understood, more than the outstanding leaders must be known. The great figures must be seen in relation to their lesser contemporaries. Luther in his magnificence is apt to hide Melancthon, Calvin in his brilliance blinds the incidental reader to the other French and Genevan reformers, without whom neither Luther nor Calvin could ever have accomplished the results which they did. Not the least of the men who have been overshadowed by the proximity of a greater, is Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, a professor in the University of Paris, who was largely instrumental in bringing about the Reformation in France. He was a man well thought of in his own day, respected alike for his ability as a scholar, as a teacher and as an interpreter and translator of the Scriptures.

It is with Lefèvre and the influence that he had on the rise of the Reformation in France that this study has to do. It is proposed to trace through the life and works of Lefèvre the ideas and actions that aided or retarded

the spread of this movement. There are many of his life ^{phases} and each phase will constitute a chapter in this discussion. The opening chapter will introduce Lefèvre, giving an account of his early training in order that his environment and the influences and forces that formed his life may be seen. The chapter will close when Lefèvre is ready to enter upon his work as a teacher in the University of Paris. Chapter two will be a survey of the field of his work. Primarily this will be a study of France, where he spent practically all his life, but what was true of France was true to a greater or less degree of all the other countries. This is particularly true in the consideration of the state of religion in his day. This survey will not attempt to be exhaustive, but simply indicative of the environment in which Lefèvre worked.

The remaining chapters of the work, excepting the last, will take up, through the different phases of his life and works, Lefèvre's contribution to the Reformation in France. The development of the thesis can be followed through the outline preceding it, each chapter denoting a distinct phase of his relationship to the movement. The last chapter will be an attempt to interpret the character and religion of Lefèvre and to estimate the scope of his influence not only on his own day but upon the movement as a whole and, as a side issue, his influence on the counter-reform within the mother church.

Up to this time there has been no study of Lefèvre in English but it is hoped that in some small way this thesis will throw new light not only on the man himself, but also on the origin of the Reformation movement in France. Lefèvre's influence was broad and though he did not have the same recognition as a reformer that Luther had in Germany or Calvin in Geneva yet historians have hitherto slighted the contribution he made to the movement as a whole.

CHAPTER ONE

BIRTH AND EDUCATION

Birth and Education

- I. Birth - - - - - pages 7 - 9.
- II. Education in Paris - - - - " 9 - 13.
- III. Contact with Italian Humanists - " 13 - 20.

Birth.

The little country of Picardy has given to France and to the world many great men of religion. Peter the Hermit, "Le Grand Ferre", and John Calvin are three Picards who are outstanding. She also gave to France another, for in a little sea-coast town of Picardy, Étapes, just off the Straits of Dover, Jacques Lefèvre was born.(1) He was destined to be famed in both religion and letters. So common was the name Lefèvre that in order to identify themselves possessors of this name were forced to add the name of the place from which they came. For this reason in later years Lefèvre is distinguished by the addition of the name of his home town and is commonly known as Lefèvre d'Étapes. The latinized form of his name is Jacobus Faber Stapulensis. It was by the latter name that he was best known to his contemporaries.(2)

There is no agreement among historians concerning the date of his birth. Dates ranging from 1435 to 1455 are given. One writer puts forward as a compromise the date 1445 but offers no arguments for its authenticity.(3) Those who argue for the date 1455 are followers of Henri Carl Graf.(4) Graf argues from a letter written by Erasmus in 1519 in which Erasmus referred to Lefèvre as "senex".(5)

- * * * * *
- (1) Sainte Marthe, Elogia, p. 1.
 - (2) It is the name by which he signed all his works.
 - (3) Louis Delaruelle, Correspondance de Guillaume Bude.
 - (4) H.C. Graf, Essai sur la vie et les écrits de Jacques Lefèvre d'Étapes.
 - (5) Translated by Graf - "sixty".

He points out that if Lefèvre had been born in 1435 he would at that time be much too old to be called "senex".(1) Then, also arguing from probability, Graf attempted to prove his point by asserting that a man as old as Lefèvre would have been if born at the earlier date would never have been able to accomplish the work and travels of Lefèvre between the years 1519 and 1528. His conclusion is that Lefèvre was born between the years 1450 and 1460, and he suggests 1455 as satisfying all the requirements.(2) In this he is followed by most of the writers on the subject of the Reformation in France.(3) There are a few however that do not agree with this date but prefer the earlier one.(4) For the earlier date there is this to be said: Marguerite of Navarre, in speaking of the death of Lefèvre, has him say that at the time of his death he was one hundred and one years old.(5) This is supported by the statement of Macrinus that Lefèvre had seen a century of life.(6) Since he died in 1536 the date of his birth would be 1435. As the two references given above are the only definite references that exist, there seems to be no good reason for rejecting them.

Little is known of his family. Sainte Marthe said
* * * * *

(1) Graf's translation is not necessarily correct and the argument from probability fails too often to be final.

(2) Graf, op. cit., p. 4, note 1.

(3) Tilley, Barnaud, Baird, Herminjard etc.

(4) Doumergue, and Sichel.

(5) See chapter nine. Also Doumergue, Vie de Calvin, Appendix IV. (6) Salmon Macrini, Hymnorum, L iii, p. 119

of him that he was "ex ignobili familia natus"(1) and Remond went further to say that he was a "pauvre enfant, sans berceau et sans aveu".(2) Nothing is known of his family and the blank is such that when Mangan asserts that Lefèvre, like Erasmus, was an illegitimate child there is no one to contradict. He gives no source for this statement but if it is true it would explain many puzzling things in Lefèvre's life.(3)

But whatever may have been his parentage we do know that he was possessed of sufficient funds to educate himself and to travel. He later gave up his benefices to his brothers and nephews and devoted himself entirely to study. (4) Some time before 1490 he completed the course for the degree of Master of Arts in the University of Paris.

Education. in Paris.

It is not definitely known either the time when he entered the University of Paris or the training that he had before his entrance. However it can be inferred from a letter written by Jean Reuchlin to Lefèvre in which Reuchlin spoke of himself as a former fellow-student of Lefèvre,(5) that Lefèvre was in the University in 1473(2).(6)

And from this date it is possible to reconstruct the

* * * * *

(1) Ste. Marthe, *Elogia*, p. 1. "from an low family by birth".

(2) Florimond Remond, *Histoire de l'Hérésie*, p. 846. "poor child, a homeless waif"

(3) Mangan, J.J. ? *Life of Erasmus*, Vol. II, p.14.

(4) Ste. Marthe, *Op.cit.*, p.3.

(5) Herminjard, *Correspondance des Reformateurs*, vol.I, p.15.

(6) Reuchlin left the University in 1474.

course which he followed.

The Universities of France had not at this time broken with the old scholastic curriculum as had the universities of Italy. Lefèvre, therefore, pursued the course of studies identified with the scholastic regime. While we are ignorant of his pre-university training, it is known that he was required to be able to read, write and speak Latin in order to matriculate at the University.(1) Here he went through the usual training of a "bejaunus", or freshman, in the works of Aristotle. The trivium - that is grammar, rhetoric and dialectic (logic) - and the quadrivium - music, arithmetic, geometry and astronomy - were the subjects of his study, with especial emphasis on Logic.(2)

In contrast with modern methods the teaching of the schoolmen is often held up to ridicule, but not always with reason.(3) The training they gave should not be despised. In his college work Lefèvre had to attend three lectures a day, two of these in the morning and one in the afternoon. In the conduct of these lectures the professor either dictated or spoke rapidly the content of his lecture. Because of the scarcity of books, the dictation method, which allowed the student to copy his own text and notes,

* * * * *
(1) Whittlesey quotes Rait, Universities, p.133.

(2) The best discussion of the medieval university training is found in Rashdall, The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages, and of the Univ. of Paris, Crevier, Hist. de l'Univer. Paris.

(3) See Rashdall, op. cit., vol.II, pt. ii, p. 703ff.

was the more popular.(1) The following quotation from Odofredus illustrates the method used in the classroom.

"First I shall give you summaries of each title before I proceed to the text; secondly, I shall give you as clear and explicit a statement as I can of the purport of each law(included in the title); thirdly, I shall read the text with a view to correcting it; fourthly, I shall briefly repeat the contents of the law; fifthly, I shall solve apparent contradictions, adding any general principles of law - - - and any distinctions or subtle and useful problems arising out of the law, with their solutions, as far as Divine Providence shall enable me. And if any law shall seem deserving, by reason of its celebrity or difficulty, of a repetition, I shall reserve it for an evening repetition."(2)

Though this illustration is taken from law yet the same method was applied to the study of Aristotle and theology.(3)

Besides the three daily lectures there were two other periods which had their contribution to make to the education of Lefèvre. They were the "resumptiones" and "disputationes", periods of reviews and debates. "Resumptiones"(review) came at the hour immediately following dinner and "disputationes" came after supper. In the former there was a general review of the lectures of the morning and the elucidation of certain obscure points of the lecture. In the evening "disputationes" was for some one to disagree with any proposition that had come up in the day's discussions and to substantiate the disagreement.

* * * * *

(1) Rashdall, op. cit., p. 703.

(2) Encyclopedia of Education, Vol. V, p. 659, Art. Univ.

(3) Ibid.

These periods, particularly the latter, were excellent training in dialectic and also furnished fine opportunities to review the day's lectures.(1)

The student followed this procedure for three or four years until he was ready to come up as a candidate for the degree of bachelor of arts. At his "determination", the candidate announced a thesis, defined his terms and defended his thesis against the world. When he had successfully passed this test he was granted his degree and the right to try for the degree of Master of Arts.(2) One year after receiving the Bachelor of Arts degree, the student was made a "licencie" and three years later he took another examination for the master's degree.(3)

Just who Lefèvre's teachers were is not known, but it is more than likely that he had as his Greek instructor either Gregory Typhernas or Jerome of Sparta. John of Lapidus gave courses in the university in Latin and in literature. Perhaps greater than all of these in their influence on Lefèvre were his teachers of rhetoric, Guillaume Fichet and Robert Gaguin, his disciple and great successor. Gaguin sought, with some success, to replace the faulty Latin of the schools by the more classical form, which was filtering into France from Italy.(4)

The subject that interested him most was Aristotle since to his works Lefèvre devoted most of his early

* * * * *

(1)It was in these periods that the student learned to uphold a thesis. See Whittlesey, op. cit., p. 18
(2)Ibid, p. 19 (3)Graf, op. cit., p. 6. (4) Ibid, pp. 5&6. See also Tilley, Rise of the French Renaissance, p. 188.

literary labors.(1) Because of his great interest in the purifying of the text of Aristotle it would seem that he had come under the influence of Gaguin. But his interest was not limited to logic, for though on this he spent the greater part of his classical labors, yet he wrote original treatises on both music and astronomy, whereas on the other subjects he was content to edit and comment on the text of another.(2)

Lefèvre brought out of the university a training that left him

"attaché à la pensée plus encore qu'à la forme, de sorte que sa connaissance du Grec fut toujours défectueuse et son style latin inférieur à celui des bons latinistes de son temps".(3)

Contact With Italian Humanists

Though Lefèvre had all that Paris could offer him in the way of an education, his preparation was not yet complete. For while he remained at the University of Paris for some time as a teacher yet he planned to go to Italy.(1) It was the custom of many students of France to journey to Italy, attracted there by the learning for which that country was famous. If the students were seeking degrees, they were more easily obtained in Italy than in France, or if degrees were no inducement the great

(1) See list of Lefèvre's publications in chapter three.

(2) These two folios are the only original works he published.

(3) Barnaud, Jacques Lefèvre, p. 11. "to the thought more than to the form with the result that his knowledge of the Greek was always defective and his Latin style inferior to that of the fine Latin scholars of his day".

(4) Lefèvre was teaching in the College of Cardinal Lemoine in 1490.

libraries were.(1) So Florence, Venice and Rome annually drew from France large numbers of students who came to visit the great libraries and to meet the new teachers whose fame had spread into France.(2) Graf, in his Essai, states that Lefèvre made this first journey in the year 1486, but gives a footnote saying that he believed the date to be wrong.(3) His mistake was due to an imperfect text of a letter written by Beatus Rhenanus(4) in which he said:

"Jacobus Faber Stapulensis, vir ex omnia aevo incomparabilis omniumque disciplinarum uberissimus fons, qui philosophiam nimio situ squalentem et suo viduatam ita illustravit, ut Hermolao Barbaro et Argyropoulo Byzanto, praeceptoribus (quod quodam loco adnotasti) olim tuis."(5)

Graf's text read "suis" in the last line for "tuis", which led him to think that Rhenanus was mistaken. The date for this journey was 1492 and is definitely set from Lefevre's statement made in 1508 that

"hunc sextus decimus agitur annus quod viguit adhuc Hermolaus Barbarus - - - Romae peregrinus agebam".(6)
* * * * *

(1) Tilley, Dawn of the French Ren., p. 83.

(2) Ibid. (3) Graf, Essai, p. 8, note 10.

(4) Beatus Rhenanus was one of Lefèvre's close friends.

(5) Quoted in Herminjard, op. cit. vol. I, p.10, note 2.

"Jac. Faber Stapulensis, a man incomparable in all ages, and a very rich fountain of all learning who thus showed philosophy filthy with too much mould and stripped of its splendor, as (did) Hermolaus Barbarus and Argyropoulus the Byzantine (which you have noted in certain of your works) your former teachers - -"

(6) Dialectica of George of Trebizond, Praefatio. "Sixteen years ago I journeyed to Rome because Hermolaus Barbarus flourished there."

All, however, are not in agreement with this date, but as this is conclusive evidence the date of the journey is established as 1492.(1)

Accompanied by Guillaume Gontier, Lefèvre traveled to Italy and visited Rome, Florence and Venice. Obviously then his interest was not in any university but in the libraries and scholars of the country. It has been noted that the University of Paris gave to him a method of study. To understand his works it is important to recognize that this journey did three additional things for him. First, it added to and completed his method. Secondly, it gave him a motive and a principle for his life work. Thirdly, it brought him into contact with three men who had great influence on his life - at Florence, Pico della Mirandola and Marsilio Ficino and at Rome, a renewed acquaintance with Ermolao Barbaro.(2)

It is commonly reported that Lefèvre made other journeys, that he was a

"grand explorateur de bibliothèques, la légende lui prêtait toutes sortes d'exodes, en Africa, en Asia". (3)

This seems to be no more than a myth; for, though he no doubt had the desire, nowhere in his writings is there any record of such journeys.

* * * * *

(1) Barnaud suggests the dates 1488-9 for this trip but offers no evidence. See p. 12, of his work on Lefèvre.

(2) Tilley, op. cit., p. 234, Renaudet, p. 218ff.

(3) Hanotaux, Hist. de la Nation Française, vol. xii, p. 330. "great explorer of libraries, legend takes him on all sorts of expeditions into Africa and Asia."

The depth of the influence of this trip is being more and more recognised by writers on Lefèvre.(1) It was this journey that turned Lefèvre from becoming merely another teacher into one of the greatest of the leaders of the new learning in France. As a study is made of Pico, Ficino and Barbaro it is easy to recognise in Lefèvre their influence. For the chief characteristic of each man is reproduced in the life and work of Lefèvre.

One of the outstanding traits of Lefèvre that remained with him throughout life was a certain weakness of style in writing both Latin and French. One authority describes and explains it by saying that Lefèvre

"dans l'étude des auteurs latin et grecs, il avait beaucoup plus en vue la pensée que le langage, et doué d'un esprit aussi juste que profond, il dut bientôt reconnaître combien la scholastique vide et le formalisme dialectique qu'on lui avait enseigné et qui s'appuyait sur un Aristote tronqué défiguré, était loin de la véritable doctrine de ce philosophe".(2)

Whence came this emphasis on the thought of the author rather than on style? Probably he was influenced in this direction by Pico, for in a letter written by Pico to Ermolao Barbaro there are similar principles expressed.

* * * * *

(1) Renaudet, *Pré-réforme et Humanisme*, and Jourdain, *The Movement toward Catholic Reform in the XVI Century*, both stress the importance of this journey. I have followed neither.

(2) Graf, *op. cit.*, p. 8. "in the study of Greek and Latin authors he had the thought much more in view than the language, and endowed with a mind as honest as it was profound, he must soon recognise how far the empty scholasticism and dialectic formalism which he had been taught and which was based on a mutilated and distorted Aristotle was from the true teaching of this philosopher."

"We are solicitous what, and not how, we write. We are solicitous indeed how. We would avoid all pomp and flowing oratory; we seek not to commend ourselves by wit or elegance. Let our manner be useful, be grave, be venerable. Let it rather derive authority from the dignity of the subject, than commendation from frippery and style. - - Grant us the praise of detecting falsehood so clearly that it can no longer be defended; of defending truth so ably, that it can no longer be called in question. Allow us brevity of style; pregnant notwithstanding, with multifarious and weighty matter; pages replete with the most important questions and solutions. - We are pronounced, you say, by the many unpolished and uncouth. We deem this rather an honor than a disgrace."(1)

To understand the fame of Pico at this time, when he was known and highly respected throughout all Europe, is to appreciate somewhat the effect such ideas would have on Lefèvre. From the study of his writings it is evident that he also followed the same principles. Graf(2) recognised this characteristic in Lefèvre and Renaudet also found it.(3) In his French translations the same trait is distinguishable as Quievreux wrote of his translation.(4)

Beyond giving Lefèvre the motive of study, his contact with these men gave him the philosophic principle to which he held throughout his life. It permeated his work not only with Aristotle but also with the mystics and the Scriptures. And it is from Ficino most of the three that he received this. Ficino, who was the leader of that

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(1)Greswell, Memoirs of A. Politianus, M.Picus Mirandula, etc., p. 198ff. (2) Graf, op. cit., p.8.

(3) Renaudet, op. cit., p. 142 ff.

(4) Quievreux, Thesis on the New Testament in French of Lefèvre, p. 53.

group of Platonic enthusiasts that gathered around Lorenzo de Medici, was at once a great philosopher and a great Christian. Unlike some of his contemporaries, Ficino found no contradiction between philosophy and Christianity; on the contrary he considered them related and mutually helpful.

"He(Ficino) asserted that Socrates and Plato witnessed together with the Evangelists to the truth of revelation, and that the same spirit inspired the laws of Moses and the Greek philosophers - - this as he conceived it, was in effect little else than extending the catena of authority backward from the Christian fathers to the sages of the ancient world."(1)

And as one must have a basis for his faith, Ficino found that basis in Platonism.

It is true that Lefèvre did not follow Ficino into Platonism, but he had the same regard for Aristotle and his teachings that Ficino had for the philosophy of Plato.

And

"the same mysticism which enabled Ficino to read Christianity into Plotinus and an amalgam of Christianity and Neo-Platonism into Plato, led Lefevre to regard Aristotle as a transcendental and almost as a Christian philosopher."(2)

To what an extent this influenced his later life will be shown in the following chapters.

How extensive and how close the friendship between Lefèvre and Ermolao Barbaro is not known. Barnaud says
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- (1) Symonds, Renaissance in Italy, Reviv. of Learning, p.325.
(2) Tilley, op. cit., p. 246.

that Lefèvre knew Barbaro in Paris before the trip to Italy.(1)

If that was the case it might be that they were well acquainted. Certainly Barbaro seems to have had a very great influence on Lefèvre.(2) Barbaro's scholarly task was left incomplete and it fell to Lefèvre to pick up the work where it was left and carry it through. To make this statement clear it will be necessary to trace something of Barbaro's life. He was a Venetian noble to whom honors came early.(3) ^{a man} Though of affairs, he found time to do a great deal of work in the field of Latin and Greek scholarship. While yet a young man he had been authorized to lecture on philosophy and "with great public approbation" he expounded Aristotle's Ethics, and drew up an epitome of them for his hearers.(4) He planned to translate all the works of Aristotle. In the accomplishment of this design he published the Themistius' Paraphrases. It is in this work that his influence on Lefèvre is evident. The method used by Barbaro in the Paraphrases is that which Lefèvre later followed. First to give the text, and if appropriate to make critical comments on it. Then in a brief, lucid style paraphrase the words of the text to show their meaning. Finally, to accompany this with a commentary.(5)

This was Ermolao Barbaro's method and it was the method
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(1) Barnaud, op. cit., p.12. (2) Lefèvre always had a high regard for Barbaro. See *Dialectica* of Geo. Trebizond, *Præfatio*. (3) Bayle, P., *A General Dictionary, Hist. and Crit.*, Article Barbarus. (4) *Ibid.* (5) *Ibid.* See discussion of Lefèvre's technic in chapter three.

employed by Lefèvre. This completed the education of Lefèvre.

The subjects that interested him in his Italian sojourn were sober and serious. The lighter and more frivolous Latin writers did not attract him. He regarded them with distrust. In his later writings he said that Terence, Ovid, Tibullus and Lucretius were hurtful and dangerous to morals, and so warns others from them.(1)

He returned from Italy before 1494 (2) and resumed his work in the College of Cardinal Lemoine. There he remained for many years as a teacher of Aristotle. His training was complete and he now began the life work for which he had prepared himself and in its pursuance he went further than he had dreamed.

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(1) Comm. in Epist. Paul. I Cor. XV, 33; II Cor.V,10,
I Tim. IV, 1.

(2) He published his Introduction to Aristotle's Metaphysics in Paris in February, 1494.

CHAPTER TWO

THE FIELD OF HIS WORK

II. The Field of his Work

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What sort of a world was that in which Lefèvre was about to begin his work? What was the condition of the country in which his work was to be carried out? Was there any need for a change? Were there any prospects of such a change, and were there any forces already at work to bring it about?

To answer these questions, it will be necessary to make a survey of France and of Europe, where Lefèvre carried on his work. This survey will be conducted along four lines, each of which has a direct bearing on the spread of the Renaissance and the Reformation. Movements such as these do not spring full grown without herald or without announcement. This survey aims to show those influences which, coming out of the political, social, religious and educational conditions of France, during Lefèvre's early years in the University of Paris led to the start and spread of the Renaissance and Reformation in France.

A. The Political Status of France.

Growth of Centralization

Feudalism had been the form of government in France for many years. But feudalism had been dealt its death blow by the growing nationalism of the French people. A sense of their essential unity came out of the turmoil and tragedy of the Hundred Years War.(1) Louis XI and Anne de Beaujeu used this growing sense of unity and broke the

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(1) Bridge, A History of France from the death of Louis XI, vol. 1, pl 1 ff.

power of the feudal lords to make a real monarchy of France. But feudalism died hard and it took all the wisdom and statesmanship, wit and cunning of Louis and Anne to compass its downfall. The deliberate purpose of Louis XI was, at any cost, to centralize the power in the throne, and his death saw this work well on its way to completion.

"As feudal anarchy and provincial independence gave way to administrative unity, a new spirit became manifest in every sphere of government. Hitherto of little account, the king's ordinances took on a general character: they were addressed to all portions of the realm: - - and in many cases they became impressive monuments of legislative achievement. At the same time Royal justice acquired a wholly novel position of supremacy: feudal, ecclesiastical, and municipal jurisdictions were subordinated, limited and abolished, the ancient Parlements of Paris was strengthened and enlarged; and within the space of a few years numerous provincial courts were constructed upon the same model, which carried the King's laws and the King's justice to the uttermost borders of the land. To further the work of law and justice, a centralized government was invoked. -- Unusual powers were curtailed. Provincial peculiarities were discouraged. Municipal liberties were restricted. The ancient independence of the Church was diminished. The last strongholds of feudalism were made to totter before the advancing forces of the crown."(1)

This work of centralization which Louis left well advanced but incomplete, was resumed and carried forward by his daughter, Anne de Beaujeu.(2)

"Had she not stood by the side of the infant heir of Louis XI the monarchy might well have succumbed in the turmoil of domestic disturbance and external aggression, wherein the remnant of a kingdom shattered by hostile hands would have sunk into the impotence of feudal disintegration." (3)

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- (1) Bridge, Hist. of France etc., vol. 1, p. 2 ff.
- (2) The best account of her work is in Bridge's work.
- (3) Ibid., p. 252.

So well did she do her work that when she relinquished her power to the young king, Charles VIII, the last great feudal province had been brought under the royal banner and France "was now entire and at unity with itself".(1) Anne well deserved her title, "Madame la Grande".(2)

This centralizing policy was pursued by the next two kings, so that by the time Francis I came to the throne the government of France was almost entirely in the king.(3) If Charles V had had a like power in Germany the chances of the spread of the Reformation under the guidance of Luther would have been negligible. This great power vested in the person of the king of France made him the decisive factor in determining the spread or the repression of the Reformation teachings in France.

Foreign Relations.

In the history of great movements within a particular country, such as the Renaissance and the Reformation, the influence of the neighboring states is often of noteworthy importance. So it was in France. So greatly did the influence of her neighbors contribute to the growth of these movements that it is necessary to consider France's relations with the other countries.

With her hereditary enemy, England, France was, if

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(1) Roger Bacon in his life of Henry VII.

(2) Bridge, Hist. of France etc., p. 230.

(3) Baird, The Rise of the Huguenots of France, vol. 1., p.38.

not on amicable terms, yet, on terms of practical non-interference.(1) England, under Henry VII, had enough to do at home without meddling in foreign affairs. With Spain on the south, the relationship was normal, for, the existing rivalry between the houses of Aragon and of Anjou had by now become an international affair. Spain, while not entering into any general war, yet had found the time and the opportunity to take from France the greater part of Navarre.(2) Ferdinand was striving to establish in Spain the unity that Charles VIII had secured in France.

It was with the emperor that France was really at odds. Following the established policy of centralization, Anne de Beaujeu contrived to bring about the marriage of Charles VIII with Anne of Brittany, thus bringing Brittany, the only remaining great province, under the throne. But, in so doing, it was necessary to break the betrothal of Charles with Margaret of Austria, the daughter of Maximilian, and to break the betrothal of Maximilian with Anne of Brittany. This not only insulted Maximilian, the son of the emperor, but also lost the province of Brittany to the Empire. The result of this action was a war between Maximilian and France. Although ended by the Treaty of Etaples, it was the cause of friction between the Empire and France for many years.(3)

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(1) Following the treaty of Etaples.

(2) McDonald, *A History of France*, vol. 1, p. 333. See also Battifol, *The Century of the Renaissance*, p. 12ff.

(3) The details of this affair comprise most of vol.1 of Bridge's work. Bridge, *op. cit.*

In Italy a claim was made by the French crown that was to assist greatly in the spread of learning throughout France. In 1265, Clement IV conferred on the Count of Anjou, brother of St. Louis, the throne of the kingdom of Naples. After many changes and deaths, and a rebellion, one of the claimants (Rene of Anjou) willed his claim to his nephew, Charles of Maine, and in case his issue failed, this claim was to pass on to the king of France. Charles of Maine died in 1481 and as he left no heir, Charles VIII laid claim to the throne of Naples. Lured by the invitations of some jealous Italian Princes, Charles used this claim as an excuse to set out on a military expedition to establish himself on the throne of Naples. He entered Italy in 1494. The details and the political results of this ill-fated campaign do not concern this paper, except that it led to other expeditions into Italy by Louis XII and Francis I.(1) But while these campaigns were unsuccessful from a military standpoint, yet they gave the French king and, particularly, his nobles and court, an introduction to the Italian Renaissance, with its art, its architecture and its letters. This introduction bore much fruit in France. As Duclaux has so well stated it:

"What really contributed to the growth of France was the impression of Italy that the French brought away with them: an immense enlargement of the moral and artistic faculties. The one stimulated by the beauty and science of Italy, the other shaken and awakened as by the spectacle of a shocking example." (2)

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- (1) Bridge, op. cit., vol., II, discusses this campaign.
(2) Duclaux, Short History of France, p. 109.

B. The Social Status of France.

The Effects of Centralization

In order to understand the growth of the Renaissance and the Reformation in France, it is necessary to have a knowledge of the people to whom these movements made their appeal, their economic conditions, the social divisions, and the class relationships. The program of centralization had had its effect not only on the political unification of the kingdom but also upon the legal, social and economic conditions. Parallel with the centralization of legislation there ran, perforce, the centralization of taxation.

"Where the King's laws ran and the King's orders were executed, the King's taxes had to be paid: they were centralized like the government; and the mainstay of the new fiscal system, the taille, was regulated by the requirements, not of the individual province in which it was raised but of the country as a whole."(1)

Accompanying this centralization of the tax went a centralization and codification of laws. Not that all things were perfect or complete, but in the program of Louis and of Anne, this central program included taking from the nobles the administration of justice and the right to make all laws. To this end, Louis

"instituted three new parliaments, at Grenoble, Bordeaux and Dijon, which brought the king's justice within the reach of the people and kept in check the local pretensions of the feudal lords."(2)

(1) Bridge, op. cit., p. 3.

(2) Duclaux, op. cit., p. 106.

For the first time since Charlemagne, a postal service was opened over all the main roads in France. This however was reserved for royal service alone.(1) Louis opened countless roads, canals, mines; founded many manufactories, markets, fairs, attracting to France the cleverest craftsman of the neighboring countries.(2) The country at large was prosperous and in the year he died, there was the richest harvest known for many years. The internal policies were carried on by his daughter, Anne, so that in the year when Lefèvre returned from Italy, France was at peace, her people at work and contented.(3)

The State of Society.

Throughout France, though the great feudal lords no longer held the power that once was theirs, the feudal form of society still held and the varied classes of the feudal system comprised the social groups of Lefèvre's day. In the discussion of these classes, the detailed feudal classification will be passed over and the broader and more general one of the court, the church, the bourgeois and the working classes will be followed. Of these the court, the bourgeois and the working classes will be considered in this section, leaving the first estate to a subsequent section.

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(1) Duclaux, op. cit., p. 106.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid.

The head of the court, the king, was growing more and more absolute. Absolutism had not yet been reached, for though the king might "dispose of his armies and his finances as he pleased"(1) yet he was still under some compulsion. His power was growing so rapidly that not much later the Parlements - the last real check on the king - addressed Francis I with these words: "Sire - - we know full well that you are above the law, that ordinances and statutes affect you not".(2) This absolute power vested in the king was of great importance in the day when the question of both the new learning and church reform came up for decision.

This growing power naturally affected the members of his court. Around the king were the princes, dukes and barons, varying in importance according as they had close connection with the royal house, or as their family had succeeded in retaining some portion of their ancestral rights. There was yet some independence in their lives and many of them held smaller "courts" in their own domains. In these they aped the customs and etiquette of the king's and each lord, aside from the duty that he owed to the king, attempted to be, and frequently was, an allpowerful ruler within his own domain.(3)

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(1) Quoted from Machiavelli, by Baird, op. cit.

(2) Cheruel, Histoire de l'Administration, tome 1, pp329-30.

(3) Filley, Dawn of the French Ren., p. 78-88, 181.

The bourgeois, thanks to the internal improvements under Louis XI and later under Louis XII, were enjoying an unprecedented period of prosperity. Commerce, begun under Louis XI, was carried on to the profit not only of the nation, but also of the merchants. Many of them became rich, some vastly so.(1) Though political preferment was not open to them, yet they fared better than in any other period of French history since Charlemagne.(2)

Because of the close connection in France between the Renaissance and the Reformation, it is often said that the Reformation was a movement limited to the intellectuals and to the nobility. But to think this is to misunderstand the strength and genius of the movement. To be sure, the Reformation had its origin amongst the aristocratic clergy and intellectuals, but they made their first converts and built the real foundations of their reform among the poorer classes.(3) And these poorer classes, the agriculturist and the laboring man, were much abused.

"The discovery of gold and silver mines, which increased considerably the stock of the precious metals in Europe, had caused a rise in the price of the necessities of life; and the wages of the workmen were far from rising in the same proportion. The guild system which in the thirteenth century had been the protection of the weak, was tending more and more to become oppressively oligarchical; the management of manufactures became the monopoly of a rich, in fact, hereditary caste."(4)

(1) For example, Jacques Coeur. (2) See Bridge, Duclaux and Duruy. (3) See Baird, op. cit., and Hauser, French Reform and the French People. (4) Hauser, Ibid., p. 220

Because of this the common people

"lost the consciousness of their manhood, in consequence of the degraded position into which the king and the privileged classes, imitating his example, had forced them. 'Because of their desire to rule the people with a rod of iron,' says Dandolo, 'the gentry of the kingdom have deprived them of arms. They dare not carry a stick, and are more submissive to their superiors than dogs.'"(1)

This period brought women to the fore and they were destined for the next two hundred and fifty years or more to be a ruling element in France. The emancipation of women had already come about in France, so that instead of being hardly more than menials they had become the recognised equals and often the superiors of their male companions. There were all kinds of women, from licentious and immoral to modest and virtuous, from the weak and foolish to the strong, able and wise. They shared everything that men did, the hunt, war, letters and governing.(2)

"Universality was her badge, and all she touched she did creditably - generally with brilliance".(3)

Much might be and much has been written about the women of this age. Certain it is that for many years their new and influential place in society was the reason for the undisturbed work carried on by the reformers of Meaux.(4) Their influence played a very important part both in the development of the Reformation and in the final defeat

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- (1) Baird, Rise of the Huguenots, p. 15
- (2) Sichel, Women and Men of the French Renaissance, p.15
- (3) Ibid, p.19.
- (4) Marguerite of Navarre, see chapters VII and VIII.

of the Huguenots. (1)

Besides the above mentioned conditions existing in France, there were others of a more general and obvious nature which added their weight to the spread of learning and the reformed teachings. One of these was the printing press, invented in 1454, and set up in Paris and Lyons by the order of the king in 1470.(2) Another was the general use throughout Europe of Latin whereby the spread of these new ideas to scholars of every land was unhindered by the limitations of language. For thus scholarship and religion had a common language, and as the new ideas of either were printed in one country they could be understood in any other.(2)

C. The Religious Status of France.

The Church at Large

More than nine years before Lefèvre returned from Italy the Estates General of Tours had demanded the reform of the church for the following reasons:

"Chez les moines de Cîteaux, de Saint Benoist, de Saint Augustin, comme chez les autres, disait, dans la séance solennelle du 10 février 1484, le théologien Jean de Rély, député du clergé parisien, chacun scet qu'il n'y a plus reigle, dévotion ne discipline religieuse, qui est chose fort préjudiciable au bien du roi et du royaume; car - - des religieux bien servans à Dieu despendent plus bien du roi et du royaume et la maintenue de la chose publique, que des offices, labeurs et sueurs des
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(1) Catherine de Medici and others.

(2) Renaudet, Préréforme et Humanisme, p. 83

(3) See the letters collected in Herminjard, Correspondance.

"chaveliers et autres gens de guerre.' Chez 'les prélat's de Sainte Eglise et ceux qui ont la cure des âmes, successeurs des apostres et des disciples, et constitués de Nostre Seigneur Jésusrist pour régir, ordonner, et adrécer à salut perdurable le peuple crestion', nul souci de leur devoir et de leur ministère; on voit 'les lais meilleurs que les gens d'Eglise, qui doivent estre la forme, l'exemple et le mirouer des autres', et l'on ne rencontre point 'au chief le sens, le régime et la conduite qui se trouve en la plante du pié'.(1)

The French Church possessed more national unity than any other, indeed more than was desired for it by the Roman See. This was largely due to the efforts of the French king, Charles VII, who sought to curb some of the existing abuses by collecting the principal decrees of the Council of Basle and issuing them under the name of the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges.(2) In this Sanction were several decrees which were to the advantage of the French and to the disadvantage of the Pope. It is the 'magna carta'

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(1) Among the monks of Citeaux, of St. Benedict, of St. Augustine - as well as among the others, said the theologian, Jean de Rely, representative of the Parisian clergy, in the solemn meeting of Feb. 10, 1484, every one knows that there is no longer any rule, devotion or religious discipline which state of affairs is very injurious to the well-being of the king and his kingdom: for some religious leaders, although serving God are more taken up with the well being of the king and the kingdom than the duties, the labors and toils of the knights and other men of war.' Among the prelates of the Holy Church and those who have the healing of souls, the successors of the Apostles and the disciples, and ordained by our Lord Jesus Christ to rule, rule and direct the Christian people to everlasting salvation, there is no concern for their duty and their ministry; we see laymen better than the leaders of the church who ought to be a model, an example and a reflector of Christ for others, and we do not meet at all among the leaders the judgment, the rule, and the conduct which is found in the lives of the pious.'" Renaudet, Prereforme, etc. p. 1. Quotation from Masselin, Journal des Etats Généraux, p. 197.

(2) Baird, op. cit., p.26 ff, and Renaudet, Ibid, p. 2.

of the French Church.(1) A full discussion of the Sanction is impossible here but some results of its promulgation are noteworthy: first, the government and the control of the money of the Gallican Church was kept in France; secondly, foreigners were precluded from interfering in the administration of the laws; thirdly, the Church was made distinctly national. Successive kings repealed or reenacted this Sanction and it is interesting to note that the Parlements, the voice of the nation, always objected strenuously to its repeal.(2)

Louis XII published the Pragmatic Sanction anew and thus reestablished the autonomy of the French Church. The ensuing struggle with the Pope, in which the king had been loyally supported by the French people and clergy, gave the French Church an independent attitude toward the Roman See.

The Religious Leaders

The clergy who supported the Pragmatic Sanction were not, however, above reproach. Due to the Sanction, they were able to keep within France the greater part of the money which came to them and so became very rich. This wealth had attracted into orders many men of noble blood. They had, both by their hereditary and acquired position, great power in the realm.(3) This led to a

(1) Baird, op. cit., p. 29

(2) Full discussion of the Pragmatic Sanction is in Baird, p. 26 ff. and in Renaudet, op. cit., p. 2 ff.

(3) Baird, Ibid, p. 51.

neglect which was not unnatural when the way in which many of them came into their positions is understood. For these offices with their fat revenues served as a convenient method of rewarding services. (1) It was not necessary for a man to be already in orders, but any one, soldier, sailor, merchant, noble, with never a thought as to his moral qualifications, might be given a benefice.(2) These men came into these offices, not to serve the church but themselves. Consequently they neglected their diocese for the court or the chase and left their work for others. In 1486, the Benedictines of St. Denis went before Parlemeute to lodge a complaint against their abbot, Jean Villiers de la Groslaye, Bishop of Lombes. He had refused to make the most necessary repairs in their monastery.(3) At St. Germain-des-Prés the administration of Robert of Lespinasse had been so scandalous that Louis XI took away his revenues for five years.(4)

This attitude of the cardinals and bishops naturally influenced the entire order from the top down to the lowliest monk. A contemporary described the religious leaders of his day in no complimentary terms:

"They cared little or nothing how anything went, if they could but draw the income of their benefices at whatever place of residence they had selected with a view to the pro-
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(1) Baird, Rise of the Huguenots, p.54.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Renaudet, Préréforme et Humanisme, p. 19.

(4) Ibid, p. 19, note 3.

"notion of their pleasures. They let their benefices out at the highest rate they could get, little solicitous as to the hands they might fall into, provided only they were well paid according to the terms of the agreement. The archbishops, bishops and cardinals of France were almost all at the court of the king and the princes. The abbots, priors and curates resided in the large cities and in other places, wherein they took more delight than within the limits of their charges and preaching the true word of God to their subjects and parishioners."(1)

Such abuses had existed in the Roman Church for many years and it was, in part, to correct them that the great orders of monks had been established. But when the first ardor of the founders had subsided and wealth had come to the monasteries, the monks fell into the same conditions. The monks of Lefèvre's day were connected with every type of fraud, deceit, immorality and crime. Their members played a leading role in the licentious stories of Rabelais and Marguerite of Navarre. This was not because evil leaders had been forced on them, for they elected their own abbots or priors.

"Generally the monks elected the most jovial companion, him who was the most fond of women, dogs, and birds, the deepest drinker - in short, the most dissipated; and this in order that, when they had made him abbot or prior, they might be permitted to indulge in similar debauch and pleasure. Indeed, they bound him beforehand by strong oaths, to which he was forced to conform either voluntarily or by constraint. The worst was that, when they failed to agree in their elections, they usually came to blows with the fist and the sword, and inflicted wounds and even death. In a word, there was more tumult, more faction and intrigue, than there is at the election of * the Rector of the University of Paris."(2)

(1) Memoires of Claude Haton, I, p. 18 after Baird, p. 53.

(2) Brantome, Oeuvres Complètes, vol. vii, p. 280.

These monks were popularly and properly despised. Marguerite related that one man named his pigs "Cordeliers" - the popular name for the Franciscan monks.(1) They were very jealous of their privileges and constituted themselves protectors of these privileges and of the Church. In this latter capacity they became great heresy hunters.

Though given the privilege of preaching in most of the bishoprics, they were densely ignorant and utterly unqualified for this task.(2) In the main they used as their sermons exhortations for money and accounts of miracles. Exhortations for money were subjects dearer to their hearts, as they had much more use for money than for miracles.(3) Any knowledge of the Bible in either monk or priest was very rare. Even the doctors of theology in the Sorbonne, who professed to base their teachings on the Scriptures, were largely unacquainted with it. Robert Etienne, the celebrated printer of that famous house, told of their lack of knowledge in startling terms.

"In those times, as I can affirm with truth, 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 in 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 or better proven: Not long since, a member of their college used daily to say, 'I am amazed that these
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- (1) Marguerite of Navarre, Haptameron, Conte 34, 4th day.
- (2) Farmer, Essays on French History, p. 23.
- (3) Baird, op. cit., p. 75.

"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)

The Common People

In lieu of the Scriptures and of well-ordered preaching, the preachers, of whatever sort, would recount miracles connected with relics or the Mass. The author of the "Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris" recounted four miracles in his book, one having to do with a miracle of transubstantiation, two with healing and one with a young Man's revival after strangling.(2) Other miracles of a more usual character had to do with weeping images and bleeding relics.(3)

For spiritual food the people were fed a curious diet made up of the worship of saints and relics, of charms and even of sorcery.(4) To aid in this worship, they had various relics of the lives of the saints. First in importance were the apostles, whom death singularly multiplied, for each of them had at least four bodies.(5) Common saints did not fare so well but had no real cause for complaint since St. Dionysius had two bodies, as St. Anthony also had.(6) Nature was not satisfied to leave these saints and apostles simply with more than one body, but must needs give them other extra equipment. Accordingly

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- (1) Baird, op. cit., p. 57. (2) Journal etc., pp. 35, 60, 313-315 and 346. (3) Baird, op.cit., p. 57 ff.
(4) Calvin, John, *Advertissement -- de tous les corps etc.* p. 156 ff. Also Baird, *Ibid*, p. 55.
(5) Calvin, *Ibid*, p. 139. (6) *Ibid*, p. 171.

there is in Toulouse a body of St. Andrew and in case of accident he had an extra head in a church in Rome - a bit too far away in case of emergency - in another an arm, and, nearer to the body, in Provence he had an extra foot.(1) St. James also was quite fortunate in that, while he had four complete bodies, he could lose either arm and still be able to replace it.(2)

"Car au lieu de mediter leur vie, pour suivre leur exemple, il a mis toute son étude à contempler et tenir comme en trésor leurs os, chemises, ceintures, bonnets et semblable fatras."(3)

Every church had at least one relic and some had many, so necessary had relics become to worship. It was no wonder that they duplicated frequently in their efforts to bring fame to their church or abbey by the glory of their relics. Naturally souvenirs connected with the life of Jesus Christ were the most highly prized, and such were innumerable. There could be found at least one for every stage of His life. For His babyhood - they had mangers in three different places and His cradle was at Rome.(4)

"Car outre les dents et les cheveux, l'abbaye de Chavroux, au diocese de Poitiers, se vante d'avoir le prepuce, c'est-à-dire la peau qui lui fut coupée à la circoncision."(5)

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(1) Calvin, op. cit., p. 168.

(2) Ibid. (3) Ibid. "For instead of meditating on the life and following the example (of the saints), he has used all his study to consider and to hold their bones, clothes, hats and similar rubbish as treasures.

(4) Ibid., p. 140.

(5) Ibid., p. 141. "For besides the teeth and the hair, the abbey of Chavroux, in the diocese of Poitiers, boasted that it had the foreskin, said to be the skin which was cut off at the circumcision".

It made no difference to them that the church of St. Jean de Latran had a duplicate. So this record might be continued for His entire life, for each incident was represented by a relic.(1)

With such abuses and frauds fostered within the church, it was no wonder that the people were gullible. All sorts of stories were told and believed.(2) Worship had so degenerated that it turned from God as its object to things. Anything might be worshipped. Out of such soil, belief in enchantments, charms and even in astrology sprang up. Indeed so prevalent was this belief that scholars advocated it and royal houses supported their own astrologer.(3) Calvin considered its overthrow so important that he wrote a treatise against it and Pico della Mirandola also attacked it vigorously.(4) Charms, potions and enchantments existed side by side with astrology and the worship of relics. Even heathen images were openly adored.(5)

Attempted Reforms

To be sure such conditions did not exist without some attempt at reform. The demand that the Estates General of Tours made upon the king was not entirely neglected, for in

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- (1) Calvin, *Advertissement* etc., p. 140
- (2) Marguerite's stories include some that have instances of popular credulity. See Conte ~~XXIII~~ of the *Heptameron*.
- (3) Baird, *op. cit.*, p. 47ff.
- (4) Calvin, *Advertissement contre l'Astrologie* etc., and Pico della Mirandola,
- (5) Farmer, *Essays on French History*, p.

1485 Charles VIII instructed Tristan de Salazar to carry out a reform in his province. This he set out to do by calling the prelates of the province into a synod to consider what measures might be put into effect. After deliberations they passed regulations of two kinds; first, confirming the work of the previous councils and, secondly, setting forward instructions for the accomplishment of such reforms.(1) Though the resolutions of this synod read well, they were indifferently carried out and made no great impression.(2)

In 1493, the king made another movement toward reform. He summoned a delegation of churchmen, abbots and theological doctors to meet at Tours and work out some method of correcting the abuses of the church.(3) This effort was more wide spread than the former, but the results were not much greater. This movement is interesting since it was at this time that Jean Standonck began his long life of reformatory work.(4)

There were other reforms which were not so general in scope as these since they were the expression of the purpose of one man or woman. The three men who contributed most to this movement in France were George d'Amboise, Jean Standonck, and Olivier Maillard, each representing a different sphere of life. D'Amboise was at that time Bishop of Rouen and be-
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(1) Renaudet, *Préréforme et Humanisme*, p. 161 ff.

(2) *Ibid.*, p. 162.

(3) *Ibid.*, p. 178.

(4) *Ibid.*

came a leading candidate for the Papacy. His personal life was beyond reproach, which was unusual in men who rose to such high rank among church men.(1) He represented the prelates. Jean Standonck was the proviseur of the College of Montaigne and from 1493 on he worked unceasingly for the reform of the Gallican Church.(2) He was the representative of the school men. Olivier Maillard, a Franciscan monk, was so active in his work for reform that he earned the enmity of his fellows and they accused him before the cardinal.(3) He spent his life in an effort to restore the monastic life of his own and other orders. In him, the monks had their representative. There were two women who also were prominent for their work toward reform. Marie de Bratagne and Anne d'Orleans were successive abbesses of the Benedictine convent of Pontevrault who followed in the way of the reformers in their endeavor to restore their convent and order to its former way of life. Their work had some immediate but no lasting success.(4)

The chief difficulty with these reforms was that they made no attempt to correct the doctrines of the church, nor to correct the underlying evils of the abuses of offices within the church. What appeal could the ascetic life have to the man who entered orders for political or monetary

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- (1) Renaudet, Préréforme et Humanisme, p. 300 ff.
- (2) Ibid, p. 172 ff.
- (3) Ibid, p. 163.
- (4) Ibid, p. 186 and 187.

reasons, and who remained to enjoy himself? These changes affected a return to the earlier form of the order but made no effort to reproduce the religious experience and thought which had made the founding of these monastic orders possible. Until those experiences could be reproduced and the doctrines of the church purified, any attempt to carry out a general reform must be as wind whistling in the dry grass. The need was life, not regulation; spirit, not letter.

CHAPTER THREE

CONTRIBUTION THROUGH HIS SECULAR WORK

III. Contribution through his Secular Work.

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A. The Educational Status of France.

All phases of national life affect to a greater or less degree every one in the nation, and the political, social and religious conditions of France had their influence on Lefèvre. In his earlier years, however, none of these gave to him the call for life work. There had started to come into the educational and scholastic life of France a new influence which was to exert a very great power over him. Scholasticism was going the same way that feudalism had gone and the same forces that nationalism had brought to bear on the old order in government, humanism brought to the conflict with scholasticism, and the effect was the same. With the history of the movement in France the name of Lefèvre is inextricably bound.

Humanism, as the new learning has been called, was the application of the three principles of the Renaissance to letters and, later, to life. These three principles, - first, individualism, secondly, a critical spirit and thirdly, an appreciation of natural beauty - rose in opposition to the tyranny of society, the deadening influence of tradition and authority, and the continual forcing of man's attention always upon the future life. This was the new movement, which, previous to and contemporary with Lefèvre, carried on a mortal conflict with the older form of learning.

It is difficult to place definitely the date of the beginning of the humanist movement in France. It was at

the University of Paris, perhaps the highest point in the educational life of France, that this new learning took its strongest root.(1) Before the new ideas appeared there had been many influences at work to prepare the way for them. Tilley, in his work on the French Renaissance, has shown how the economic, social and political status of France set the stage and the mold for the Renaissance that was to follow.(2) It has been mentioned that the life of the nobles, previous to the perfecting of the centralization policy by Francis I, was conducive to the formation of lesser courts which were the nuclei of such movements.(3) Due to the great influence of the king, the court in Paris, with the University, became the real center of the new movement in letters. Hence it was that the men who carried on this were found in Paris.

For the sake of convenience, the beginning of printing in Paris will be considered as the date of the start of the Renaissance in France. In 1470, when Lefèvre was an undergraduate student in the University of Paris, Guillaume Fichet, the librarian of the Sorbonne, and his associates obtained permission from the authorities to set up the first printing-press in France. (4) During the previous year Fichet had been employed on a diplomatic mission to the duke of

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- (1) Imbart de la Tour, *Origines de la Réforme*, vol. ii, p. 351.
(2) Tilley, *The Dawn of the French Renaissance*, chapter ii.
(3) *Ibid*, p. 78-88 and 181ff.
(4) Renaudet, *Préréforme et Humanisme*, p. 83.

Milan and while there had come into contact with the new learning.(1) So enthusiastic did he become over it that he immediately set about to circulate the new ideas throughout Paris by means of the printing-press.(2) Fichet's chief work was an endeavor to make a critical correction of the Latin texts in France, for the movement in France, as in Italy, was characterised by a return to the authors of antiquity. So Fichet busied himself with the correction and printing of old Latin authors.(3) His press was at first entirely devoted to the publication of humanistic work. The one book which he printed that was not of this character marked the end of Fichet's work in Paris. Cardinal Bessarion had come to Paris to preach a Crusade. Because he greatly admired Bessarion, Fichet aided him by printing his speeches.(4) This friendship, begun by a previous correspondance and cultivated by this contact, resulted in Fichet's accompanying Bessarion to Italy, where he remained. Another phase of Fichet's work was an attempt to purify the existing Latin prose style.(5) When he left France the unfinished task fell to his friend and former student, Robert Gaguin.

Even though he was a lecturer in the University of Paris in both rhetoric and canon law, Robert Gaguin was not primarily a schoolman, for he put his greatest effort into his lectures on rhetoric and his efforts to improve Latin

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- (1) Renaudet, op. cit., p. 84.
- (2) See quotations from the letter of Fichet to Gaguin in Renaudet, op. cit., p. 84, note 4, and p. 85, note 1.
- (3) Tilley, op. cit., p. 87.
- (4) Renaudet, op. cit., p. 87.
- (5) Ibid, p. 115.

style, with the emphasis on style in versification. For, as Tilley well said:

"for the reign of the Schoolmen was fatal to Latin composition. Forced to express highly abstract ideas, for which the genius of the Latin language is not too well suited, and no longer sustained by a natural sense of literary form, or by the study of classical models, Latin style rapidly deteriorated. The great Schoolmen of the thirteenth century, above all, Thomas Aquinas, wrote at any rate with lucid dignity, but in the hands of Scotus and Occam, largely owing to the increased prominence which they gave to logic, Scotus by exalting it above all other philosophical studies, Occam by excluding metaphysics from the field of speculation, style became obscure as well as bald. Finally when Occam's death, which took place shortly before 1350, brought the great age of Paris Scholasticism to a close, and no fresh movement took its place, Latin composition was more and more neglected. Grammar was reduced to the mere learning by rote of grammatical rules, and rhetoric practically disappeared. Thus Latin writing became as barbarous in style as it was feeble in thought."(1)

Gaguin came to the University of Paris in 1457 and there two years later he met Guillaume Fichet.(2) Out of the companionship which grew up between the teacher and his pupil, Gaguin acquired a great interest in the improvement of Latin style. But to Fichet's interest in prose Gaguin added an interest in versification.(3) Because of his duties as General of the Order of the Trinitarians and of his ability as an orator, Gaguin had little time for study.(4) Yet, in spite of the demands of his many duties, he found time to edit and write works for the improvement of Latin style. To these accomplishments he added two more

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- (1) Tilley, op. cit., p. 187-188. (2) Renaudet, op. cit., p. 114.
(3) Ren., p. 115, also Tilley, op. cit., p. 188.
(4) Ibid.

First, he used the vernacular in his writing, and even wrote verses in it. (1) Also he wrote a history of France from its beginning to the end of the reign of Louis XI in which he demonstrated a critical spirit in his treatment of the sources.(2)

Neither Fichet nor Gaguin read Greek or knew anything about the language.(3) Up to the time that Lefevre began his teaching, there had been no serious study of Greek.(4) Tilley dates the beginning of the study of Greek in France in 1496 when Jean Lascaris entered the service of Charles VIII.(5) It was from his teaching that Bude, the greatest Greek scholar of that day in France, received his training. Lascaris also numbered among his students Jacques Lefèvre, who spoke highly of him not only as a teacher but also as a friend.(6)

At the time when Lefèvre resumed his labors as a teacher in the college of Cardinal Lemoine, an event took place which more than any one think assisted in the spread of the new learning through France. This was the expedition of Charles VIII into Italy to recover the Kingdom of Naples. It has been noted that this expedition carried into Italy, the center of humanism, the finest of the young French nobles and that they brought back into France a desire to emulate

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(1) Renaudet, op. cit., p. 115. "Le dubat du labourer, du Prestre, et du Gendarme."

(2) Tilley, op. cit., p. 191 ff and Renaudet, p. 276.

(3) Tilley, op. cit., p. 257.

(4) Ibid, p. 257 ff.

(5) Ibid. (6) Ibid.

the courts of Italy, in sponsoring the new learning.(1) Thus it is that the spread of the humanistic tendencies was not primarily through the universities, as had been the case in Italy, but rather through individual initiative.(2) As this movement spread from Paris into the rest of the kingdom, centers of learning sprang up, usually sponsored by some prince or great noble who was able to support a group of scholars at his court.(3)

De la Tour has pointed out that the humanism of France was superior to that of Italy.(4) Though this statement might be difficult to prove for all phases of the Renaissance, there is no doubt that French humanism never became anti-Christian.(5) The leaders of the movement in France were men of real Christian piety. Perhaps the proximity of the heresy hunting Sorbonne had something to do with it. But whatever may have been the reason, for many years the Church and the scholars went hand in hand in the spread of the ideas of the new teachings.

"Mais, malgré leur respect du legs de croyances et d'idées que leur transmettait le Moyen-Age, et bien qu'ils vécussent encore à moitié du passé, ils introduisaient dans la pensée religieuse des éléments nouveaux qui allaient la modifier profondément. Ils ne bouleversaient pas, semble-t-il, le cycle des

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(1)Chapter II, p. 27.

(2)De la Tour, Origines de la Réforme, vol. ii, p. 352.

(3)Ibid., p. 356.

(4)Ibid, p. 372 ff.

(5)Ibid, p. 381 ff.

ii "études universitaires. La théologie restait à leurs yeux la reine des connaissances divines et humaines. On ne les entend hasarder aucune critique contre l'enseignement de la Faculté; ils ne souhaitent pas que l'on lise davantage la Bible et les Pères; les problèmes qu'Erasmus, Lefèvre et Luther agiteront dans le premier tiers du siècle suivant ne les inquiètent pas. Leur domaine est à la Faculté des Arts; encore acceptent-ils l'économie générale de son enseignement; ils admettent la logique, l'éthique et la physique comme triple base de toute savoir. --

 Ils prenaient insensiblement l'habitude de voir dans la science de l'homme l'introduction nécessaire au dogme. Et si, depuis Guillaume Fichet, ils écoutaient moins les maîtres du Moyen-Age, c'est que désormais, comme les savants italiens, ils voulaient interroger les penseurs grecs, sans recourir à leurs interprètes barbares; timidement encore, à la philosophie hellénique, au platonisme tout enveloppé de mystère, ils demandaient, suivant l'admirable formule de Michelet, l'élargissement d'une moralité plus douce et vastement humaine."(1)

Lefèvre came to this movement with a new Approach.

Fichet and Gaguin had both stressed style, the one in prose,
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(1)"But in spite of their respect for the legacy of beliefs and ideas which the Middle Ages bequeathed to them, and although they still half lived in the past, they were introducing into the religious thought new elements which were going to modify it profoundly. They were not overturning, so it seems, the cycle of university studies. Theology remained to their eyes the queen of the sciences, human and divine. One does not find them offering any criticism against the teaching of the Faculty; the problems which aroused Erasmus, Lefevre and Luther in the first third of the following century do not disturb them. Their domain is in the Faculty of Arts; they still accept the general administration of its teaching; they approve of logic, ethics, and physics as the triple base of all knowledge.

 Without realizing it they were acquiring the habit of seeing in the learning of man the necessary introduction to dogma. And if, since G. Fichet, they were paying less attention to the masters of the Middle Ages, it was that henceforth, like the Italian scholars, they desired to question the Greek thinkers themselves, without appealing to their barbarous interpreters; timidly still, they were asking of

the other in versification. But Lefèvre, considering style of secondary importance, turned all his attention to the task of securing the correct thought and matter. Following in the footsteps of Gilles de Delft, a bachelor of the Sorbonne, (1) Lefèvre began his work both of restoring the correct Latin text of Aristotle and also of recovering the correct interpretation. This he did so well that one of his earlier biographers wrote of him that when

"Torpebant ingenia Gallorum diuturnis ignorantiae tenebris involuta, Lutetiaeque scholas omnes foedissima iampridem Barbaries occupabat, cum e Belgico litore tanquam Sol novus emerit Jacobus ille Faber, qui dissipata caligine Gallicam inventutem ex altissimo veterno tandem excitaret, liberalesque disciplinas turpissime iacentes effuso purioris doctrinae lumine primus illustraret et erigeret." (2)

B. Lefèvre - The Man

Lefèvre resumed his teaching career in the College of Cardinal Lemoine in the year 1492. (3) He was a small man, short of stature, and with a real humility which adorned fine ability and an attractive personality. (4) Together

Hellenic philosophy, of the Platonism entirely shrouded in mystery, following the admirable formula of Michelet, the enlargement of a morality which was gentler and more deeply human." Renaudet, *Préréforme et Humanisme*, p. 120-121.

(1) Ibid, p. 129.

(2) "The talents of France were stupified for a long time by the dark shadows of ignorance and up to this time all the scholars of Paris were occupied with the foulest barbarities, there arose, from the Belgian seacoast, as it were a new sun, Jacobus the Faber, who, having dissipated the mists of France at length incited France to awaken from the deepest lethargy and first showed and raised up free learning, and threw the light of purer doctrine on the most base." *Sainte Marthe, Elogia*, p. 1.

(3) Renaudet, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

(4) "Statura fuit supra modum humili, vultu modesto et moribus plane aureis, animo praesertim ab omni avaritiae labe prorsus alieno." *St. Marthe, Elogia*, p. 3.

with his interest and knowledge of the philosophical works, he was well acquainted with the thought of his day. For example, his work on Aristotle's Politics contained one of the first, if not the first, reference to the discovery of America published in France.

"Similia narrant de quibusdam insularum accolis que nostro eno reperte sunt, ab ijs qui accido hibero mari, novas vias ad indicum mare, nondum repertas sollicita perquisitione, scrutati sunt et nisi viris mendacia miscent, ad quinquaginta celi partes non nulli eorum navigaverunt ad aram, polumque; antarticum alij autem ab occiduo ad hypogeum; medieque noctis punctum; per partes 60 et amplius, at cum visa narrant: nobis in altero habitantibus celo somnia videntur."(1)

In philosophical point of view he was neither a Thomist nor a Scotist. Upon the question of universals he placed himself on the side of nominalism.(2) Though he was interested in many things, the philosophy of Aristotle held first place for him. Yet he showed interest in mathematics, astronomy, astrology, Socrates, Plato, Greek literature, history, the mystical writers and the Bible.(3) So universal were his interests that one writer said of him that

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(1)"Likewise they report concerning some inhabitants of islands that have been discovered by our ships by those who travel the northern sea, they have explored new ways to the indigo sea not previously discovered, and, unless they are mingling falsehood with truth, some others have sailed to fifty parts of the seas to the Altars and the pole; likewise others to the antarctic from the top to the bottom, and the middle; they have pierced the night and through sixty parts or more, unless they tell dreams, sights have been seen in other hidden places by our inhabitants." Lefèvre, Politicorum, Folio 100 v.

(2)Beatus Rhenanus recorded that Lefèvre mentioned the nominalists with approbation. See Renaudet, op. cit., p. 131, n.1.

(3)He later either wrote or edited works on all of these subjects.

he possessed

"une science encyclopédique, pareille à celle de ce Pic de la Mirandole".(1)

There runs through all his writings an appreciation of life and beauty, so that he has been called a poet.(2)

He was acquainted with music, and enjoyed singing.(3)

He was of an even temperament and possessed a cheerful spirit. His character was above reproach, so that when he was attacked later in life there was no charge against his personal life. With all of his interests he was primarily a teacher. In his teaching he was interested more in the thought of the subject than in the style in which the thought might be expressed.

C. Lefèvre - The Teacher

Lefèvre followed his teaching career in the College of the Cardinal Lemoine. This college of the University of Paris was the one in which he had, in all probability, received his undergraduate training.(4) This college was founded in 1302(5) by Jean, Cardinal Lemoine, in connection with the University of Paris for the promulgation of theological teaching in the University.(6) Throughout its long history it had always held a high scholastic rank among the

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(1)"an encyclopedic knowledge parallel to that of Pico della Mirandola". (Hanotaux, Histoire, vol. vi, p. 330.

(2)De la Tour, Origines de la Réforme, vol. ii, p. 383.

(3)Herminjard, Correspondance etc., p. 23, note 3.

(4)It was set apart for the nation of Picardy and he was from Picardy. See Renaudet, op. cit., p. 130.

(5)Jourdain, Le Collège du Cardinal Lemoine, p. 47.

(6)Ibid, p. 44.

other colleges, indeed it shared highest honors in theology with the Colleges of Navarre and the Sorbonne.(1) Due to the purpose in its founding it held a high place in its curriculum for theology so that its entire program was influenced in this direction.(2) Scholastically it had the highest standards and required a longer term both in the arts and in theology than the other Colleges.(3) Because of this a higher class of students was attracted to this College.(4)

The courses offered in the college did not differ from those of the other colleges of the University, except that the degree of master of arts from either the University of Paris or of Oxford was required for students of theology.(5) In the conduct of the classes they followed the regular routine.(6) Lefèvre was a lecturer there to the young men who were candidates for license.(7) In his lectures

"il expliquait à la manière d'Ermolao, devant les étudiants, le texte d'Aristote, cependant que, pour la satisfaction intime de ses besoins religieux, sous la conduite de Ficin et de Pico, il approfondissait les théories platoniciennes et alexandrines."(8)

(1)P. Feret, La Faculté de Théologie, p. 22, and 53.

(2)Ibid, p. 53. (3) Ibid, p. 21. (4) Ibid, p. 21.

(5)Ibid, p. 21 and Jourdain, Le College etc., p. 54.

(6)Jourdain, op. cit., p. 54.

(7)Massebieau, Une Acquisition de la Bibliothèque du Musée pédagogique, p. 422.

(8)"after the manner of Ermolao he explained the text of Aristotle to the students, however, as though under the leadership of Ficin and of Pico he searched the Platonic and Alexandrian theories for the satisfaction of the religious needs of his students." Renaudet, op. cit., p. 145

Some day a detailed study will be made of the contribution of Lefèvre to French pedagogy.(1) When he began his teaching, the only work which might give any aid to the student in the study of Aristotle was the manual by Thomas Bricot and George of Brussels.(2) This was a commentary on Aristotle at once "too expensive for the student to buy and too difficult for him to understand".(3) In place of this Lefèvre wrote short introductions and simple commentaries on Aristotle and published them so that they could be purchased by his students.(4)

He had no patience with the endless disputations of the older method.

"Praeterea indignum putant et a philosophiae dignitate quam plurimum alienum in sophisticam expositionem incidere, et amica sophistorum syncathegoremata sequi vimque in ipsis ullam facere."(5)

He eliminated the useless discussions of the Scholastics from his class room and substituted a search for the real meaning of the philosopher,(6) for to him philosophy had a high purpose.

"Quae solum pulchram et pulchrorum contemplationem intendit, nullius maledica, clamorosa jurgia vitans, ea sophisticis relinquens, quibus cedere magis ipsi
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(1) Massebieau, Une Acquisition etc., p. 431. He makes some reference to Lefèvre's contributions.

(2) Tilley, Dawn of the French Renaissance, p. 247.

(3) Ibid. (4) Ibid.

(5) "Furthermore they think to make an end of the nobility of philosophy in shameful and very strange arguments, like the sophists, and to pursue the amiable proceedings of the sophists and to put their lives into the same." Lefèvre, Physicos libros Aristotelis, Prologus, b i v., after Renaudet, op. cit., p. 146, note 2.

(6) Renaudet, op. cit., p. 147.

"opere precium est et eas tacendo superare."(1)

Lefèvre was not the first to utilize the plan of writing a book to guide his students in their study,(2) but he was the first to slough off the verbose and pedantic style of the scholastic writers and put his explanations in a simple, plain, concise form easily understood by the student.(3) He always kept the student in mind when he composed these commentaries.(4)

"L'ouvrage se distinguait avant tout des commentaires scolastiques par la précision utile et la sobriété. Il inaugurerait véritablement en France un nouvel enseignement de la philosophie, qui se fondait sur l'étude historique des doctrines anciennes."(5)

In his class room conduct there is no reason to suppose that he broke with the established custom. He lectured from the editions of Aristotle to a class that, with pen in hand, had his books in front of them.(6) He insisted that his students memorize the introductions to his editions so that they should have an exact knowledge of the subject.(7)

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(1)Which(philosophy) ought to lead us to the contemplation of beauty and only beauty, avoiding abusive, noisy disputes of no value, leaving those to the sophists; it is better to give up the work itself and to vanquish them by silence." Lefèvre, *Physicos libros Aristotelis, Prologus, b iiii v*, after Renaudet, p. 146, note 3.

(2)Tilley, op. cit., p. 247.

(3)Massebieau, *Une Acquisition etc.*, p. 422 ff.

(4)Renaudet, *Préréforme et Humanisme*, p. 148.

(5)"The work was distinguished above all the scholastic commentaries by its useful precision and its sobriety. He inaugurated truly a new teaching of philosophy in France which was founded upon the historic study of the ancient doctrines." Renaudet, op. cit., p. 148.

(6)Tilley, op. cit., p. 253.

(7)Renaudet, op. cit., and Massebieau, op. cit., p. 424.

Lefèvre was well liked as a teacher. His teaching was acceptable to the minds of his students and was reinforced by an attractive and pleasing personality. His blameless life and modest bearing, in spite of his many accomplishments, also drew many to him. He gathered about him many friends from among his students. Of these, Josse Clichtove, who collaborated with him in many of his productions, Beatus Rhenanus, the friend and proof-reader of Erasmus, Bruno Amorbach, Michael Hummelberger, Charles de Bouelles, Gerard Roussel and Guillaume Fare were his special friends and intimates. They worked with him or under his direction in the publication of the texts of Aristotle.(1)

Beatus Rhenanus described the feeling of his classes when he wrote that

"Jacobus Faber Stapulensis, qui tum propter energentia studia meliora quibus pro virili succurrebat, tantum non deus quispiam videbatur".(2)

Another contemporary, Jean Caesarius, a philosopher, a doctor of medicine and a professor at the University of Cologne, left this tribute to his former teacher.

"Novi hominis (sc. Fabri) modestiam, et candidam in omnes et doctos et bonos affectionem; quippe qui ejus fuerim aliquot annis discipulus, atque idem ut Sophistas imprimis mordere atque acriter impugnare consueverat, ita doctissimum quemque commendare ac laudibus debitis ornare. Itaque esse non potest, quod et
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(1) Tilley, Dawn of the French Renaissance, p.

(2) Clerval, J.A., Daudoci Clichtovei, vita et operibus, p.19, note 1. "Jacobus Faber Stapulensis, who then contributed largely to mankind through his more energetic studies, no one seemed more like a god."

"tu quoque ita sentis, quin a pessimo aliquo daemone instigatus sit, cui utinam obstitisset, et tuam potius erga se benevolentiam fovere curasset, ut per quam ejus fama cresceret magis quam decresceret."(1)

D. Lefèvre - Editor and Commentator

Equipment and Purpose

Well known as Lefèvre was as a teacher and as an expositor of Aristotle, yet it was in another field that he achieved his greatest success and earned a more enduring fame. This distinction came to him for his work in restoring the text of Aristotle. Naturally in the search for the true meaning of Aristotle he sought to know and to present the original, or at least a faithful translation of it. This brought about two important results in Lefèvre's experience. The first was an intensive training in the technic of procuring, editing and interpreting the texts of Aristotle. The second was that Lefèvre himself studied Greek and did all in his power to advance the study of the Greek language in France.

This restoration, not only of the text but also of the thought, was one much needed by the University. The

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(1)"I knew the modesty of the man and his uprightness in all things and his learning and good nature; indeed I was a pupil of his for several years and he was so accustomed to attack the Sophists directly and to fight hard against them that you ought to commend him as most learned and to adorn him with praise. Therefore it is not possible, which you also know, that he is inspired by a demon of the lowest order, whom he would check and would rather run to promote your good will, so that his fame should ascend more than descend." A letter from Jean Caesarius to Erasmus during the quarrel between Lefèvre and Erasmus. Found in Herminjard, Correspondance etc., p. 32.

text of Aristotle had been abused for so many years that by Lefèvre's day it was mutilated almost beyond recognition. (1) For the only translations current in that time had been made by Boethius, Porphyry or Moorish translators whose Latin versions were translations from the Arabic. (2) Since Aristotle was not read in the original, there was a great need that true texts be put into the hands of the student. It was to fill this need that Lefèvre set himself to the task of publishing the texts of Aristotle in good translations.

Lefèvre's training for the task of revising these texts has already been reviewed. From his work in the University of Paris he had acquired a considerable knowledge of the early interpreters of Aristotle. (3) He was gifted with the ability to select the central thought of a passage and express it in simple, clear language, designed to bring out the real content. He brought back with him from his trip to Italy many translations of the texts of Aristotle made from the original Greek by more able translators than himself. (4) He knew some Greek but was not sufficiently familiar with it to make a good translation of any of Aristotle's works, and, unfortunately for the abiding quality of his work, Lefèvre was not a master of either Latin or Greek style. for

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(1) Tilley, op. cit., p. 234. (2) Ibid, p. 235 and Barnaud, Jacques Lefèvre, p. 15. See also Renaudet, op. cit., p. 59. (3) This was demonstrated in his first work (1490). Renaudet, Op. cit, p. 147. (4) See list of his works in this chapter.

"sa connaissance du Grec fut toujours défectueuse et son style latin inférieur à celui des bons latinistes de son temps."(1)

In spite of these handicaps however there was an element in his character which preeminently equipped him for this work. There was in all of his activities a never failing love for and search after the truth.(2)

Lefèvre's purpose in editing these texts and publishing his interpretations was primarily pedagogical and, particularly in his earlier works, this point of view predominates.(3) Unlike others of his day or those who immediately preceded him, he was not greatly interested in either Latin or Greek style(4) but was entirely devoted to the restoration of Aristotle's philosophy.(5) He wisely decided that the best method of interpreting Aristotle was by a careful study of the works of Aristotle in the original.(6)

His Method

Lefèvre's secular writings fall into three classes, related to each other in subject matter but different in method. These three classes are, first, the early editions

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(1)"his knowledge of Greek was always defective and his Latin style was inferior to that of the good Latin stylists of his time."(Barnaud, Jacques Lefèvre, p. 11.

(2)As he expressed it in his reply on the subject of the treatise on the Three Marys. See chapter VIII.

(3)See Renaudet, op. cit., p. 147, note 4.

(4)Gaguin, Fichet, Erasmus, Bude were all stylists.

(5)See Renaudet, op. cit., p. 132.

(6)See Renaudet, ibid, pp. 133 and 146.

of Aristotle; second, editions of Aristotle in which the primary interest is in the text; third, original treatises. Of the three, the original treatises, while interesting, are the least important and for that reason will be discussed first, the other two will follow in order.

Original Publications

There are extant two original treatises that are now known to have been written and published by Lefèvre. They are on music and astronomy. Other than this work on music, Lefèvre's connection with and appreciation of music are not well known. In his treatment of the subject he discussed first the historical background of music and then turned to a more technical discussion of time, tones and harmony.(1) From the standpoint of pedagogy, it is interesting to note that frequently throughout the book he explains and illustrates the principles that he lays down.

The treatise on astronomy is quite short. In it Lefèvre worked out his astronomical theories in two books, which he introduced by a comparison of astrology and astronomy.

"Nam haec astrologie pars tota ferme imaginariae efficitrixque est"(2)

where as astronomy is the

"sapientissimus optimusque opifex"(3)

and is the greatest product of the "divine mind".

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(1)Elementa Musicalia.

(2)"Now this astrology is almost all part of the imagination"

(3)"The wisest and best work".

In the body of the work, Lefèvre divided his discussion into two parts. In the first he treated the more obvious heavenly bodies, i.e. the earth, the sun, moon and planets. The second part was devoted to the stars, discussing and classifying them.(1) Lefèvre was a follower of the Ptolemaic system of astronomy.

Early Editions

The first of a long list of publications appeared in 1490 when Lefèvre published his Paraphrases on the physics of Aristotle. As this work well illustrates the method which he used it will be discussed. The book opened with a prologue in which the editor stated his method and purpose in the work in hand.(2) Following this there was a brief introduction in which there were seven paragraphs. These paragraphs explained briefly and clearly the essential ideas of Aristotle's Physics; the ideas of nature, of cause, of movement, of infinity, of place, of space and of time. This was followed by the commentary. In this group of his works, Lefèvre's method was to give the text of the philosopher and to follow it with comments. These comments accompany the philosopher chapter by chapter, and explained the difficult terms and the obscure points of his teaching in simple and understandable language.(3)

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(1) He had seventeen classifications of stars.

(2) For the discussion of this work see Renaudet, op. cit., p. 145 ff. (3) Ibid, pp. 146 and 147.

"Il manifeste une connaissance déjà profonde de la philosophie grecque et des exégètes anciens d'Aristote."(1)

Lefèvre added to these features of his commentary two short dialogues. These were carried on between the professor and his pupils on the subjects discussed in the book proper. The first one contained a general review and explanation of the thought of Aristotle; the second dealt with the more difficult theories.(2) This use of dialogues was not new with Lefèvre, but he developed it greatly, for in his next publication, an Introduction to the first six books of the Metaphysics of Aristotle, there were four dialogues.⁽³⁾ These dialogues were worked out in the form of a French comedy, for the names of the characters represented both the pure qualities and the abstractions, after the manner of the French moralities.(4)

Later Editions

The third class of Lefèvre's works was very similar to the second, except that he set about to procure the best possible text for publication. His interest was still primarily philosophical, for he had come to the conclusion that the best way to interpret Aristotle was to know what he had said. It was a return to the original sources.

Lefèvre knew himself to be too poor a Greek scholar to

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(1) "He shows a knowledge already profound of Greek philosophy and of the ancient interpreters of Aristotle". Renaudet, op. cit., p. 147.

(2) Massebieau, Une Acquisition etc., p. 427 ff.

(3) Ibid, p. 428. See also Tilley, p. 236.

(4) Massebieau, op. cit., p. 428.

produce the best Latin texts from the original Greek, and so he spared no pains to procure the translations from the Greek scholars of Italy.(1) In 1497, he began a new series of commentaries in which he published the Latin texts of the more recent scholars. Of these, the Byzantine Argropolus and Leonardo Aretino furnished the text for the first book of this group.(2) Bessarion, Barbaro, Ficini, and Valla all furnished him texts of Aristotle's works.(3)

Perhaps the best known of all the books in this group was his commentary on Aristotle's Politics. This book may be taken as representative of the group. He began the book with a dedication to Guillaume Briçonnet, bishop of Lodève, and followed this with a short preface. After the model of his earlier introduction to Aristotle, Lefèvre first gave a short summary of the content of each chapter of the Politics and then of the Economics. Two indices follow, one giving the location of each proper name in the Politics and the second a similar index of the "Hecatonomie" of Socrates.

Immediately preceding the text and Lefèvre's comments on it, was a prologue written by the translator. The text and the comments make up the body of the work, occupying 104½ folios out of 143. The book followed the familiar outline of, first, a chapter of the text; secondly, a commentary on the chapter; and finally, a brief paragraph of Annotations. This last paragraph was exegetical in character,

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(1) Renaudet, op. cit., p. 257. (2) Ibid, p. 148. (3) See list of works given in this chapter.

and in it Lefèvre explained the peculiar significance of the Greek.(1) Occasionally he corrected the translation of Bruni(Aretino) in this paragraph of Annotations.(2)

In his comments Lefèvre showed a considerable knowledge, not only of the other commentators on Aristotle, both ancient and modern, but also of ancient writers in general. Cato, Virgil, Plato, Xenophon, Herodotus, Homer, Aristophanes, Sabellicus, Socrates and Plutarch are all referred to. He also mentioned the Arab commentators on Aristotle.(3) As always his explanations were simple and clear and his comments fair to the meaning of the text. He dealt with the text of the Economics in the same way.

This volume is particularly interesting because it included, besides these texts of Aristotle, the "Hecatonomie" of Lefèvre, in which he expressed the epitome of Socrates in one hundred short paragraphs and of Plato in six hundred, setting them forth in seven chapters of one hundred paragraphs each.(4) At the end of the "Hecatonomie" Lefèvre made a few brief comments on these laws. He did not fear to differ with the great philosopher; he even went so far as to entitle one paragraph "Platonice leges absurde".(5) The book is concluded by a six line stanza of Latin verse written by Beatus Rhenanus.(6)

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- (1) Lefèvre, Politicorum, Folios VIIr, IXv, XI, et al.
 - (2) Ibid, folios XIV and LXXI.
 - (3) Ibid, fol. XXv, Annotations.
 - (4) Ibid, folios CXIII & CXXXV.
 - (5) Ibid, fol. CXXXVr.
 - (6) Ibid, fol. CXLIII v.

The Scope of His Publications

In studying Lefèvre's work as an editor, one is struck by the wide scope of his interest and his knowledge. His must have been an encyclopedic mind and it is easy to understand why he was compared with Piccolidella Mirandola. As his primary interest was the restoration of the text of Aristotle, it is to be expected that the majority of his publications should be of the works of that philosopher, as they were. He published all the texts of Aristotle that came to him and when his work was finished he had published fourteen books having to do with Aristotle's philosophy. These included Aristotle's Physics, Natural Philosophy, Morals, Logic, Politics, Economics, Metaphysics, Ethics, and Meteorology. He did not limit himself to Aristotle, however, but published the works of Euclid on geometry, Boethius on arithmetic, the Iliad of Homer, the dissertation of Ricoldi against the Mohammedans and Josephus.(1)

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(1) Because the names of all of Lefèvre's works unfortunately do not appear in the bibliography, the best way to bring out the scope of this phase of his work is to give the titles of his various publications. The date when each volume appeared is included also to show the development of his work and thought.

1. 1490 - Jacobi Fabri Stapulensis in sex primos Metaphysicorum libros Introductio composita anno 1490.
2. 1492 - In Aristotelis octo physicos libros paraphrasis.
3. 1493 - Introductiones in diversos metaphysicorum Aristotelis libros.
4. 1493/4 - Philosophia naturalis paraphrases.
5. 1494 - Ars Moralis in Magna Moralia Aristotelis introductoria.
6. 1494/5 - Textus de Sphaera Joannis de Sacrobosco cum additione quantum necessarium est adjecta novo commentario nuper edito ad utilitatem studentium phil-

There is considerable probability that there have

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- osophice parisiensium Academie illustratus.
7. 1496 - Artificiales introductiones.
 8. 1496 - In hoc opere contenta: Arithmetica decem libris demonstrata; Musica libris demonstrata quatuor; Epitome in libros arithmeticos divi Severini Boetii; Rithmimachiae ludus qui et pugna numerorum appellatur.
 9. 1497 - Decem librorum moralium Aristotelis tres conversiones: prima Argyropyli Byzantii, secunda Leonardi Aretini, tertia vero antiqua, per capita et numeros conciliate communi familiarique commentario ad Argyropyllum adjecto.
 10. 1498 - Athenagoras de Resurrectione; Xenocrates Platonis auditor de Morte; Cebetis Thebani Aristotelis auditoris Tabula miro artificio vite instituta continens.
 11. 1500 - Ars suppositionum Jacobi Fabri Stapulensis.
 12. 1501 - Compendiaria in Aristotelis Ethicem introductio, rei literariae studiosis apprime utilis.
 13. 1503 - Libri Logicorum ad archetypos recogniti cum novis ad litteram commentariis.
 14. 1506 - Politicorum libri octo; Commentarii. Oeconomicorum duo; Commentarii. Hecatonomiarum septem. Oeconomicarum publicarum unus. Explanationis Leonardi in Oeconomica duo.
 15. 1508 - In Politica Aristotelis Introductio; Oeconomicon Xenophontis a Raphaelae Volaterrano traductum.
 16. 1508 - Georgii Trapezontii Dialectica.
 17. 1509 - Ricoldi Ordinis Praedicatorum contra sectam Mahumeticam non indignus scita libellus. Cujusdam diu captivi Turcorum provinciae Septemcastrensium de vita et moribus eorumdem alius non minus necessarius libellus.
 18. 1510 - Aegessippi historiographi fidelissimi ac disertissime et inter Christianos antiquissimi historia. De bello judaico sceptri sublatione Judaeorum dispersione et hierosolymitano excidio a divo Ambrosio Mediolanensi antistite e graeca latina facta, cum ejusdem Anacephaleosi et tebellis congruentiarum cum Josephi libris: etiam de gestis Macchabeorum.
 19. 1512 - Meteorologia Aristotelis, eleganti Jacobi Fabri Stapulensis paraphrasi explanata, commentarioque Joannis Coclaei Norici declarata.
 20. 1510 - Ilias Homeri quaternus ab Nicolas Valla tralata est.
 21. 1515 - Continentur hic Aristotelis castigatissime recognitum opus metaphysicum a clarissimo principe Bessarione, Cardinal Niceno latinitate foeliciter donatum XIII libris distinctum, cum adjecto in XII primos

been some of his books lost, but the list in the notes gives a fair conception of the scope of his work and of his knowledge, as well as of his contribution to the learning of his day. He did not do this alone, but was assisted, as can be seen from the titles, by some of his students, chiefly Josse Clichtove and Beatus Rhenanus. (1) Another great factor in his success was the cooperation of his printer, Henri Estienne (H. Stephanus), who was himself a scholar of no mean merit.(2)

E. Estimates of Lefèvre

Such work as this was bound to produce results. To Lefèvre himself the result was a great reputation, not only as a teacher but also as a scholar. So favorably was he regarded that he was well known in court, being under the protection of Louis XII.(3) In the educational world he was well regarded and closely followed. In looking over the bibliographies of Renaudet and the catalogue of the Bibliotheque Nationale it is remarkable the number of editions that were printed of some of his texts: his "Philosophiae Naturalis paraphrases" went through seven editions,

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- 21) libros Argyropyli Byzantii interpretamento, rarum procul dubio et hactenus desideratum opus.
 22. 1516/7 - Euclidis geometricorum Elementorum etc.,
 23. 1522 -Utilissima introductio Jacobi Stapulensis in libros de anima Aristotelis adjectis quae eam declarant brevinsuculis Judoci Clichtovi.
 24. 1528 -In hoc opere continentur Totius philosophiae naturalis paraphrases etc.

(1) Tilley, op. cit., p. 249. (2) Renouard, A., Annales de l'Imprimerie des Estienne, p. 7.

(3) Barnaud, Jacques Lefevre, p. 21.

his "Textus de Sphaera Joannis de Sacrobosco" through six,(1) as did his "Decem librorum moralium Aristotelis".(2) Others were reprinted from one to four times. Through the agency of his pupils his books were published in many lands - Venice, Nuremberg, Leipsig, Strassburg, Freiburg, Basle, Deventer and Cracow, with or without the permission of the author or publisher.(3) Massebieaux refers to an eulogy of Lefevre in the preface of the dialogue of the Introduction to the Physics of Aristotle, which edition was printed in Cracow by the head of the University there for use in teaching.(4)

Among the scholars he was recognised as the friend of all seekers after truth. Reuchlin wrote to him and asked him to use his influence in Reuchlin's favor when the faculty of theology was about to pass on some of Reuchlin's opinions.(5) Erasmus also was one of Lefèvre's friends.

In referring to Lefèvre Erasmus wrote:

"Fabri tanta est apud omnes reverentia, vel ob castitatem, vel ob vitae sanctimoniam, ob tot vigilias in publicam utilitatem desudatas ut nullas adhuc ei impegeret haeresim."(6)

In the philosophic world he had a following who were called
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(1) Renaudet, op. cit., p. xxxviii and xxxix.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Tilley, Dawn of the French Renaissance, p. 249 and Massebieaux, op. cit., p. 420-1.

(4) Massebieaux, op. cit., p. 421.

(5) The letter is in Herminjard, op. cit., vol. I, p. 9.

(6) "Faber is greatly revered among all men, both because of his age and because of his blameless life, and because of his so untiring watchfulness in public service, that up to this time no one has fixed heresy upon him." Delaruelle, G. Bude, p. 51, n.

after him, Fabristae. The Fabrists were opposed to the terminists and had a large influence.(1)

The world of letters thought so highly of him that one of his earliest biographers said of him that he was

"un des plus nobles hommes de la terre".(2)

He was given first place by Sainte Marthe in his lives of men who had well served their day.(3) The court poet also considered him worthy of an ode.(4) The kings of his day regarded him favor. Louis XII had him under his special protection and Francis I wrote of him

"que la grande et bonne renommée en fait de science et de sainte vie que depuis avons scu iceluy Fabri avoir en ce pais d'Italie et Espagne, l'avons eu en telle opinion et estime."(5)

Much more might be written of the influence that he had on the advancement of learning in his day. All recognised that his was a great and worthy contribution to this movement.

F. Contribution to the Reformation through his Secular Work

It is evident that to further the cause of real learning was to make a real contribution to the Reformation in France. A review of the attitude of the Sorbonne at a

(1) Delaruelle, G. Bude, p. 51.

(2) "one of the noblest men of the earth". Theo. Beza, Les Vrais Portraits de hommes Illustres, p. 153.

(3) Sainte Marthe, Elogia, p. 1.

(4) Macrinus, Hymnorum, III, p. 119.

(5) "that the great and good name that he has made both for knowledge and for blameless life which we have since come to know that Faber has in the countries of Italy and Spain, we have had the same opinion and estimate of him."
Du Plessis, Histoire de l'Eglise de Meaux, vol. II, p. 232.

later day shows that they looked with suspicion on anything new. This new method of approach to a subject had momentous results. The return to the sources was the keynote of the Reformation under Luther. The return to the sources, at first to those of Aristotle, was the program of Lefèvre. To determine first the true text, then to procure the best possible translation of it and, thirdly, in the light of these two steps, to decide what the author meant when he wrote, was the program of Lefèvre in his work with Aristotle and was also his program when he turned to the Scriptures.

Even if the work in the University of Paris had influenced no one else, this period in Lefèvre's life would be deserving of a detailed treatment. For it was during this time that the characteristics of faithful, careful and thorough scholarship and an undying love of truth and an unfaltering search for it were formed in Lefèvre's character. These characteristics throughout his whole career and in spite of opposition held him true to his purpose. But this was not all.

As a result of his teaching and his work on Aristotle Lefèvre gathered around himself a group of young men who were won to the truth through his method. They were one with him in his ideals and plans and they formed the nucleus of the group which later rallied to his side in the work at Meaux.

The relation of this phase of Lefèvre's work to the

Reformation was felt and expressed by Beza in a short poem with which he closed his short account of the life of Lefèvre.

"Dans la fosse d'erreur, d'un admirable effort,
Par ta main, l'Eternel reprima l'Ignorance,
Resueilla, repolit, remit les arts en France
Et menaca tout haut le Prince de la Mort,
Qui voulut t'englouter: mais Dieu repos te donne,
Tandis qu'en son borbier rit et périt Sorbonne."(1)

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- (1) "In the pit of error, with a praise worthy effort,
By thy hand, the Eternal checked Ignorance,
Revived, polished anew, restored the arts in France,
And menaced from on high the Prince of Death,
Who wished to engulf thee, but God gave thee repose,
While in its own mud hole the Sorbonne laughs and
perishes." Theo. Beza, Les Vrais Pourtraits etc, p. 154.

CHAPTER FOUR
CONTRIBUTION THROUGH HIS PUBLICATION
OF THE MYSTICS.

IV. Contribution through his Publication of the
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A. Lefèvre's Religious Restlessness.

His Interest in Religion

Philosophy was not Lefèvre's only interest during the early days of his teaching. In all his philosophical work he was moved by another powerful and growing interest, that of religion. From his early years he had been interested and attracted by the church and her claims.(1) In many of his philosophical works he expressed this constant interest in things religious.(2) Throughout his career as an editor his editions of Aristotle alternated with editions of the writings of the mystics and early church fathers. To him philosophy and religion were closely related. So greatly did this idea possess him that he sometimes went far afield to show how the ancient philosophers had been Christian in their view of life.

"Platonis in Protagora sententia videtur esse, eas artes que ad victum pertinent humanum providentiam humanam reperisse, que autem ad bene beateque vivendum summi Dei munere mentibus mortalium infusas esse."(3)

He was greatly pleased with the Christian virtues of Pythagoras(4) and the meekness of Xenocrates.(5) He recognised

(1) Barnaud, Jacques Lefèvre, p. 18.

(2) In his Politics, Metaphysics, Ethics.

(3) "One sees in Plato's Protagoras that the arts necessary to human life have been invented by human intelligence, but that the rules of virtue and happy living were a gift by the Almighty God who introduced them into the spirits of mortals." Lefèvre, Decem Libr. Moral. A i v, after Renaudet, op. cit., p. 283.

(4) Renaudet, ibid, p. 283.

(5) Ibid.

in Aristotle a forerunner of Christian theology.(1)

" 'Those who predicate ideas', he says in the preface to his introduction to the *Metaphysics*, 'are Platonists; those who follow the divine and eternal doctrines are Aristotelians.'" It is a surprising view of Aristotle, and would have surprised no one more than Aristotle himself, but it explains why this ardent Aristotelian was able to pass without effort to Neo-Platonism and Platonism, or rather to be at one and the same time a follower of Aristotle, Plotinus, and Plato."(2)

Lefèvre recognised that philosophy lacked something and this he found in religion. So when he came to express his ideal for education he went beyond philosophy to religion.

"Si delectabunt historie; post sacram castiores sunt Iosepgii et Egisippii religiosores Heraclidisi et Agiografe in dialecticis: logicam Aristotelis ad litteram non precariam quesita a Boetio et alijs fidis interpretibus intelligentia. In Arithmetica: Nicomachum Boetij: In musicam. eiusdem musicam. In Geometria: Euclidem. In Astrologia: Ptolomei theoricem que et magna compositio. In naturalibus moralibus republicis et re familiari: Acroamaticorum, Physicorum, Ethicorum, Politicorum, Economicorum Aristotelis e fonte puri bibantur liquores -- Sed qui volet hec ad finem deducere superiorem felicisque ocium: prae-paretur in libris Aristotelis qui transmundanorum et metaphysicorum sunt quique de prima supra mundanaque philosophia nuncupantur hic libri sacri cum venerat-ione tractentur quibus assint comites Cyprianus, Hilarius, Origines, Hieronymus, Augustinus, Chrysostomus, Athanasius, Nanzanzenus, Damascenus et similes. In his autem mente purgata et sensibus exercitatis, actione vite consentanea - - - si mens generosior elevatiores contemplationes affectet paulati ex libris Cuse surgat et divine Dionysij."(3)

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(1)Lefèvre, *Metaphysics*, Praefatio, after Renaudet, op. cit., p. 283. and 148, note 1 and 2.

(2) Tilley, *Dawn of the French Renaissance*, p. 246.

(3)"If they would delight in history, after the sacred history there are the fine religious writings of Josephus and Agesippus, the Heraclidus and the Hagiographa; in dialectics, the Logic of Aristotle, not the doubtful ones such as Boethius and the interpreters of another faith; in arithmetic, Nicomachus Boetius; in music, the music itself; in geometry, Euclid; in astrology(astronomy), the theory of Ptolemy and

There is a three fold explanation of this attitude of Lefèvre. The first part of this explanation is found in his education. Since in his day all education was filled with a religious interpretation and all studies were conducted in order to further ecclesiastical interests it is no wonder that his mind was turned to consider seriously the program and claims of the church. Some time in his earlier years he had entered into Holy Orders, but whether he ever exercised the function of a priest is not known.(1) But the fact that he was in Orders did not necessarily mean that he was inclined to religion. In his case however it is probable that he entered them because of religious convictions.

The second part of the explanation is given by Lefèvre when he recounted an early experience.

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"the great composition. In natural morals and private life, the Physics, Ethics, Politics, Economics of Aristotle. Let him drink the pure streams from the source itself. But he who wishes to reach the higher peaks of blissful tranquillity, let him study in the books of Aristotle which are about the universe and metaphysics and declare the highest worldly learning. From these they will be reverently led to the Holy Scriptures and let them take as companions, Cyprian, Hilary, Origen, Jerome, Augustine, Chrysostom, Athanasius, Nazianzen, Damascene and the like. Then when his mind has been purged and his senses put under subjection by these studies, like the action of wine. If his more generous mind affects contemplation of loftier heights, let him rise gradually by the aid of the books of Cusa and of the divine Dionysius."(Lefèvre, *Politicorum libri octo*, Libri VIII, Cap. VI, Annotations, f. 120 r.

(1) Jourdan, G.V., *The Movement towards Catholic Reform in the early XVI century*. p. 82.

"Il ya plus de quatorze ans (je remonte donc un peu haut) j'avais dans ma poche une pièce d'or presque inutile, quand un de mes vieux amis de la Gaule Narbonnaise vint vers moi, tenant un livre qu'il se disposait à vendre: il avait été gravement malade et se trouvait dans la misère. Ayant vu le titre de l'ouvrage qui parlait de contemplation, je le pris avec le désir de le lire, et tendis à mon ami ma pièce d'or pour qu'il la gardât, s'il le voulait, dans le cas même où je lui rendrais le livre que je désirais seulement parcourir. Mais lui, tout en insistant pour me laisser le volume, versait d'abondantes larmes - le livre enfin me resta, et m'apporta une très grande consolation; il me poussa presque à chercher Dieu dans la solitude, après avoir fui le monde (poene ad hoc pertraxit ut, dimisso mundo, Deum in solitudine quaererem); heureux peut-être serais-je, si j'avais mis ce dessein à exécution. Je communique le livre à plusieurs, et d'abord à Guillaume Wassarius, homme opulent, qui laissant aussitôt ses richesses, chercha un refuge dans les pratiques rigides du cloître: d'autres firent de même et je ne m'étonnai pas que cette lecture ait produit sur moi le même effet que sur eux. Mais bien des choses troublèrent le dessein que j'avais formé (cela arrive souvent): quelques amis m'en dissuadèrent, tandis que d'autres soins et des études encore inachevées me retenaient. Pendant que je différais ainsi de fuir le monde, tout en conservant l'espoir de le faire, je favorisais mon dessein en visitant et fréquentant de saints hommes qui, foulant aux pieds le monde, élevaient à Dieu, par leurs paroles et leur conduite, les esprits de ceux qui les approchaient - - La maladie (un grand manque de sommeil) suivit ce travail imprudent, maladie pour la guérison de laquelle les très célèbres et très remarquables médecins Anselme Bertolus et Cop m'ont donné des soins plus que paternels. Une certaine faiblesse fatigante, qui dura plusieurs années, suivit cette insomnie; il arriva ainsi que le monde, auquel je voulais surtout échapper, me retint comme avec des lacs par cette situation qui ne convenait nullement à la vie cloîtrée. Voilà pourquoi revenu à mes premières études, je travaille à la propagation des livres qui forment la piété, et j'ai publié, ces jours-ci, ce premier volume des contemplations de Rémond qui doit, à juste titre, être compté parmi les pieux serviteurs de Dieu." (1)

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(1) "It was more than fourteen years ago (I go back

Though Lefèvre never entered any monastery, this convic-
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"then a little further) I had in my pocket a piece of gold nearly useless, when one of my old friends from Gaul Narbonnaise came toward me, holding a book which he was planning to sell; he had been seriously ill and found himself in want. Having seen the title of the work which dealt with contemplation, I took it, desiring to read it, and offered my gold piece to my friend in order that he might keep it, if he wished, even in case I should return the book, which I only desired to glance through. But he, all the while insisting that he leave me the volume, wept copiously - - in the end the book remained with me and brought me great consolation; it almost led me to seek God in solitude, after having fled the world; perhaps I would be happy if I had put this plan into execution. I passed on the contents of the book to several, and first to G. Wassarius, a rich man, who soon left his wealth and sought a refuge in the rigid practices of the cloister; others followed the same course and I was not astonished that the reading of this book should produce on me the same effect as on them. But many things interfered with this design which I had formed (that often happens): some friends dissuaded me from it, while other cares and yet still unfinished studies held me back. While I was thus putting off the forsaking of the work and at the same time guarding the hope of doing it, I forwarded my plan by visiting and frequenting holy men, who, spurning the world, were lifting up to God by their words and their lives the spirits of those who came to them. Sickness (insomnia) followed imprudent work, a sickness for whose healing the very celebrated and very remarkable physicians Anselme Bertolus and Cop gave me more than fatherly care. A certain irksome weakness followed this insomnia which lasted several years. Thus it happened that the world from which above all I wished to escape held me as with bands by this situation which was in no way suitable to a cloistered life. That is why, having returned to my first studies, I work for the propagation of books which develop piety, and I have published during these days, this first volume of the Contemplations of Ramon (Lull) who justly deserves to be counted among the pious servants of God."

Lefèvre, Primum volumen contemplationum Remundi duos libros continens: Jacobus Faber Stapulensis Gabriele neophyto Carthusio: 1505.

Translated into the French by Barnaud in his Jacques Lefèvre d'Étapes, son influence sur la Réformation, p. 18 and 19.

tion that he should seek God remained with him throughout life and helped to produce in him a religious restlessness that sought everywhere for peace.

The final part is found in a study of his first Italian trip. The date of the above experience was 1490 or 1491.(1) This was before Lefèvre's first trip to Italy. With this impression strong in his mind it was not strange that the religious interpretation of the Florentines, Savonarola, Ficcin and Pico should deepen it and give him a practical method of carrying it out. From Ficcin Lefèvre brought away two things: first, a belief that there was a witness to the truth of Christianity in Philosophy;⁽²⁾ secondly, a love of Platonic mysticism as expressed in the writings of the mystics, especially those of Dionysius the Areopagite, a copy of whose work Lefèvre's group in Paris received from Ficcin in 1494.(3) From Pico Lefèvre received an added impetus to inward contemplation of the love of God.(4) Jourdan finds great similarity between the thought of Savonarola and that of Lefèvre, particularly in their attitude toward the study of the Scriptures and the Catholicity of the church. Though this rests entirely on conjecture, it seems to be a reasonable deduction.(5)

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(1) The book was published in 1505.

(2) See Tilley, Dawn of the French Ren., p. 246.

(3) Renaudet, Préréforme et Humanisme, p. 283.

(4) Ibid, p. 283, note 5.

(5) Jourdan, Movement towards Cath. Reform, p. 91 ff.

The aforementioned influences of education, contact with the book of contemplation and acquaintance with the Christian humanists of Italy combined to produce in Lefèvre a religious hunger that filled him with restlessness.

B. His Search for Relief

In his search for relief from this restlessness, Lefèvre turned to the church. He was assiduous in his observances of its requirements of fastings, pilgrimages, prayers to the saints and reverence of relics, but these brought no satisfaction.(1)

Had he been so minded he might have turned from his search and enjoyed life as one of the courtiers of Louis XII. The king, following the example of the Italian nobles, gathered around him men distinguished for their learning. Lefèvre was one of these.(2) Because of his work in the field in philosophy Lefèvre's reputation was such that he might have remained an honored member of Louis' court with his name and fame assured. But he was wise enough to know that he would not find the peace for which he was searching at court. When Brignonnet offered him a place of retirement, Lefèvre accepted it and, in 1507, withdrew to the Abbey of St. Germain-des-Prés.(3) Thereafter the court knew him but little.(4)

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(1) Farel, *A Tous Seigneurs*, p. 168.

(2) Graf, *Essai sur la vie etc.*, p. 11.

(3) *Ibid.*, p. 12.

(4) Renaudet, *op. cit.*, p. 498. Renaudet relates the incident of Lefèvre accompanying the court on a trip to Italy.

In spite of the fact that his observances had not given him the relief he sought, Lefèvre continued in his obedience to the ritual of the church. In accord with its practices, he made two pilgrimages to Rome, one in 1499 and the other in 1507.(1) Lefèvre was not a man who would fail to notice the conditions which surrounded him and when he came to Rome he could not help but be impressed with Rome's evil conditions. He had already made a visit to Rome, in 1492. On this occasion he saw the Papal Court under the rule of Innocent VIII. This pope had the unenviable distinction of being the worst exponent of nepotism, for

"Innocent and his son (Franceschetto Cibo) obtained money through a bank of secular pardons where amnesty for murder could be obtained at high fees."(2)

On the second journey Lefèvre took advantage of the offer made by Alexander VI, who promised indulgences to all pilgrims that visited the Roman basilica in the last year of the century.(3) If Rome was in an evil state under Innocent VIII, it was in a worse condition under Alexander and not even the trusting mind of Lefèvre could avoid seeing the misgovernment and hypocrisy of the papal rule. Though on this visit Lefèvre saw all the colorful

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(1) Renaudet, op. cit., pp. 381 and 498.

(2) Burchard, Pope Alexander VI and his court, Intro., p. XIII.

(3) Renaudet, op. cit., p. 381.

ceremonies of the jubilee celebration yet they could not meet his need. Indeed they made a less lasting impression on him than did the discovery, at Padua, of some writings of Ramon Lull.(1)

On his last journey to Rome he saw the Pope, Julius II, become general, truly the head of the "church militant".(2) Lefevre had no sympathy with the scandalous proceedings of the Italian church nor was he blind to the similar conditions in the church of France. Although he never took the attitude that Erasmus expressed in his "Praise of Folly", yet he did object to the manner of life led by both the clergy and the monks of France.(3) And his mind, already influenced by the writings of the mystics, turned to them again for the relief he had sought in vain from philosophy and from the church.

For many years Lefèvre read the writings of mystics with pleasure and profit. He found in them the solace that he needed, since they expressed for him at once the longing of his soul and its satisfaction in the Being of God. They put into words his inmost thoughts and gave to him a method of contemplation which solved the problem of his restlessness and led him into peace.(4)

As has been said, Briçonnet gave him, in 1507, a refuge in his Abbey of St. Germain-des-Prés, where he had

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(1) Renaudet, op. cit., p. 391, note 1.

(2) Ibid, p. 499.

(3) See discussion in chapter V.

(4) Hauser et Renaudet, *Peuples et Civilizations*, vol viii, p. 133. See also Renaudet, op. cit., 483.

opportunity to add to his knowledge of this new found science. In the quietness of this place Lefèvre had the leisure to spend time in contemplation and in searching through the great library of the Abbey.(1)

Also in this place he became much better acquainted with Briçonnet, the Abbot, who was also an ardent student of the writings of the mystics. Just what this place of retirement meant to Lefèvre can be surmised when it is realized that he stayed there until he was forced out of Paris by the persecution of the Sorbonne in 1519 or 1520. It was here that Lefèvre did his work on his two most famous commentaries. The close association between these two men which began here lasted for many years and was the means of beginning the Reformation in France.

C. Editions of the Writings of the Mystics

Since his early interest in the mystics, Lefèvre had been collecting their writings, and, up to the time of his entrance to the Abbey of St. Germain-des-Prés, he had edited and published several volumes of the mystics. In 1494 he published an edition of the mystical writers entitled: "Mercurii Trismegisti, Liber de potestate et sapientia Dei per Marsilium Ficinum traductus." This was the beginning of a series of similar publications issued at irregular intervals during the next twenty years. It is of interest to note the dates and the titles of these

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(1) This library was famous for its library.

works.

- 1498 - Theologia vivificans. Cibus solidus. Dionysii
coelestis Hierarchia, divina nomina, mystica
Theologia, undecim Epistolae. Ignatii undecim Epistolae
Polycarpi Epistola una.
- 1498 - Hic contentur libri Remondi pii erumite. Primo
liber de laudibus beatissime Virginis Marie qui et
ars intentionem appellari potest; secundo libellus de
Natali pueri parvuli; tertio Clericus Remundi; quarto
Phantasticus Remundi.
- 1504 - Pro piorum recreatione et hoc in opere contenta;
Epistolae ante indicem; Index contentorum. Ad lectores,
Paradysus Heraclidis. Epistola Clementis. Recognitiones
Petri Apostoli.
- 1505 - Primum volumen Contemplationum Remundi duos
libros continens. Libellus Blaquerne de Amico et Amato.
- 1507 - Theologia Damasceni. De ineffabili divinitate;
de craturarum genesi ordine Moseos. De iis quae ab
Incarnatione usque ad resurrectionem. De iis quae
post resurrectionem usque ad universalem resurrect.

These were all edited and published before Lefèvre
entered the Abbey. In the library of the Abbey he found
many books that interested him, including some texts of
the Bible. Guillaume Briçonnet encouraged him to persevere
in this work.(1) At his suggestion, in June 1510 Lefèvre
journeyed into Germany to seek for unpublished works of
Nicolas of Cusa. This journey held many interesting dis-
coveries for him. He was introduced to the "Brothers of
the Common Life" with whom he stayed at Cologne and through
whom he became acquainted with the ideas of Ruysbroeck and
Gerard Groote.(2) On this trip he was given manuscripts
by the Abbess Adelaide of Ottenstein and by the abbot of
the Benedictines. (3) In addition to these he brought
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(1) Renaudet, Préréforme et Humanisme, p. 600.

(2) Ibid, p. 600 and 602.

(3) Ibid, p. 601

back with him six books relating the life and visions of Elizabeth of Schonau(1), the "Liber specialis gratiae" of Mattilda of Hackbon(2), and the "Visions" of Robert of Uzes(3). The crowning achievement of his journey was the copying of the "Catholicae Concordiae".(4) On his return with these manuscripts he published them,(5) and also the writings of Richard St. Victor.(6)

D. The Influence of the Mystics on Lefèvre

Character of Lefèvre's Religion

For Lefèvre the chief question in his search for peace was: "How can I come into direct personal contact with God?" He had tried the church and found its answer insufficient, but in the study of the mystics he found the answer to his question. It was but natural that he should find it there, for mysticism came into the medieval church as a reaction from the dead religious formalism of the Middle Ages.(7) Mysticism received a great

(1) Renaudet, op. cit., p. 601, note 1.

(2) Ibid. (3) Ibid. (4) Ibid. (5) Ibid.

(6) The titles of these books are:

1506 - Egregii Patris et clari theologi Ricardi quondam devoti coenobitae Sancti Victoris juxta muros parisiensis de super divina Trinitate theologicum opus -- Adjunctus est commentarius artificio analytico metaphysicam et humani sensus transcendentem apicem sed rationali modo complectens intelligentiam.

1512 - Devoti et venerabilis patris Joannis Rusberi presbyteri canonici observantiae beati Augustini de Ornatu spiritualium Nuptiarum libri tres.

1513 - Liber trium virorum et trium spiritualium virginum.

Hermae liber unus. Uguetini Liber unus Fratri Roberti libri duo. Hildegardis Scivias libri tres. Elizabeth virginis libri sex. Mechtildis virginis libri quinque.

(7) Encyclopedeia Britannica, Vol . 19, p. 126. Art. Mysticism.

impetus when the Popes interdicted the Empire and thus prohibited its subjects from public worship. In consequence they had no opportunity for the expression of their religious longings and emotions, so they naturally turned their thoughts inward to find religious consolation. Out of this situation arose the scholastic mystics,(1) in whose writings Lefèvre was greatly interested.

In the writings of these mystics, as in all mysticism, there were two sides, a philosophical and a practical. Unlike the mysticism of the east, these western writers placed more emphasis on the practical than on the philosophical.(2) They, like their later disciple Lefèvre, were primarily interested in the question: "How can the soul come into contact with God?"

Lefèvre was deeply impressed by his study of these mystical writings. Indeed, so marked was this influence that two authors have attempted to show that Lefèvre was merely another of the medieval mystics.(3) Imbart de la Tour, in two separate works,(4) attempts to show this in two ways. He asserts that in the first place Lefèvre was a Platonist, and in his Platonism he followed the Neo-Platonistic mysticism that had come into France. De la Tour dated Lefèvre's change from Aristotelianism to Plat-

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(1) Encycl. Britn., vol. 19, p. 126. Art. Mysticism.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ch. Schmidt in an article in the Bulletin de la Soc., vol. vi, art. Quietiste Mysticisme, and De la Tour.

(4) Origines de la Réforme and an article in Le Correspondant for Apr.-Oct. 1913, p. 240 ff., vol 253.

onism from the time of his contact with Ficini on his second trip to Italy in 1499.(1) Unfortunately for this argument, Ficini died in 1498.(2) Though Lefèvre was not unacquainted with Platonism and Neo-Platonism, nevertheless

"he died faithful to the teaching of Aristotle, in spite of the limits that M. I. de la Tour has wished to mark."(3)

In the second place, de la Tour goes into great detail to demonstrate that Lefèvre, and with him the entire group of Meaux, were mystics who carried on the principles and ideas of the earlier mystics of the Middle Ages.(4) He selects scattered quotations from Lefèvre's writings and demonstrates, to his own satisfaction at least, that Lefèvre was of the same type as Dionysius the Areopagite and Ramon Lull.(5) Undoubtedly there is much to be said in defense of this point of view, but to say this of Lefèvre is to overemphasise one side of his life and to present a distorted picture of the man. Beyond all question Lefèvre was deeply influenced by his study of the mystics, but he never went to the extremes of expression of which they were guilty, for his writings were always practical and he himself later became an active reformer. Further, it cannot be said of him as it was said of the earlier western mystics that

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(1) De la Tour, *Origines de la Réforme*, vol. iii, p. 389.

(2) Renaudet in an article in the "Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine" for June-July, 1909, refutes this contention. p. 267.

(3) Ibid. (4) I. de la Tour, *Art. in Le Correspondant*, vol. 253, p. 253. (5) Ibid, pp. 250-269.

"there is no sign that Tauler, for example, Ruysbroeck or Thomas a Kempis had felt the dogmatic teaching of the Church jar in any single point upon their religious consciousness."(1)

For in many things, as will be shown in chapters five and seven, Lefèvre objected to the dogmatic teachings of the church.

Though the position by de la Tour on this question is too extreme, yet there is no doubt that Lefèvre received much from the study of these writings. His mind had much the same tendency and he was interested in the subjects upon which they wrote. Throughout his writings, as de la Tour has pointed out, there are many indications of their influence. It is only as this is understood that it is possible to explain the way in which Lefèvre reconciled certain seeming contradictions between his opinions and the teaching of the Church. In the next few paragraphs some particulars in which the mystics influenced him will be discussed.(2)

Chief Results

The most apparent result in Lefèvre's thought which

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(1) Encycl. Brit., op. cit., p. 126.

(2) After an exhaustive inquiry in the larger libraries of the United States it was discovered with regret that no copies of any of Lefèvre's editions of the writings of the mystics were in this country. For the material of this chapter it has been necessary to find parallels between the writings of the mystics and similar ideas in Lefèvre's available writings. M. Renaudet's excellent work has several quotations from his editions of the mystics, which have been studied with care.

came from his study of the mystics was his conception of the meaning of religion, namely, that religion is the finding of God. All the mystical writers held this idea and expressed it in various ways. To Dionysius the question was a philosophical one and he answered it in that way. Having concluded that God "is an unfathomable abyss of supereminent perfections"(1) he answered the question of the approach to God in two ways. First,

"God pours Himself through His creatures by the diffusive power of His infinite goodness;"(2)
Secondly, "Creatures attracted by God return to Him, their first cause and last end."(3)

Of all the mystics whose writings Lefèvre edited, Ramon Lull was the only one who had not been influenced in his thinking by the writings of Dionysius.(4) As it was Lull's work on "Contemplation" that first turned him in this direction, perhaps he owed as much to him as to Dionysius, for his conception of God. Though in Lefèvre's opinion Dionysius ranked with Nicolas of Cusa as the greatest of the mystics,(5) the following quotation from Lull more aptly fits Lefèvre's type of thinking:

"Who's He that all things can create?
And pardon sins however great?
Who in a moment can destroy
The world and all that we enjoy?
Who gives the harvest, flower and grain?
Who makes a man to rise again?
Who gives him joy that never ends?
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(1) Two Masters of Byzantine Mysticism, Amer. Cath. Quart. vol. , p. 21. (2) Ibid. (3) Ibid.

(4) Graf credits Dionysius with exerting the greatest influence upon Lefèvre, but I do not believe that it was as great as that of Cusa. (5) Lef., Politicorum, Liber VIII, Cap. VI, Ann.

"Who is most loyal and true of friends?
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One, only One, all this can do -
All this and more than I can show.
He is the God that loves alway,
Him do I praise, to Him I pray.
Before Him I a sinner bend:
He gives me pardon and grace to mend."(1)

This same conception was amplified in the first two books of Lull's "Book of Contemplation".(2) In Lefèvre's edition of this work in 1505, he thought it worth while to publish only the first two of the five books.(3) And this expression by Lull of the joy which accompanies the love of God is an idea frequently found in Lefèvre's writings. Such expressions abound in Lefèvre's exhortations to his readers as found in his preface to his commentary on the four Gospels, and also in his prefatory remarks before his translation of the Scriptures.(4) In them, God is described as "le Père de miséricorde" and we are His children in Jesus Christ.(5) We are drawn to Him by His Spirit and to Him we owe all that we have.(6) Lefèvre adopted the phraseology of the mystics to express his attitude toward the "parole de Dieu". Love for the "word of God", which is "ray du vray soleil spirituel, ouquel toute beaute, excellence, gloire, et toute supereminente bonte est enclose"(7), and for Jesus Christ "nostre seul

(1)Peers, Ramon Lull, p. 300 - 301.
(2)Ibid, p. 43 ff, chapter III.
(3)Renaudet, Préréforme et Humanisme, p. 482.
(4)Found in Herminjard, Correspondance, vol. I.
(5)Herminjard, Correspondance, vol. I, p. 135 et al.
(6)Ibid, (7) a ray of the true spiritual sun, in whom all beauty, excellence, glory, and all supreme bounty is included. Herminjard, vol. I, p. 137.

sauveur"(1) are alike recommended to the reader.

"Tota fides eorum, tota fidutia, totus amor ad ipsum colligebatur, et haec etiam in nobis ad eundem colligentur. Nullus suo, sed Christi spiritu vivebat: sic et nos viveremus. Et sic tandem ex hac vita ad ipsum ituri essemus, ut et ipsinos praecesserunt, quibus erat omnia Christus."(2)

In the second place, Lefèvre drew from Nicolas of Cusa the most concise expression of the way in which to approach God.(3)

"Il est trois moyens de chercher Dieu: l'imagination conduit à l'erreur et à l'idolatrie; la connaissance rationnelle nous aide à découvrir les vestiges divine; mais seule la connaissance intellectuelle nous élève jusqu'à la contemplation de la lumière invisible et incompréhensible. -- Alors ceux qui croient voir sont aveugles, et ceux qui savent qu'ils ne voient pas aperçoivent la vérité; alors l'ignorance est préférable à la science."(4)

Of all the mystics, Nicolas, Cardinal of Brixen, is usually credited with exerting the greatest influence upon Lefèvre.(5)

This can easily be explained when it is understood that the mysticism of Nicolas was "the support of a man weighed down

(1) Herminjard, op. cit., p. 135.

(2) "It is on Him that they (the faithful) should concentrate all their faith, all their confidence, all their love, and to Him we should address the same sentiments. No one lives of himself but by the Spirit of Christ, thus also we should live. And so at length when it is necessary that we go out of this life to Him, let us go as they also have gone, to whom Christ alone was all." (Quatuor Evangel., Praefat. A 3r.

(3) Renaudet, op. cit., p. 599.

(4) "There are three ways to seek God: by the imagination, which leads to error and to idolatry; by rational knowledge, which helps us to discover vestiges of the divine; but only the knowledge intellectual raises us up to the contemplation of the invisible and incomprehensible light. -- Then those who think that they see are blind, and those who know that they do not see perceive the truth; in that case ignorance is preferable to knowledge." Renaudet, op. cit., p. 599.

(5) See Tilley, Barnaud, Renaudet, et al.

by responsibility"(1) and his works were written to help others into the mystical experience of God.(2) The Cardinal was also a great Aristotelian and philosopher, which interests Lefèvre shared with him.

Although Nicolas exerted the greatest influence, yet Renaudet credits the writings of Richard de Saint-Victor with leading Lefèvre to a complete understanding of the art of contemplation.

"Richard professait que, des affirmations de la foi, les unes sont démontrables rationnellement, les autres appartiennent au domaine de la science mystique; mais l'esprit humain peut s'élever, de degré en degré, jusqu'à la connaissance immédiate de Dieu; parvenu à la contemplation extatique, il le découvre en lui-même. Ainsi Lefèvre voyait, par cette doctrine, la pensée de Denys l'Areopagite se relier à celle de Lulle et de Nicolas de Cusa."(3)

In the third place, Lefèvre drew from these studies his interpretation of the place and meaning of faith.

To the mystics, one of the essentials of the approach to God was faith,(4) and faith need not depend on understanding; indeed faith must proceed when understanding is lacking.(5) Lefèvre was quick to apply this principle to the

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(1) Nicolas de Cusa, Vision of God, Intro., p. x.

(2) Ibid, p. xii and 12.

(3) "Richard taught that of the affirmations of faith, some are rationally demonstrable, others belong to the domain of mystical knowledge; but the human spirit is able to raise itself step by step to the immediate knowledge of God, arrived at by the ecstatic contemplation which he discovers in himself. Thus Lefèvre saw in this teaching the thought of Dionysius the Areopagite reconciled to that of Lull and of Nicolas of Cusa." Renaudet, op. cit., p. 521.

(4) Peers, Ramon Lull, p. 71.

(5) Nicolas de Cusa, Vision of God, Intro. p. xv, xvi.

understanding and following of the Scriptures. In one place he wrote:

"Sed age, cum dominus iubeat ut dictum est, evangelio credere, non autem intelligere: aspirandum ne erit ad ipsum intelligendum? Quidui? sed ita tamen, ut credulitas priores partes obtineat: intelligentia posteriores: nam qui non credit, nisi quod intelligit nondum bene ac sufficienter credit". (1) Continuing with a comparison of the two he concluded that the "credulitas mentis maius quid est quam intelligentia, cum haec sit finiti, illa etiam infiniti."(2)

Lefèvre, however, never went to the extremes of expression sometimes found in the mystics. Great as was his admiration for the involved and, at times unintelligible, writings of Dionysius and of Nicolas, yet nowhere did he fall into such instances of unintelligibility as are frequently found in their writings.(3)

By-Products

Accompanying these more noticeable results in Lefèvre's thinking from his study of the mystical writings, are several by-products. One of these came from a study of the philosophical writings of Nicolas of Cusa, which demonstrated that one could reconcile the Aristotelian tenets with those of Christian mysticism.(4) This explains why

(1)"But observe: Since the Lord, as has been said, commands to believe the gospel, not indeed to understand it: why then does he try to understand it? Why not? But therefore notwithstanding faith ought to have first place, understanding a lower place: for he who does not believe except that which he understands does not have a good and sufficient faith."

(2)"In the spirit, faith is more important than understanding since the one possesses the infinite, the other the finite." Comment. Initiat. Praefatio: A3r.

(3)Nicolas entitled one of his books, De Docta Ignorantia.

(4)Renaudet, op. cit. p. 661-5.

Lefèvre could publish side by side the works of these mystical authors and of the very practical Aristotle.

Another by-product can be traced to Ruysbroeck. Ruysbroeck was an ardent exponent of the idea that the common people should have religion taught them in their own tongue.(1) Lefèvre expressed this same idea in his commentary on the Pauline Epistles in theory;⁽²⁾ and later, he put it into practice when he worked with Briçonnet in Meaux, and when he translated the Scriptures into French for the common people.

Hyma contends that Lefèvre drew most of his Protestant views from his contact with the writings of the "Brethren of the Common Life".

"The so-called Protestant views of Lefevre sound so much like some of the thoughts expressed in the 'Imitation' and the works of Gansfort that one agrees with Renaudet that he must have acquired them during his visit in the brethren-house at Cologne. His friendship with Badius Ascensius and his love of Cusa's mysticism also link him with the pupils of the Brethren of the Common Life. Of course his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans was not the first Protestant book. Not one single view is expressed therein which cannot be found at least as plainly expressed in the 'Imitation' and in Gansfort's writings."(3)

A fourth by-product of this study was his attitude toward relics. One of the apparent inconsistencies of Lefèvre's later work was his strict emphasis on the necessity of depending on Christ alone for salvation while

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(1)Hyma, Christian Renaissance, p. 278.

(2)Lefevre, Pauli Epistolae, I Cor. XIV;101

(3)Hyma, Christian Renaissance, p. 278-9.

he countenanced the use of relics. It may be that he was influenced by his knowledge that John of Damascus, the early Christian theologian whose works Lefèvre had published, was at once the exponent of salvation through faith and a great defender of the practice of adoration of relics.(1) Though Lefèvre never went as far as did John, yet it is probable that it was through John's writings that he learned to reconcile these two conflicting ideas.

The most important by-product of these studies was in his attitude toward the Scriptures. As early as 1498 he expressed the idea of the supreme position of the Scriptures:

"The nearer one is to the sun the more light one gets. For that reason the greatest deference and authority ought to be conferred upon the Holy Gospels -- -- -- Attention, piety, religious feeling, deference, and humility, such as assist and prepare the mind, are needed in applying oneself to sacred studies. Those who possess not these qualifications are only made worse by the study of holy things."(2)

The mystics turned him to the study of the Scriptures as

"la seule parole de Dieu qui est esprit et vie."(3)

And in his exposition of the Scriptures he sought to find that "spiritual interpretation" which he found in all the writings of the New Testament and the Psalms. There are many examples of this; one is the triple denial of Peter which Lefèvre interpreted as the three periods of the decadence of the Church: the first extended to the end of

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(1)Harnack, History of Dogma, vol. iv, p. 322.

(2)Jourdan, Movement towards Cath. Reform, quotes this from Lefèvre's Theologia Vivificans, p. 22.

(3)The only words of God who is spirit and life." Herminjard, Correspondance, vol. i, p.134.

the primitive church when Constantine came to the throne; the second witnessed the triumph of the body over the spirit in the church; and the third is the period of the anti-Christ.(1) Lefèvre applied Dionysius' three-fold description of the development of the Christian life to his description of his commentaries. Dionysius divided the Christian life into the stages of purgation (purification), illumination and perfection.(2) Lefèvre accepted this division and modestly placed his commentary as an aid to the first stage, i.e. purgation.(3)

An interesting exception to Lefèvre's usual attitude of gentleness and tolerance was his attitude toward the Mohammedans. Lefèvre published one book against them.(4) In it he inveighed against the Mohammedans and expressed the wish for an immediate Crusade. He hoped that the alliance of Louis XII, Maximilian, Henry VIII of England and Alphonse of Aragon would accomplish this worthy project.(5) Renaudet describes this work as containing only "miserable diatribes".(6) It may be that Lefèvre's attitude was an outcome of his reading the works of Lull, who occasionally expressed himself forcefully against the Mohammedans.(7)

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(1)Comment. Initiat., Matthew XXVI, 263.

(2)American Cath. Quarterly, op. cit., p. 25.

(3)Comment. Initiat., Praefat. A 3 v.

(4)Ricoldi Ordinis Praedicatorum contra sectam Mahumeticam.

(5)Ibid, fol. 1 v - after Renaudet, op. cit., p. 520,note 1.

(6)Renaudet, op. cit., p. 519.

(7)Ibid, p. 379.

E. Contribution to the Reformation through
these Publications

The contribution of his study and publication of these writings to the Reformation was two-fold. In the first place it established the character of Lefèvre's religion, or more properly, his interpretation of Christianity. It has been shown that Lefèvre accepted for himself the teaching of the mystics on the subject of how to know God, and that they gave him his view of faith and the development of the Christian life. If this were all that these writings did, in view of Lefèvre's importance in the development of the Reformation, a study of this phase of his life would be worth while. But it went further, for it brought Lefèvre to the study of the Bible and showed him that the Scriptures were the supreme authority in religion.

In the second place, this study and these publications had a marked influence on several of Lefèvre's friends who were later influential in the furthering of the work of reform. Three of these, Guillaume Briçonnet, Gerard Roussel, and Marguerite of Navarre, accepted for themselves Lefèvre's mystical interpretation of Christianity. Marguerite and Briçonnet carried on a very lengthy correspondence on religious matters in which they expressed their thoughts in the phraseology of the mystics.(1) The first practical expression of the Reformation in France was at Meaux. Here under the protection of the Bishop, Briçonnet, a group of

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(1) This correspondence is found in part in Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. i.

Lefèvre's friends, led by Lefèvre himself, put into practice some of his ideas. And in the program of the group the influence of the mystics is easily discernible.

First in the popularization of religious teachings, when the sermons were preached in French, the Mass celebrated in French and the Scriptures were translated into the vernacular and put into the hands of the common people. This was the ideal set up by Ruysbroeck in his writings.

Secondly, in the teachings of the group that religion consisted in coming into direct contact with God Himself.

Thirdly, this influence is seen in the emphasis placed upon the importance of the Scriptures as over against the Church and ritual. The mystics and the Bible itself were the only sources from which this emphasis could have been drawn in Lefèvre's day and it has been shown that Lefèvre was led to the Scriptures by his study of the mystics.

In the light of the emphasis placed upon the authority of the Scriptures, it is no exaggeration to say that the early French Reformation was a direct descendent of the mystics of the Middle Ages.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONTRIBUTION THROUGH HIS BIBLICAL COMMENTARIES.

V. Contribution through his Biblical Commentaries.

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There is much truth in Tilley's warning that

"It is a mistake to separate the two phases of his (Lefèvre's) career, the Aristotelian and the theological, by too rigid a dividing line".(1)

And yet Jourdan also is right in pointing out that there was a development in Lefèvre's thought in that he progressed from the study of philosophy through the mystics to the study of the Scriptures.(2) The chief interest of the latter years of Lefèvre's life was the study, textual criticism, interpretation and translation of the Scriptures. It is with this phase of Lefèvre's life and work that the remaining chapters of this study have to do.

This chapter will deal with the subject of his Biblical commentaries. In it the method he used in his approach to the Bible, the conclusions that he drew from his study which led to his later attitude toward the reform movement and the mother church and his contribution to the Reformation will be discussed. A short consideration of his attitude toward the authority of the Scriptures and of his outlook on the church problems which surrounded him will be included. This period is crucial because of the formative influence it exerted not only on himself but also upon his fellow workers at Meaux and his students at Paris. For that reason it will receive a detailed treatment.

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(1) Tilley, Dawn of the French Renaissance, p.239.

(2) Jourdan, Movement towards Cath. Reform, p. 84. I do not believe that Jourdan's dates are accurate.

A. The Task and his Equipment

The study of the Bible had fallen even lower than had the study of Aristotle, not because the men of the theological schools were uninterested in this study, but because they had allowed the Sentences of Peter Lombard to supplant the original text.(1) As a result, there had grown up in the University of Paris a disregard of the sacred Scriptures and a corresponding elevation of the authority of tradition. So firmly was this conception established, that when a candidate for license, Jean Laillier, dared to oppose Scripture to the authority of the Popes and of traditions, he was persecuted for many years and finally imprisoned.(2) It was Lefèvre's self-appointed task to restore the Scriptures as he had restored Aristotle.

Following his change of interest from philosophy to religion, it was inevitable that Lefèvre should turn to the study of the Bible. Just as the poor texts and the verbose, unprofitable commentaries on the books of Aristotle had driven him to procure for himself and his students the corrected texts and to write brief, plain paraphrases and explanations for Aristotle's philosophy; so the corrupted texts and versions of the Vulgate led Lefèvre to turn his hand to a similar task for the Scriptures. He brought to this work the same critical tech-

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(1) Renaudet, *Préréforme et Humanisme*, p. 105.

(2) *Ibid*, p. 108 ff.

nique which he had used and developed in his work with Aristotle. He brought his insistence upon the return from commentaries to the original text. Above all, his ability to express clearly, briefly and logically the thought of the text aided him in his new work. In addition he had a considerable knowledge of Greek and a rudimentary knowledge of Hebrew.(1) But the greatest asset he had in this study was his never failing desire to know the truth, and to arrive at the truth he was willing to go any length.

"If the difficulties, which, in consequence, presented themselves to all who sought to restore the honor and usefulness of Christianity, stood in the way of Lefèvre's project, nevertheless, at that epoch, no one was, by circumstance and training, better qualified to impress on his generation the value of a knowledge of the Bible. Not only did he possess a firm faith in Christianity, as it was set forth in the Gospels and Pauline Epistles, but also the very bent of his mental powers facilitated such a congenial task, formed as these were by the convergence of the mystical and the intellectual in a marvellously simple soul. Thus the philosopher, the mystic, and the savant coexisted in him with the gentle, faithful Christian."(2)

B. Textual Criticism

The first of Lefèvre's commentaries appeared shortly after he had retired to the abbey of St. Germain-des-Prés, in 1509.(3) This work he entitled "Quincuplex psalterium, gallicum, romanum, hebraicum, vetus et conciliatum". It was followed three years later by a larger, more complete

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(1)He occasionally explained the meaning of Hebrew words. See Psalm VIII.(2) Jourdan, Movement towards Cath. Reform, p. 85. (3)Renaudet, Préréforme etc., p. 514.

and more daring commentary on the Epistles of Paul, "Epistolae divi Pauli apostoli cum Commentariis J. Fabri Stapulensis", which was published in 1512.(1) Ten years later his work on the four gospels appeared while he was at Meaux, "Commentarii Initiatorii in IV Evangelia", printed in the house of Simon de Colinnes in 1522.(2) His last commentary was on the Catholic Epistles and was published in 1527.(3)

In the first of his commentaries, Quincuplex Psalterium, the reader was allowed to be his own textual critic, for Lefèvre took the three versions of Jerome and printed them in parallel columns. The first column, entitled Psalterium Gallicum, was the version of the psalms used in the churches of Gaul. The second column, Psalterium Romanum, was Jerome's revision of the Latin Psalter which had been translated from the Septuagint, and named Romanum because it was introduced into the diocese of Rome by the Bishop Damase. The Psalterium Gallicum was a revision of the Psalterium Romanum made by Jerome himself. Dissatisfied with both of these versions, Jerome made a new translation direct from the Hebrew. This Lefèvre placed in his third column and entitled it Psalterium Hebraicum. At the end of his comments on the Psalms, he printed, without

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(1) Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. i, p. 3.

(2) Ibid, p. 89.

(3) Ibid, vol. ii, p. 33.

comment, two more versions, entitled Psalterium Vetus and Psalterium Conciliatum. The former was the old psalter in use before Jerome, the other was Lefèvre's own version in which he attempted to bring the different versions into agreement.(1) He was handicapped in this last work by his very imperfect knowledge of Hebrew.

It was natural that when Lefèvre found that the text of the Scriptures was in poor condition, and that the various editions did not agree with each other he should set himself, first of all to the task of revising the text. That he dared to do this showed his courage, for it was no small thing in that day to suggest that the version of the Vulgate attributed to Jerome was not perfect.(2) Erasmus before this had edited the works of Laurentio Valla(3) which included a series of notes upon the Vulgate of the Gospels, the Pauline and Catholic Epistles and the Apocalypse, in which Valla had pointed out the errors and variations in the existing texts.(4) Erasmus had been attacked

(1)Lefèvre, Psalterium Quin., Praefatio, f iii r. Lefèvre described these versions thus: "Romanum que Rome emendatum ab Hieronymo(ceu ex eius prologo dilucet)i ecclesia caneretur romana id est Gallia transalpina. Gallicum que eo ecclesia gallica id est cis-alpina iteretur et illud esse arbitror quod ad preces Paulae et Eustachij secundo correxit Hieronym hoc ductus -- Hebraicum vero: que nulla media intercedete lingua exhebreo ad sophroni preces latina illud donarit colonia.

Porro Psalterium vetus dicit: que eo vel maxime ante editiones a Hieronymo emendatas uterentur ecclesia. Conciliatum; que pauca addat aut mutet ad gallicum quo magis veritati et hebraico concorder psalterio et quandoque et aptior et accommodatior habeatur fermo."

(2)Graf, "ssai, p. 27. (3) April 13, 1505. (4) Richard Simon, Histoire Critique du Texte du N.T., p. 485-6

Epistole diui Pauli apostoli: cum commen- tariis preclarissimi viri Jacobi Saba Stapuleñ

CHRISTVS.

Domini nostri IESV CHRISTI longanimitate: salutē arbitramini. sicut & dilectus frater noster Paulus secundum datam sibi gratiam scripsit vobis.

Viuo ego: iam non ego: viuitero in me: CHRISTVS: quod autem nunc viuo in carne: in fide viuo filij dei.

1	Epistola ad Rhomanos.	1.53
2	Epistola prima ad Corinthios.	10.84
3	Epistola secunda ad Corinthios.	19.107
4	Epistola ad Galathas.	25.120
5	Epistola ad Ephesios.	29.128
6	Epistola ad Philipenses.	32.136
7	Epistola ad Colossenses.	34.142
8	Epistola prima ad Thessalonic.	36.148
9	Epistola secunda ad Thessalonic.	38.154
10	Epistola prima ad Timotheum.	40.157.
11	Epistola secunda ad Timotheum.	42.167.
12	Epistola ad Titum.	44.171
13	Epistola ad Philemonem.	45.175
14	Epistola ad Hebraeos.	46.180
	Ad has 14 adiecta intelligentia ex græco.	
	Epistola ad Laodicenses.	147.
	Epistolæ ad Senecam: &c.	176.
	Commentariorum libri quatuordecim	53
	Linus de passione Petri & Pauli	209.2012

J. Saba Stapuleñ

Venundantur Parrhisus in edibus Francisci
Regnault: et Joannis de la Porte Bibliopolarum.

severely for this and made his defense in the preface of his publication.(1) Lefèvre realized this but he made an original defense for daring to correct this text when he published his commentary on the epistles of Paul. He said that he knew some would object because

"ad translationem Hieronymi intelligentiam graecam adijcere ausi fuerimus ad nimis insolenter factum arbitantes, et me temeritatis et audaciae; non tam accusabant que damnabunt. Quibus nichil succensemus, nam iuste ad quidem facerent: si ita res haberet ut et ipsi corrietant et iam que plurimus est persuasum. Verum nos bona venia dignabuntur: cum plane intelligent nos ad sacri Hieronymi translationem nihil uasos sed ad vulgatam aeditionem quae longefuit ante beatum et gloriosum ecclesiae lumen Hieronymum et quam nobiscum ipse suggillat carpit et coarguit et quam veterem et vulgatam appellat aeditionem. - - - Ut dominum tutorem et defensorum nostrum ostendamus: cuius nost putant adversarium. Enimvero si sacer Hieronymus huius aeditio nis interpretem et alium citat latinumque interpretem appellat et interpretationem ipsam nominat vulgatam: nonne egregie conficitur non esse Hieronymi translationem."(2)

Thus he disposed of any accusation of disrespect to

Jerome's translation. But there still remained the question
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(1) Renaudet, Prereforme etc., p. 478.

(2) Lefèvre, Pauli Epistolae, Apologia, iii r.

"we have dared to place the sense of the Greek text beside Jerome's translation: they will regard this as an excessive innovation and they will accuse me, they will condemn me, for my temerity and audacity. We are not in the least angry with them, for they would have reason, if things were as they have represented and as many have been persuaded. But they will count us worthy of a good excuse when they understand clearly that we have in nothing changed the translation of St. Jerome, but rather of the vulgar edition which existed a long time before the blessed and glorious ecclesiastical light, Jerome, and which he himself with us, blamed, criticised and corrected, which he called an old and vulgar edition. --- --- --- ---
As we will show the Lord is our tutor and defender: they hold us his adversary. However, truly on my word, since Jerome quotes another translation of this edition, he both devotes himself to the Latin text and calls the translation itself vulgar: does he not conclusively prove this not to be the translation of Jerome?" And Lefèvre concluded that this edition was the translation of Isidore. Ibid.

of daring to return to the Greek original and in his answer he turned for his authority to Jerome himself,

"Sacer Hieronymus novum testamentum in quo et hae epistolae continentur graecae fidei reddidit, verum vulgata additionem adeo multiplici vicio scatet ut non tam fidei graecae reddita sit, quae reddi indigeat non est igitur Hieronymi alioqui pro dignitate reddita esset graecae fidei."(1)

Therefore this version could not be Jerome's for it did not conform to the Greek, and Jerome's translation must have been lost, much to Lefèvre's regret.(2)

In his two later commentaries Lefèvre did not pay so great attention to the question of textual criticism. Probably the reason for this was the appearance in 1516 of Erasmus Greek New Testament which made it possible for all who would to come to the original.(3) For this reason he made no attempt to give a new translation but reserved his comments on the text for a shorter critical section in the body of the commentary. Though the comments on critical and exegetical questions are shorter in length in his *Commentarii initiatorii* than in the *Pauli Epistolae*, yet they are much longer than those in his last commentary.

In his *Commentarii in epistolas catholicas*, Lefèvre made

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(1) "St. Jerome translated the New Testament, in which work these authoritative Greek texts were consulted, but yet the vulgate abounds in many different changes so that the Greek is not faithfully translated and having been translated it is deficient, therefore it is not of Jerome otherwise the Greek would have been faithfully rendered for the sake of honor." Lefèvre, *Comment. Pauli Epist. Apologia*, iii r.

(2) Ibid.

(3) See Lefèvre's reference to Erasmus in his *Comm. Init., Praefatio*.

no changes in method or in doctrine, unless to be more outspoken on the subject of the priestly character of the individual Christian.

It is of interest in passing to note his dedications. The first two were dedicated to the Briçonnets, the *Psalterium Quincuplex* was dedicated to the elder, the Archbishop of Narbonne, and the second was dedicated to his close friend, Guillaume Briçonnet, then Bishop of Lodève, later Bishop of Meaux. But contrary to the custom of the day, he dedicated his commentary on the Gospels "*Ad Christianos Lectores*". He returned to the established order in his last and dedicated it to Archbishop Duprat, for reasons that are unknown to this day.

While many have found fault with Lefèvre's textual work in that it does not measure up to the standards of present day textual criticism and fails to equal that of Erasmus in this field, yet it must be recognized that Lefèvre was a pioneer here as well as in the restoration of the text of Aristotle and as such he deserves the title of the "Father of textual criticism."(1)

C. Exegesis

Having already disposed of the objection that he had no right to change the Vulgate, Lefèvre showed no hesitancy in making corrections. The *Pauli Epistoli* was published with the two translations, Jerome's and his own,

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(1) Cambridge Modern History, vol. ii, p.

side by side in two unequal columns. That of Jerome was printed in large type entitled "Vulgata Aeditio" while his own was modestly printed in type much smaller and entitled "Intelligentia ex Graeco". His translation cannot be called a new version for it is hardly more than a revision of the Vulgate. He retained the text of the Vulgate whenever it seemed to him to conform to the original, and changed it only when it seemed to lose the sense of the Greek. Whenever he made a correction he gave his reason for so doing in a section of his commentary entitled "Examinatio nonnullorum circa literam". Both his Greek and his Latin were often at fault and he did not always follow his own rules.(1)

"Il fait observer, à la vérité, que les interprètes doivent avoir soin de ne pas changer la pensée de l'auteur par une traduction trop littérale, mais qu'ils doivent la rendre conformément au caractère particulier de la langue dans laquelle ils traduisent; car, dit-il, fort souvent ce qui est exprimé d'une manière juste et propre dans une langue, si on le traduit dans une autre en conservant le même locution, sera inexact et inintelligible."(2)

In his translation Lefèvre occasionally changed the translation of the Vulgate for the worse, as in I Corinthians IX, 17, where the Vulgate translated

(1) See these rules in his Comment on Romans VI, 27, Examin.

(2) "He observed, in truth, that the translators ought to take care not to change the thought of the author by a too literal translation, but they ought to render it so as to conform to the particular character of the language into which they are translating, for, he said, very often that which is expressed in a clear and proper manner in one language, if the same locution is used in translating it into another language, it will be inexact and unintelligible." Graf, Essai sur la vie etc., p. 30.

by "dispensatio mihi credita est", Lefèvre translated it by "dispentioni creditus sum". But there are also several instances where he bettered the older version as in II Corinthians II,16. Vulgate: "Nam et ego quod donavi, si quid donavi propter vos" - Lefèvre: "Nam et ego si quippiam alicui condonavi, ei condonavi propter vos", which is a less literal but more intelligible translation.(1) He reproached the Vulgate for not consistently translating the same Greek word by the same Latin word.(2) And he objected, rightly enough, to the introduction of Greek words into the Latin translation.(3)

It is to be regretted that Lefèvre did not give us the Greek manuscript from which he made his corrections of the Vulgate. In an endeavor to establish what this manuscript was, the writer compared his Greek quotations from Romans with the Vaticanus, Alexandrianus, Sinaiticus, Codices and the Greek New Testament of Erasmus. The text does not agree with any one of them entirely but holds more closely to the Codex Vaticanus than to any other. It would seem that Lefèvre either found an excellent Greek manuscript in the library of the Abbey of St. Germain-des-Prés or else had procured a copy from Italy that had been corrected by some of the Italian Greek scholars.(4)

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(1) For a full discussion of the weakness and strength of Lefèvre's translations see Graf, *Essai* etc., p. 30 ff.

(2) See *Examin. circa*, Romans, I, 17, VIII, 5, I Cor., XV, 41.

(3) *Examin.*, II Cor., IV, 8, Galatians, VI, 6.

(4) As Erasmus had in the works of Valla.

Most authorities in speaking of Lefèvre's work as a textual and exegetical critic(1) follow Simon in discounting as useless, or worse, the work that he did in his revision of the Vulgate.(2) There is no doubt that his weakness in Greek, coupled with his unfinished style in Latin, led him into many errors, and it is of these alone that they speak. But much can be said for his contributions to this science through his corrections and Graf, after summing up both the good and the bad in his work, concluded that although

"Beaucoup de ces corrections sont de fort peu d'importance; parmi celles qui sont plus remarquables, le nombre des bonnes est proportionnellement plus grand que celui des mauvaises."(3)

D. Style of Commenting

Lefèvre's claim to distinction as a Biblical writer does not rest only or chiefly on his exegetical or his critical work. It rests rather on his commentaries and his interpretations, which initiated a new method in Biblical interpretation.(4) The commentators of the Middle Ages were satisfied to make their explanations of the Scriptures by the compilations of quotations from the Fathers and other commentators. So insignificant and un-

(1) Barnaud, Jacques Lefèvre, p. 26, Renaudet, op. cit., p. 622.

(2) Simon, Des Versions, p. 239.

(3) "Many of the corrections are of very little importance, among these, which is the more remarkable, the number of the good is proportionately greater than the number of the poor." Graf, Essai etc., p. 35.

(4) Ibid, p. 36, and Barnaud, op. cit., p. 27.

original were all the commentators of the time from Peter Lombard and Albert the Grand to the beginning of the sixteenth century that Simon, in his history of all the commentators on Scripture, considered only two of them worthy of treatment.(1) Even these writers were slaves of tradition and were more anxious to prove whatever type of interpretation they represented than to find out the meaning of the text itself.(2) Lefèvre on the other hand was

"doué d'un esprit juste et indépendant des décisions de l'école, d'un amour de la vérité étranger à toute routine, d'une piété vraie, vivante et profonde, se mit à étudier la Bible en elle-même et par elle-même, sans vouloir la plier à un système étranger, y voyant la parole de Dieu supérieure à toute système, à toute opinion humaine, la seule règle de la vérité religieuse."(3)

His method of commenting differed in some points in his different books. In his Psalterium Quincuplex he divided his comments, which were printed after each psalm, into four parts. The first part he called "Titulus". In this the central thought and purpose of the Psalm was expressed. The second part, "Expositio", was a running paraphrase in which the meaning of each verse was explained. The third division he entitled "Concordia". In it Lefèvre

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(1)R. Simon, Des Commentateurs, pp. 468-484.

(2)See Renaudet's discussion on pages 55-59. Renaudet, op. cit. (3)"gifted with a spirit, fair and independent of the decisions of the School, with a love of truth divorced from all routine, with a true piety, living and profound, he went to the study of the Bible in itself and by itself, without wishing to force it to a strange system, seeing there the word of God superior to all systems to all human opinion, the only rule of true religion (religious truth)". Graf, op. cit., p. 37.

referred to other passages of Scripture that either re-
stated the same idea(1) or use the same figure,(2) or
interpret the ideas in the psalm,(3) or show its fulfil-
ment.(4) The most of these quotations came from other
psalms, but there are also many from the Prophets and the
New Testament. The fourth section of his comments he
called "Adverte" and included in it his exegetical re-
marks. In this section he discussed the differences in
the three versions and gave what he considered to be the
best reading. Here he referred to other commentators on
the Psalms(5) and did not fear to differ with them if he
believed them to be wrong.(6) For the sake of brevity,
the Concordia was omitted after the twenty-fifth psalm
and the Titulus section dwindled to a very few words, hardly
more than the repetition of the title. Occasionally, he
followed the example of Gilles de Delft and expressed his
paraphrase in hexameter verse which he called "carmen epica".(7)
At the end of his commentary he put a table of the Hebrew
and Latin names of God, for which he gave the meaning.

In his Commentarii Pauli Epistolae he adopted another
method which was not so detailed in division. He began

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- (1)Psalt. Quin., For ps. VII,4, he referred to I Kings, XXIV.
- (2)Ibid, For Psalm XXII(our XXIII) he referred to John X.
- (3)Ibid, For Ps. XVIII,1 - Luke II.
- (4)Ibid, for Ps. XVIII,4 p Acts II.
- (5)Ambrose, Augustine, Cassidorus, Chrysostom and Jerome
are some referred to.
- (6)Differed with Augustine, Origen and even with Jerome.
- (7)Renaudet, op. cit., p. 516.

with a preface in which he dedicated the work to Guillaume Briçonnet,(1) the friend who had given him an asylum in St. Germain-des-Prés. He followed the with an "Apolo-
logia Q. Vetus interpretatio - non Tralatio Hieronymi", which has already been reviewed.(2) This, in turn, is succeeded by a short summary of the content of each chapter of the fourteen epistles. This summary occupies thirty-one pages. An interesting side-light on Lefèvre's mind is given by his catalogue of the chief doctrines of the faith and the references for each(3) and by another catalogue of the chief heresies and heretics of the past.(4) In this latter he listed seventy heresies and heretics and gave Biblical references confuting each heresy. In the commentary proper, which followed the printing of the Vulgate and his own version, Lefèvre used but two headings for his comments. The first, entitled simply "Commentarius", combined a paraphrase of the text which showed the meaning and traced the development of thought in the passage, with an interpretation and application of the ideas found therein. It was here that his work in paraphrasing the philosophy of Aristotle stood him in good stead.

"Le commentaire doctrinal conserve les qualités auxquelles les paraphrases d'Aristote devaient leur succes et leur action. Sans employer le vocabulaire abstrait et barbare des théologiens, sans poser à
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(1)Comm. Paul.Epist., aiv. Praefatio.

(2)Ibid, a i r.

(3)Canones ad Articulos Fidei, i iii r.

(4)Canones adversus Haereticos et Haereses, i iii r.

"propos de chaque verset des questions steriles, sans tromper les esprits par la faux appareil des divisions et des subdivisions scolastiques, qui introduisaient dans la dispute une netteté factice et n'aidaient pas à découvrir une idée, Lefèvre se contente d'expliquer en termes simples, d'après le texte, la pensée de Saint Paul, et de marquer en de précises formules l'enchaînement des principes et l'ordonnance du système."(1)

The character of the second section, "Examinatio nonnullorum circa literam" has already been discussed. Lefèvre included in his work, besides the thirteen recognised epistles of Paul, the Epistle to the Hebrews of which he considered Paul to be the author; the letter to the Laodiceans, which he inserted immediately following the conclusion of his comments on the Epistle to the Ephesians; and the correspondence of Seneca and Paul, between Philemon and Hebrews. At the conclusion of his commentary he printed the accounts of the Passions of Peter and Paul, which he attributed to Pope Linus.

In his last two commentaries, Lefèvre introduced no innovations. He did not include another translation to place over against the Vulgate, but he continued to ex-

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(1)"The doctrinal commentary conserves the qualities for which the paraphrases of Aristotle owed their success and their power. Without employing the abstract and barbarous vocabulary of the theologians, without raising barren questions about each verse, without leading astray the followers by the false display of scholastic divisions and subdivisions, which introduced into the argument an artificial clearness and did not aid in explaining an idea, Lefèvre was content to explain in simple terms, following the text, the thought of St. Paul, by noting in exact phraseology the connection of the principles and the arrangement of the system."(Renaudet, op. cit., p. 624.

ercise his freedom in making critical remarks on the text and frequently corrected this translation, and marked with an asterisk or an obelisk wherever he thought the Vulgate failed to rightly express the meaning of the Greek.(1)
The other difference in the two volumes that followed were differences that arose rather from subject matter than from method.

E. Purpose

To fully appreciate the contribution of these commentaries not only to the science of Biblical interpretation, but also to the individual reader and to the Reformation, it is essential to understand the purpose of the author. Lefèvre was not demonstrating his erudition for the sake of praise, nor was he attempting to set himself up as an authority on Biblical subjects. His was a finer and more lasting motive. He wrote these books to fill a need in the souls of his readers, and having had a similar need in his own life satisfied by the study of the Scriptures,(2) he wrote his commentaries to help others.(3)

"Verbum autem Christi, verbum dei est, evangelium pacis, libertatis, et laetitiae, evangelium salutis, redemptiones, et vitae. Pacis inquam ex bello perpetus: libertatis, ex durissima servitute: laetitiae, ex luctu indeficiente: salutis, ex summa perditione:

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(1) He discussed this in a section entitled "Annotations Breves, circa literam" in his Comment. Initiat.

(2) Psalt, Quin., f i r.

(3) Ibid.

"redemptionis, ex miserrima captivitate: et denigo:
vitae es intermina morte.(1)

Lefèvre wrote to help others understand and accept this gospel. He gave three stages of development in Christian life, purgation, illumination and perfection, and modestly designated his commentaries as "commentarios purgatorios".(2) With this purpose for his work, it was natural that his commentaries should not be primarily textual criticism, as those of Erasmus and Valla, nor wholly historical, but more largely devotional, with the textual criticism and the historical elements subordinated to the aim.

In his commentary on the Psalms Lefèvre gave his real reason for daring to elevate himself to the position of a writer on the sacred Scriptures.

"Frequens coenobia subii at qui hanc ignorarent dulcedinem vaeros aiorum cibos nescire prorsus erit-
tinavi vivunt spums ex omni verbo quod procaedit de ore dei, quaenam verba illa: nisi sacra eloquia? mortuos igitur qui eiusmodi sunt spiritus habent, ab eo tempore quo ea pietatis desiere studia coenobia periere, devotio interiit, et extincta est religio, et spiritualia pro terrenis sunt commutata, caelum dimissum et accepta terra: infoelicissimum sane commercii genus."(3)
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(1)"Indeed the word of Christ is the word of God, the Gospel of peace, of liberty, and of joy, the Gospel of salvation, of redemption and of life. Of peace, I say, from perpetual war: of liberty, from vilest slavery: of joy, from unending mourning: of salvation, from complete damnation: of redemption, from the most miserable captivity; and finally, of life, from unending death." Comment. Initiat. Ad Christianos Lectores, A 2 r.

(2)Ibid, A 3 v and A 4 r.

(3)"I have frequently visited the monasteries, but whose persons I found ignorant of this delight I considered entirely unaware of the true food for the mind. For spirits live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God and what are

Lefèvre published his commentaries in the hope that they would restore "the pious studies" which had died.

F. Principles of Interpretation

Lefèvre formed his principles with a specific need in mind.

"Et si qui eorum ex sacris litteris partum quaerunt saepius interrogavi quid ex illis dulcedinis experirentur, quid saperent. Responderunt plurimi, quoties in nescio quem sensum litteralem incidissent, et maxime cum divinatorum Psalmorum intelligentiam quaeritarent, tristes et animo defecto ex ista lectione abscedere solitos."(1)

This set him to thinking that there must be something more in the Psalms and the other Scriptures than the literal meaning. He was acquainted with the four traditional modes of interpretation, the historical or literal, the allegorical, the anagogical or prophetic and the tropological or moral. He considered the question in the light of his problem and, in a characteristic manner, decided that the true meaning came in another way.

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those words but divine utterances? Therefore men of that kind have dead spirits. And from the time in which pious studies ceased monasteries have perished, devotion vanished, religion become extinct, spiritual things have been given up for earthly, heaven exchanged for earth: a most unhappy sort of commerce." Psalt. Quin., Praefatio, fol. i r.

(1)"I have often interrogated those who search in the Scriptures the aliment of their consciences; I have asked what peace they found there, what pleasure they received there. Many among them have replied to me that if they contented themselves with the letter, in all their study of the Psalms, they quitted their work more sad and without life." Ibid.

"Illico me contuli ad primos duces nostros Apostolos dico Paulum et prophetas qui primo animarum nostrarum sulcis divina mandarunt saemina et literalem sacrarumscriptuarum aperuerunt januam; et videor michi alium videre sensum, qui scilicet est intentionis prophetae et Spiritus Sancti in eo loquentis, et hunc litteralem appello, sed qui cum spiritu coincidit; neque prophetae neque videntibus alium littera praetendit; non videntibus autem qui se nichilominus videre arbitrantur alia littera surgit; quae (ut inquit Apostolos) occidit et quae spiritui adversatur; quam et Judaei nunc sequuntur - - - Quapropter duplicem crediderim sensum literalem, hunc improprium caecutientem et non videntium, qui divina solum carnaliter passibiliterque intelligunt; illum vero proprium videntium et illuminatorum --- Sensus igitur literalis et spiritualis coincidunt; non quem allegoricum aut tropologicum vocant, sed quem Spiritus Sanctus in propheta loquens intendit."(1)

Scriptures, then, held two senses for him, the literal or apparent and the spiritual or hidden. Lefèvre did not spend much time on the former, for he held that discussions over the meaning of a word or phrase which made no contribution to edification were valueless.(2) It followed natur-

(1)"Forthwith I have returned to our first leaders, I say, to the Apostles, to Paul and to the prophets, who first have committed the divine seed to our minds and have opened the literal door of the sacred Scriptures; and methinks I see another sense, which doubtless is in the intention of the prophets and of the Holy Spirit speaking in this, and this I call literal which nevertheless coincides with the spirit; the letter does not put forward any other sense either to the prophet or to the seeing; on the other hand the meaning does not appear to the wise, who nevertheless think they understand; which sense(as the Apostle says) ruins and thwarts the soul; which the Jews now follow - - For which reason I have believed there is a double "literal" sense, which is improper to the minds of the blind and unseeing, who understand divine things in a worldly and rational manner only; in truth it is the proper sense for the seeing and the enlightened. - - Therefore the literal and the spiritual sense coincide; not that which they call allegorical and tropological, but that which the Holy Spirit meant speaking through the prophets." Psalt. Quin., Praefatio, fol. i r.

(2)See his comment on Gal. II, 11.

ally from his opinion of the origin and interpretation of the Scriptures that the readers would need some special aid in arriving at the true meaning. Their minds must not be content with the human artist, who is only the delegated instrument of God, but they must seek the true "celestial" and "divine" sense of the Scriptures.(1) Ability to arrive at this meaning must come from God, for He alone gives the intelligence which leads to this understanding.(2) This is just another expression of the purpose which influenced all his writing, namely, to help the reader into a more complete spiritual life.

But the distinction between the allegorical and the spiritual is hard to maintain and Lefèvre frequently fell into allegory. This is more often the case in his commentary on the Gospels(3) where the material lends itself to this mode of interpretation.(4) There are many examples of it in the earlier works however, for in the *Psalterium Quincuplex* he found that out of the first twenty-five psalms twenty-three of them were "de Christo domino".(5) In his *Pauli Epistolae* the book of Hebrews yielded to this mode of interpretation and Lefèvre employed it freely.(6) Those who read need help to understand this second meaning

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(1) *Pauli Epistolae*, Praefatio, a ii r.

(2) *Ibid.*

(3) See detailed discussion in Graf, *op. cit.*, p. 40 ff.

(4) For example, Matthew XV, 29 ff.

(5) *Psalterium Quin.*, Psalms I - XXV, Titulus.

(6) Note his comments in *Pauli Epist.*, Hebrews, IV § VII.

and such help can come only from the Holy Spirit, on Whom Lefevre relied for guidance as he wrote.(1)

This naturally led him into some strange interpretations.(2) But inspite of these there is a permanent value in his commentaries. In his books there are five things which mark them as distinct from other works of his day and as worthy of a place in the history of the development of modern exegesis and criticism.

First - the recognition that the Bible is primarily a book to be used to satisfy the religious longings of the soul.

Second - the combination of textual criticism with interpretation.

Third - the break with the older, established method of using quotations from the fathers and other writers to interpret the Bible.

Fourth - the return to the Bible to interpret itself.

Fifth - the conception of the Bible as the supreme religious authority.

The first two of these have already been considered and the fifth will be reserved for later discussion

G. Method of Interpretation

Renaudet has pointed out that though the commentators of the Middle Ages, recognised in Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine
(1) Psalterium Quincuplex, Praefatio, fol. i r.

and Gregory the best representatives of the historical, allegorical, anagogical and tropological modes of interpretation, yet they did not consult them in their studies. They preferred to read the later and less vital authors, and left these greater writers out of their consideration.(1) Just as Lefèvre had broken with the prevailing style of commenting on Aristotle so he broke with his contemporaries in Biblical interpretation in that he did not cite the Schoolmen in his commentaries.(2) It has been seen that he did not agree with the four usual types of interpretation. When he made reference to other authors he selected the writings of the fathers as his authorities. He referred to Jerome, John Chrysostom, Augustine, Ambroise and Origen among many others. Still, though he did refer to them, he was not bound by them, but depended upon parallel passages of Scripture for the proof and explanation of whatever passage he interpreted. This is perhaps the most radical difference between Lefèvre and the other commentators of his day. As has been noted, other students were taken up with the Sentences of Peter Lombard or with some special interpretation, whereas Lefèvre was interested primarily in establishing the meaning of the text itself. Just as he had explained Aristotle by Aristotle so now he explained Scripture by Scripture. For example, in his commentary on the Psalms, Lefèvre devoted one section of his comments on

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(1) Renaudet, *Préréforme et Humanisme*, p. 55-56.

(2) *Ibid.*, p. 622 ff. and 514 ff.

the first twenty-five psalms to the notation of parallel passages of Scripture(1) and his other sections abound in similar references. In the "Pauli Epistolae" he was most prolific of his references in the "commentarius" sections on the Epistle to the Hebrews. In the "Quattuor Evangelia", to choose one chapter at random, Mark XV, he referred to Leviticus, Ecclesiastes, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea and Zechariah of the Old Testament once each, and to Romans, I Corinthians, Colossians, Philippians and Hebrews of the New Testament also once each; also he included Isaiah, Psalms, Exodus, Genesis, Amos, Luke and John more than once in the same chapter. All his commentaries are rich in references to parallel passages of other Biblical books. These references extend from Genesis to Revelation and he had an encyclopedic knowledge of the entire Book. If there is any one book to which he referred more than any other it is the Psalms. And in his explanations he went far afield to bring in illustrations from philosopher,(2) historian,(3) poet,(4) and mystic.(5)

H. Historical Criticism

Lefèvre does not rank high as a historical critic.

The reason for this is easily understood from the fact that

(1) The Concordia.

(2) Ephesians IV, 17.

(3) I Cor. XV, 33; II Cor. V, 10; I Tim. IV, 1.

(4) Titus I, 4.

(5) Appendix on Psalm XXX, Psalterium Quin.

he included in his work on Paul's Epistles the pseudo-correspondence of Seneca and Paul, which he considered genuine, (1) and also the letter to the Laodiceans, which also he attributed in all good faith to the apostle. (2) In his discussion of the Psalms he followed the then accepted tradition in assigning the Psalms to their different authors, and made no divergence from nor comment on this order. Again in the New Testament he followed the traditional opinions concerning books and authors. He regarded the Epistle to the Hebrews as a product of Paul's pen, but thought that it, like Matthew, had been originally written in Hebrew and regretted the loss of the Hebrew original. (3) He objected to those who held that Mark was merely an abridgement of Matthew, saying logically, that those who make an abridgement follow the order of the work which is abridged, which is not the case in Mark. This logical argument he followed with a fanciful one derived from the four spirits of Ezekiel which he cited as proof that there must be four evangelists. (4) He also held that Luke had seen some of the events of Jesus ministry, for Luke was a Syrian from Antioch, which was not far from Tyre and Sidon, and was among those of Tyre and Sidon who followed the Lord. (5)

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- (1) Note his remarks on the text in "Pauli Epistolae".
- (2) Notes on Letter to Laodicea, included in Commentarius on Collossians.
- (3) Comment. Initiat. - Luke, Commentarius in Praefationem.
- (4) Pauli Epist. Hebrews, opening remarks.
- (5) Comment. Initiat. - Marc I, 1.
- (5) Ibid, Luke, Comment. in Praefationem.

In a comparison of the gospels, he noticed that the evangelists did not follow the same order in their accounts of the story of Jesus' life, and accepted the interpretation that John had written a spiritual gospel. In his consideration of the name given to the non-Pauline epistles he remarked that the Greeks had called them "catholic" because they are addressed to the church at large, while the Latins had named them "canonical" because they contained the rule of life which "conformed to the Holy Spirit and to true Christianity".(1) He attributed the fourth Gospel, the Apocalypse and the three epistles of that name to John the Apostle, the epistle of Jude to Judas Thaddaeus and the epistle of James to James the brother of our Lord and the Bishop of Jerusalem.

There are a few instances where he broke with the traditional position. One of the most outstanding of these was his contention that Joseph was a young man when he espoused Mary.(2) In his comments on the genealogy of Jesus he concluded that this was the genealogy of Mary whereas that in Matthew was of Joseph.(3) He had a high regard amounting almost to veneration for all the Apostles, but for Paul he had the greatest respect.(4) This high regard for Peter led him to make a novel inter-

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(1)Comment. in Epist. Cannn., Praefatio.

(2)Comment. Initiat., Matthew I.

(3)Ibid, Luke III and Matthew I.

(4)Pauli Epistole, Note his interpretation of II Cor, XII,7.

pretation of the events in Galatians II, 11 following. He said of this that it was a little comedy staged by Peter and Paul, in which, for the edification of both Jews and Gentiles, Peter pretended to be in error and permitted Paul to rebuke him publicly.(1) He was not entirely unacquainted with history, as he showed in his description of the prophecies of Daniel and their fulfillment up to the time of his writing.(2)

I. The Content of Lefèvre's Religious Thinking

The above discussion of Lefèvre's commentaries demonstrates both the good and the bad points of his work. What of his ideas of the doctrines and the practices of the Church? Was he a Lutheran before Luther or was he still an ardent Roman Catholic? The truth lies in between those two; and in an endeavor to estimate his stand a discussion of Lefèvre's opinions on the chief doctrines and practices of the Church will follow. In order to evaluate correctly his contribution to the Reformation, it is necessary to make this study of his opinions which he expressed publicly. The discussion will be in two parts; first, Lefèvre's opinions concerning the doctrines of the Church; and secondly, Lefèvre's opinions concerning the practices of the Church.

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(1)Pauli Epistolae, Galatians II, 11 ff.
(2)Comment. Initiat., Matthew XVI.

Dieu crea par six iours le ciel & la terre/la mer
 & tout ce quilz contiennent, Exode. xv.



Dieu veit toutes choses quil auoit cree/ &
 estoient fort bonnes. Genese. j.

The Doctrines of the Church

Theory of Inspiration

To rightly understand the view point of Lefevre in his attitude toward the conditions around him it is necessary to know his opinion of the Bible. He said that he had felt the attraction of the study of the Scriptures for some time before he undertook to write his first commentary.

"Longo equidem temporis intervallo humana sum secutus et divinis vix prima, ut aiunt, admovi labra (angusta enim sunt et non temere adeunda). At ex illa quam-vis remota accessione tanta lux affulgere visa est ut ejus comparatione disciplinae humanae michi visae sunt tenebrae."(1)

He had no doubt about the direct connection between God and His Scriptures. In the "Psalterium Quinplex" his usual introduction of each psalm read: "Propheta in spiritu loquitur. Beatus vir describitur Christus impii".(2) This same idea was carried over into his later works, and in the "Pauli Epistolae" he exhorted Briçonnet to recognise that

"non ipse Paulus erat qui dicebat sed Christus dominus qui per eum loquebatur. - - Assit Christus divinorum author munerum omnibus gratiam donans - - Nam Paulus solum instrumentum est. -- Haec enim doctrina Christi est."(3)

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(1) "For a long time I have followed human sciences and scarcely tasted of the divine (they, indeed are venerable, and not to be rashly approached), but so much light appeared to shine forth from that acquaintance with them, however distant, that, in comparison, human studies were scarcely more than shadows." Psalter. Quin., Praefat., fol. 1 B.

(2) Psalter. Quin., Psalm I, Titulus, et al.

(3) "it was not Paul himself who was speaking but Christ

Lefèvre explained why the writers of the other gospels, such as those under the names of Bartholomew, Andrew, Matthias and the Gospel of the Nazarenes, were not received as were the canonical writers. The authors of the non-canonical books wrote in human confidence and not under the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit, therefore they were not accepted by the Church as were the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, whose authors "spiritu sancto impellente scribant".(1)

He did not have a theory of verbal inspiration, however, for he believed that one of Paul's letters was lost(2) and that Matthew and Hebrews were originally written in Hebrew, of which the present copies were more or less good translations into the Greek.(3)

His explanation of the gift of tongues is closely related to his conception of inspiration. He accepted the traditional explanation that this was the power to speak the language of whatever country the apostles visited.(4) So that whenever Paul spoke to an audience, he spoke to them in their own language "as though he knew them all".(5) When Paul defended himself for being a

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"the Lord who spoke through him. -- Christ is the author of all divine gifts given to all through his grace -- For Paul is only the instrument. -- This doctrine is indeed of Christ."(Pauli Epistolae, Praefatio ad G. Bric. (1)"wrote impelled by the Holy Spirit."Comment. Initiat. Luke - Comment. in praefat.

(2)Pauli Epist., I Cor., V, 9.

(3) Ibid., Hebrews II, 7 ff.

(4) Ibid., I Cor. XII.

(5) Ibid., I Cor. XIV, 18

poor speaker in the second letter to the Corinthians, Lefèvre went to his defense saying that this lack in Paul

"cum non id ex ignorantia sed ex multiformi sermonum cognitione procederet, adeo ut et imperitia Pauli: scientiae sit superabundantia. Si quis enim Latinus qui et idem Graecus esset sermoni latino graecam formam imprimeret: qui solum latinus esset, illum rudem imperitum que sermonis imperitiam. -- --- Credo equidem si puram loquendi formam observare voluisset; vel Demosthenem ipsum aut disertissimum quemque illius linguae oratorem superare potuisset."(1)

Redemption

Renaudet, while stating that Lefèvre never rejected "aucun des usages du culte romain"(2) admits that he has an interpretation "singulierement libre de la doctrine catholique".(3) And this very freedom of thought and boldness in expression intrigues the reader of his work. What he believed he wrote; and his only interest was the truth. In spite of the blunders that he made, and in spite of the fact that he was not altogether free from the thought and superstition of his time, he demonstrated that he recognised a need in the religious world and he did not fear to point it out. As his commentary on Paul's Epistles appeared five years before Luther nailed the theses to the door of

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(1)"then this did not proceed from ignorance but from knowledge of many languages, rather than from Paul's lack of knowledge. If indeed the Latin was the same as the Greek, he wrote the Greek form in the Latin text: if the Latin was alone, he wrote that as *though* in ignorance and in lack of training in the language. --- I believe that if he had wished to observe the forms of pure speech that he would have surpassed even Demosthenes himself or the most distinguished orator of each language."Pauli Epist., II Cor., XI, 6.

(2)"a single one of the usages of Roman worship".

(3)"singularly free from Catholic teaching". Renaudet, op. cit., p. 629.

the church in Wittenberg, this work will receive the most detailed consideration.

Lefèvre was not primarily a theologian, and there is no logical outline of his theology in any of his commentaries. His aim was to edify the soul and the theological doctrines are but incidental to this end. Though he was not a theologian, Lefèvre was wise enough to see that practice must rest on doctrine and consequently a large portion of his commentary is taken up with the explanation of the doctrines of Paul. In his interpretations, Lefèvre followed no other commentator, but gave what he considered the true sense of the passage and never allowed a doctrine to become his master, but as Graf said:

"en suivant les enseignement de Paul, il ne perd de vue ceux de Jacques et des Evangiles, et en évitant l'extrême de Pelage, il se tient encore plus loin de celui d'Augustin."(1)

In his discussion of the subject of redemption, Lefèvre described its nature. Man is in need of redemption because through Adam's sin he is under the curse of death.

"Sicut Adam in peccato quo peccavit mortem incurrit et hic est primus mortis ingressus in mundum: ita omnes qui peccaverunt in eo in quo peccaverunt id est in proprio peccato et ob proprium peccatum mortem incurrerunt neque videtur velle omnes peccasse: ut statim subiungit regnavit mors ab Adam in quo ad Mosem etiam in eos qui non peccaverunt, igitur qui non peccaverunt et mortui sunt: non in quo peccaverunt

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(1)"in following the teaching of Paul, he did not lose sight of those of James and of the Evangelists, and in avoiding the extreme of Pelagius, he held himself yet further from that of Augustine."Graf, Essai etc., p. 62.

"et mortui sunt sed in similitudinem prevaricationis Adae - so that - omnes qui moriuntur: in similitudine Adae moriuntur."(1)

Original sin is not actual, however, but virtual.

"Ut certe filii leprosi cum lepra concipiuntur et nascuntur sed potenciali quae se suo tempore manifestat et sit actualis: sic omnes filii Adam cum peccato carnis et concipiuntur et nascuntur: non actualis sed potenciali quod suo tempore suas vires in corpore promit et multiplices concupiscentias contra spiritum suscitatur omnes dico filii Adam quas benedictio et gratia aut omnino non praevenit aut non sanavit."(2)

From this it follows that all men are in need of redemption and this redemption is available to all men in Jesus Christ.(3)

What is the purpose or end of this redemption and how is it accomplished? The purpose or end, in the eyes of Lefèvre, he expressed on the title page of his commentary on the Epistles of Paul.

**"VIVO EGO, IAM NON EGO, VIVIT VERO IN ME CHRISTUS
QUE AUTEM NUNC VIVO IN CARNE: IN FIDE VIVO FILIJ DEI".(4)**
* * * * *

(1)"As Adam, by the sin which he committed, brought death upon himself and thus gave death entrance into the world, thus all those who have sinned, that is to say by their own sin or by the cause of their own sin, have brought death upon themselves. And thus the Apostle does not appear to wish to say that all have sinned, since he adds that death has reigned from the time of Adam to Moses upon those who have not sinned. Thus they who have not sinned at all are dead also, not on account of sin but from likeness to the disobedience of Adam - so that -- all who die, die in the likeness of Adam." Pauli Epistolae, Romans V, 42, Examin.
(2)"Surely, just as the children of lepers, when they are conceived and born have leprosy only potentially, which manifests itself in time and becomes actual; so all the sons of Adam are conceived and born in the sins of the flesh, not actually but potentially, which brings out its strength in the body in time and arouses the multiple lusts against the spirit, all the sons of Adam, I say, which the blessing and the grace of God either has not reached at all or has not healed."Ibid., Romans, VII, 58, Comment.
(3) Galatians II, 20.

Redemption is to bring man back to live in God, and for this reason this study is the most important one in life.

The problem of redemption was ever present to Lefèvre and is found in all of his written works. Even in his first work, *Psalterium Quincuplex*, he discussed it and showed himself a Bible student of no mean perception, for even then he had already found the Pauline doctrine of redemption through the blood of Christ alone.

"Et Petrus in sua prima catholica, Sciates (inquit) que non corruptibilibus auro vel argento redempti estis de vana vestra conversatione paternae traditiones; sed pretioso sanguine quasi agni immaculati Christi et incontaminati. - - - - Et ad eandem sententia scribit beatissimus Paulus ad Ephesios de Christo sic loquens: In quo habemus redemptione per sanguinem eius; remissionem peccatorum: Et ad Hebraeos, Christus autem assistens pontifex futurorum bonorum: peramplius et perfectius tabernaculo non manu factum id est non huius creationis neque per sanguinem hircorum aut vitulorum sed per proprium sanguine introivit semel in sancta aeterna redemptione inveta. Ecce tot sacris testimoniis; redemption facta est aeterna quidem redemptione in sanguine et temporali passione Christi."(1)

His comment on the sixth Psalm reads very much like that

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(1) Peter in his first Catholic epistle says, 'You know that you are redeemed from your vain conversation concerning the traditions of the fathers not with corruptible gold and silver but with the precious blood, as it were of a lamb, of the immaculate and sinless Christ.' - - - And the most blessed Paul writes the same thought to the Ephesians, thus saying concerning Christ: 'In which redemption, through His blood, we have remission of sins'; and to the Hebrews, 'Christ also is an advocate and priest of the future blessings; it is a larger and more perfect tabernacle, not made by hands, not of this world, nor did he enter through the blood of he-goats or calves, but through the Blood itself, once for all into the sacred redemption forever. Behold so many holy witnesses; redemption is an eternal fact, redemption in the blood and the sufferings of Christ.'"(Psalter. Quin. Appendix on the Psalms.

of a Protestant writer,

"Da mihi salutem aeternam, non quia dignus sum, non quia meritus sim, sed ob solam miserationem et gratiam tuam".(1)

Since redemption is bringing back man into the will of God, alignment with His will should be the chief study of our lives, for

"si aestimas te aliquid cognoscere quod momenti et pensi dignum putes, praeter cognitionem Dei patris et mysterii Christi te ipsum decipis."(2)

Redemption comes through the grace of Christ alone, for

"Quis igit manifesto non videt argumento: si dilectum primi Adae infirmum et debile potuit multos in mortem praecipitare multo magis gratiam et donum Christi domini secundi et veri Adae qui vera et viva dei imago est: gratiam inquam et donum Christi forte validum et efficax: posse pluribus vitam praestare. Confugiamus igitur ad gratiam Christi potentissimam ad salvandum et in infinitum potentiozem ad salvandum que Adae peccatum etque nostrum possit ad damnandum."(3)

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(1)"Give me eternal salvation, not because I am worthy, not because I deserve it, but solely on account of Thy mercy and Thy grace."Psalterium Quincuplex, Psalm VI, Expos.

(2)"If you think yourself able to acquire any worth while knowledge, outside of the knowledge of God the Father and of the mystery of Christ, you deceive yourself." Pauli Epistolae, Col. II, 5.

(3)" Who then does not see the plain argument? If the sin of the first Adam, who was weak and infirm, was able to plunge many into death, much more the grace and the gift of Christ the Lord, the second and true Adam, Who is the true and living image of God; the grace, I say, and the gift of Christ, strong, valid and effective, is able to lead many into life. Let us fly then to the grace of Christ most powerful unto salvation, and infinitely more able to save than the sin of Adam and our sin also is able to damn." Ibid., Romans, V, 42, Comment.

Predestination and Free Will

What part does God play in the scheme of redemption? Lefèvre's idea contained some elements of predestination, but it is not the predestination of Augustine or of Calvin, for it is not the will of God that we should sin or fall. In his consideration of the failure of the Jews and the salvation given to the Gentiles, Lefèvre wrote

"At non qui velis praedestinaris ad vitam: sed quia deus vult est enim illa infinite bona voluntas tuae vitae causa et tuae electionis et destinationis. Et hoc intelligere magna mentis est tranquillitas: et mens in sua salute quiescit deum attendens et seipsam non rescipiens est enim illa immense bona dei voluntas: omnium salus et tranquillissimus quietis portus gratiae largitrix omnis et vitae."(1)

Just what aid God gives "in his will", Lefèvre did not precisely explain. In general his conception was that the grace of God aids the heart that is willing, prepares the believer to accept His will and leads him on to justification.(2)

"Cum aliquid boni volumus, maxime quod divinum et spirituale est, et aparamur voluntatem illam executioni demandantes, Deus est qui voluntatem illam et actum effectumque pro beneplacito suo in nobis operatur: nos autem Dei instrumentum sumus - - -

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(1)"And not because you wish are you predestined to life: but because God wills, that infinite good will is the cause of your life and your election and your destination. And it is for great peace of mind to know this, for both the mind, attending God, is quiet in His safety, and also, the good will of God does not reserve itself and is indeed immeasurable; the salvation of all and a most tranquil haven of rest and life are abundantly free." Paul. Epistl. Romans IX, 86, Comment.

(2)Ibid., Romans, III, 28, Comment.

"Deus igitur et voluntatem et energiam actumque ac operationem in spiritualibus operatur."(1)

This scheme left a large place for free will. Because of Adam's sin we come into this world potentially evil, but with the ability to choose either the good or the evil. As this is the case, man can either accept or reject salvation.

"Unicuique datur arbitrium ad duo, ad misericordiam et ad justitiam - - Sed dices: si Deus cujuscumque vult miseretur et quem vult indurat, quid igitur amplius accusantur indurati? Immo cur puniuntur cum id sint quos Deus vult? Hac argumentum impietatis est et audentium insurgere contra Deum factorem suum et dicere: cur nos sic fecisti? Et deterret Paulus rudes et stultos ab huiusmodi impia contra Deum contentione. Nam sapientes et probos non oportet qui tales cogitatus non admittunt aut continus enecant tanquam venenosos serpentes. Sunt enim afflatus serpentis antiqui."(2)

Justification

Frequently Lefèvre, like Paul, referred to the Christian life as "in Chrīsto". Union with Christ and participation with Him in the events of His life were, for Lefevre, the highest aims of life.(3) This mystical, yet real,

(1)"When we wish some good, chiefly because it is divine and spiritual, and when we entrust that good desire to a government, it is God Who is accomplishing that actual and effective desire in us for His good pleasure; however we are the instruments of God - - - Therefore God uses both the will and actual strength in the souls."Pauli Epist., Phil. II,6.

(2)"Choice of two is given to each of us, of the bad and the good -- But you say: 'if God pities and hardens whom he wills, why are the hardened the more guilty? By all means, why are they punished since they are what God wishes. Here is the reasoning of impiety and boldness to rise against God, the creator, and say why did you make us so? Paul discourages the ignorant and foolish from irreverent contention against God. For it is not necessary to warn the wise and good, who do not admit such ideas or continually torture the serpents. Indeed they are a breath of the old serpent."Ibid., Ro. IX, 82.

(3)Ibid., Romans, VI, 48, and ICor., XII, 88

element was his first love, for it was out of his study of the mystics that he came to the study of the Scriptures, and he found in mystical doctrine the center of Christian life and experience. To appreciate this rightly is to understand Lefèvre's answer to the question, What is the meaning of salvation.

Historically there have been two answers to the question of the Philippian jailor; "What must I do to be saved?"⁽¹⁾ The answer immediately given by Paul - through faith; and the answer of the older order - through obedience to the law. In view of Lefèvre's relation to the Reformation, his answer to this question is of great interest and importance.

He recognised the problem.

"Duae sectae olim erant. Prima confidentium in operibus, ut quae, sententia eorum sufficerint ad justificandum. Secunda confidentium in fide, nichil opera curantium!"⁽²⁾

Characteristically, Lefèvre sought a ground on which he could keep both of these ideas. He found it in man's relationship with God. It is God that justifies, not either faith or works. God, who seeks to reestablish relations with men⁽³⁾, gives this justification to those who approach Him in faith. * * * * * This led Lefèvre to say of works as

(1) Acts, XVI, 30.

(2) "There were once two sects. The first placed their trust in works and believe them sufficient to justification. The second trust only in faith and accord nothing to works". Pauli Epistolae, Romans III, 29.

(3) II Cor. V, 19.

a justifying principle:

"Si hoc modo quis ex operibus justificaretur, justificatio debitum esset et non esset Dei donum et gratia - - Nam gratia sine quocumque debito elargitum donum est; at qui dicit justificationem debitam esse omnem a Deo aufert gratiam."(1)

"Dicimus apud Paulum qui gratiae dei tribuit omnia: ferme prophanum esse loqui de merito operum maxime erga deum. Nam proprie meritum non gratiam requirere videtur sed debitum et meritum tribuere operibus: prope modum cum eis est sentire qui credunt nos ex operibus justificari posse, de quo errore damnantur Iudaei plurimum. Ergo meritum operum nostrorum quod vel perexiguum est aut potius nullum taceamus: et gratiam respicit deum - O que pulchrior dei que hominis respectus."(2)

Works could never bring about justification, but faith could.

"Ex operibus sine fide nunquam quis justificatur. At contra, ex fide sine operibus justificatur quis."(3)

Though works are not sufficient to bring about justification, Lefèvre could not bring himself to the point where he condemned all those who have not know of the salvation in Christ, but felt that

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(1)"If by this method one is to be justified by works, justification becomes a debt and is not the gift and grace of God - - For grace is a gift given bountifully without any debt whatsoever, and who says that justification is a debt takes all grace away from God."Paul. Epist., Ro. IV, 30.

(2)"We agree with Paul who gives all to the grace of God. It is almost blasphemy against God for one to speak of the greatest merit of works. For properly it is seen that merit does not require grace, but debt and merit is given from works; to think this is to be with those who believe us to be justified by works, because of which error many Jews were damned. Therefore let us keep silent because our work is of very little merit, or rather of none. O what is more beautiful than that God should consider man". Ibid., Ro. VIII, 57

(3)"By works, without faith, no one is ever justified, On the other hand, by faith without, some are justified." Ibid., Romans, III, 29.

"tales inquam credere salvandos fore neque divine pietate (cuius misericordia plena est terra) indignum neque apostolicem sententiae adversum". (1)

Probably, like Ficin, Lefèvre would include Aristotle and Plato.

But if works are not sufficient to justification, neither is faith.

"Neque fides neque opera justificant, sed praeparant ad justificationem, quandoquidem unus est Deus qui justificat - - - Opera igitur sunt ut praeparantia et purgantia viam; fides autem ut terminus et aditus quidam divini ingressus."(2)

Since neither faith nor works is sufficient for justification, nor indeed faith and works together, what then is to be done? Lefèvre answered:

"Et tu (si spiritu sapias) neque in fides neque in operibus sed in Deo confide; et primas partes assequendae a Deo salutis fidei tribue ex Paulo, et opera fidei adijunge ex Jacobo; sunt enim signum vitae et fructiferae fidei. At carientia operum signum fidei ociosae et mortuae - - Qui hoc modo intelligit spiritualiter intelligit, et utrumque apostolum conciliabit, ante suam etiam conciliationem conciliatum".(3)

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(1)"To say that it is necessary for such to believe in order to be saved is both unworthy of the divine nature(whose mercy fills the earth) and against the teaching of the apostles." Paul. Epist., Romans II, 15.

(2)"Neither faith nor works justify, but prepare for justification, for as much as there is one God Who justifies. Works then are as preparation and purification for life; faith is the end and the way by which the divine enters."Ibid., Romans, III, 28.

(3)"And you (if you know the Spirit) do not place your trust either in faith or works, but trust in God; and obtain salvation by faith after Paul, and seek the works of faith with James; they are indeed signs of a living and fruit-bearing faith. And foulness in works is a sign of a lazy and dying faith. Who understands this method understands spiritually, and will reconcile the two apostles."Ibid., Romans, III, 29.

By these definitions of the two terms, Lefèvre sought to go behind faith and works for the real source and means of redemption. This, after the apostle, he found in the grace of God. The commentary must be read to appreciate the place which Lefèvre gave to the doctrine of grace. The word "gratia" occurs on practically every page and on many pages it is repeated many times. The doctrine of grace takes the dependence for salvation away from man and makes salvation depend on God. Lefèvre recognised, with the apostle, that all this is due to the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross.(1) Christ was the propitiation for our sins, the means of bringing forgiveness to men,(2) the Son of God sent to reconcile men to God.(3) He closed his discussion of the meaning of faith with an exhortation which followed logically on his explanation.

"Quod igit humanum quod carnalem quod superbum est; missum faciamus et sequamur quod divinum est et spirituale et humile humilitate quidem deo placentes: iter nobis monstrante beatissime Paulo."(4)
"Nam quicumque mortui sumus peccatis, gratia vivificati et mystice resuscitati de corpore Christi sumus, et jam in mysterio sedentes cum eo in dextera patris - - - Neque putemus, si adhuc in carne vivimus sed non secundum carnem, si adhuc contra mundum carnem et aereos spiritus militamus, nos non esse cum angelis et sanctis omnibus in eodem corpore et spiritu sancto vivere et jam in dextera patris praesentatos ac praesentes."(4)
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(1)Pauli Epist., Gal. II, 9; Hebrews IX, 41,42; et al.

(2)Ibid., Romans III, 27,28,29.

(3)Ibid., II Cor. V, 25.

(4)"Because it is human to think that what is carnal is excellent; let us accept forgiveness and follow that which is divine and spiritual and, humble in humility, be pleasing to God, the way having been shown to us by the most blessed Paul" Ibid., I Cor., VIII, 57. (5)"For we all who are dead to sin

The Church

One of the chief points of difference between the Protestants and the Roman Catholics was the doctrine of the Church. What was it, what was its foundation, and what was its authority? These were the points on which they differed. The accepted theory in Lefèvre's day was that the Church was the Body of Christ, and that the Pope was the regent of Christ on earth with control over His body. There was only one Church. Lefèvre was mainly in accord with this conception; he agreed that there was but one Church, for Christ cannot have two bodies, one in heaven and one on earth, nor can He have two Spirits. Therefore there can be only one Church.(1)

"Sed dices: cur ecclesiam latera aquilonis vocat. Quia spiritum dei nichil latet, petrus autem primum Antiochi diende Rome que ad aquilonem vergunt petrae id est Christo domino ecclesiam locavit. Sed quid; appellabimus ne ecclesiam Romanam; Esto, sed honorificentius ecclesiam petrae Petro enim dictum est tu es petrus: super hanc petram edificabo ecclesiam meam. Non super romam dictum est. - - At si quis alius ecclesiam Antiochi, Alexandri, Romuli aut Remi michi nuncupet: que verum nomen obumbrat obtegit celat nomen domini mei dei mei regis magni non agnosco, si petrae si Christi; protinus agnosco immo et qui ecclesia petri nuncupat: inferiori nomine nuncupat que qui ecclesiam petrae, non enim petri est: nisi ut fidelis procuratoris dispensatoris vicarij, sed est petrae: ut proprii patris familias proprii regis,

made alive by grace and mystically resurrected belong to the body of Christ and already we are seated invisibly with Him at the right hand of the Father - - If we live in the body, but not according to the flesh, if we fight against the flesh, the world and the spirits of darkness, never doubt that we live with the angels and all the saints, and are now present at the right hand of the Father."Ibid, Eph.II,6
(1)Ibid, Ephesians II, 5.

"si petrus de nomine per contactus fuisset: vero eam nomine nuncupasset non alieno, eum in celo habeo testem, verum enim nomen: omnia unit. Atque dicit ecclesia Antiochie, ecclesia Alexandriae; hoc nomen dividit, unio aut omnium charitate; divisio vero seditiones parit."(1)

And the Pope, "imperator Christianorum", should have the obedience of all Church dignitaries.(2)

He was Gallican enough, however, to hold to some freedom of the Church. He could not grant to the Pope supreme authority in matters of faith and practice. The authority vested by the Church in Pope and Council must be checked and judged by the statements of the Scriptures. The final authority in these matters rests in the Holy Scriptures which are "verbum dei".(3) In his next publication, his commentary on the Gospels, he discussed at length what Jesus meant in Matthew XVI, 18. He spent

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(1)"But you will say: Why is the Church called "latera ac-
quilonis", the side of the north? Because nothing is hid
from the Spirit of God. Peter, indeed, placed the Church
upon a rock, that is, on Christ, first at Antioch, afterwards
at Rome, both of which lie to the north. But what then?
Shall we call the Church the Church of Rome? By all means,
but confer still greater honor on it and call it the Church
of the Rock. For it was said to Peter, Thou art Peter and on
this rock I will build my church. It was not said on Rome,
If any person mention to me a Church of Antioch, of Alexandria,
of Romulus or Remus, I give it no recognition, because it ob-
scures, covers, hides the true title, the title of my Lord,
my God, the Great King. If mention be made of the Church of
the Rock, the Church of Christ, forthwith I recognise it.
Yea, and he who terms it the Church of Peter uses a lower
term than he who calls it the Church of the Rock. For it is
not Peter's, unless it be that of a deputy, a steward, a proxy.
But it is the Rock's, as that of the rightful Head of the
Household, the rightful King. If Peter were asked about its
title he would give it its true name and no other: he in heaven
is my witness. The true name makes all things one but he who
speaks of the Church of Antioch, the Church of Alexandria,
splits up this title and as unity brings forth the love of all
so division breeds dissension." Psalt. Quin., Psalm XLVII, 12.
(2)Paul. Epist. Romans XIII, 110. (3)Ibid, Praefatio.

considerable space proving that in that place Jesus was not referring to Peter but to Himself; and in speaking of the rock He was speaking "non erat Petri sed Christi".(1) To reinforce his stand he appealed to the teaching of Paul in I Corinthians. On this point Lefevre differed greatly from those about him. Throughout the remainder of his life he emphasised the importance and the authority of the Scriptures. This outspoken emphasis on the supreme authority of the Bible was one of the chief accusations when the Sorbonne took action against him. To Lefevre the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven were "claves fidei ligandi atque solvendi", and they belong not to Peter but to Christ.

This rock

"super hanc petram inconcussibilique veritatis fidei quod Christus est filius dei vivi".(2)

Worship

At the time of the publication of the "Pauli Epistolae", Lefevre was largely in accord with the worship of the Church. He approved of the worship of the Virgin Mary, whom he considered worthy of all honor and adoration.

"Virgo illa beatorum beatissima supra omnes spirituales tam viros quam mulieres solo Christo excepto."(3)

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(1) "was not of Peter but of Christ". Comment. Init., Matt. XVI, 158.

(2) "upon this rock of firm, true faith that Christ is the Son of the living God." Ibid.

(3) "That Virgin, most blessed of all the souls of the saints, either men or women, excepting only Christ." Pauli Epist., I Cor. II, 74.

He was a strong advocate of the Immaculate Conception.(1)
This high opinion of the Virgin led him into a strange conclusion in his discussion of the universal reign of death. Death reigned over all men, except Enoch and Elijah. Mary might have been exempt from this dominion but she chose to suffer death, since her great Son had identified Himself with the human race by his death on the cross, she would not elevate herself beyond Him, but also died to identify herself with men.(2)

As for the rest of the worship of the Church, Lefèvre had one rule which he insisted should be followed. When anything disagreed with that principle, it was wrong.

"Videant ne hac tempestate nonnulli fortasse sint stultam pietatem populo praeter Christi doctrinam inducentes. Quid mihi quadragesimas novas jejungere et legitimam solvere? Quid oratiunculis fidere quorum author incertus est et apostolicas observationes omittere? Quid in cucullo mori cum in saeculari habitu toto vitae tuae vixeris tempore? Haec et similia doctrine Christi non mandat: quae docet gratiam Dei et misericordiam attendendam ad salutem, non autem quaevis alia quae fortasse magis superstitiosa sunt quam religiosa." (3)

Proceeding on this basis, he rejected emphatically the
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(1) Pauli Epist., Romans VII, 58.

(2) Ibid., Romans V, 42. Examin.

(3) "Let them see lest at this time perchance some have taught a foolish piety to the people contrary to the doctrine of Christ. Of what use will all those fasts be to me, and why should I commit myself to those formal prayers of which the author is unknown to me, and which cast aside the apostolic precepts? Why should I die in a monkish garb after having dressed myself all my life in secular clothes? Nothing like it has been ordained by Christ, Who teaches the grace of God and His mercy attending to salvation, not any other ways, which perchance are more superstitious than religious."
Ibid., Romans XVI, 135.

worship of the stigmata of St. Francis,(1) saying that there are in Christ the real stigmata to be worshipped.

"Stigmata Christi colere et in eis gloriari: non nisi vera religio esse potest in aliis autem potest esse superstitio: quod tutum est aequamur: quid dubium relinquamus."(2)

He did not reject prayers to the saints in any of his comments, but he did qualify the effectiveness of such invocations, saying that the better way was to approach Christ Himself.(3) Since there is no conflict between prayers for the dead and the worship of Christ, Lefèvre had nothing to say against them. Indeed, in a letter to Beatus Rhenanus, he commended the "animam Joannis Cracoviae" to his friend's prayers.(4) Lefèvre interpreted the Gehenna of the Gospels to mean purgatory and upheld belief in the doctrine.(5) Because relics pertaining to the life of Christ aid in worship, Lefèvre advocated their use, but warned against the danger of "stultifying" popular devotion.(6) He was silent on the subject of reverence paid to the relics of the saints. It is not too much to say that if he rejected the adoration of the saints, he would also have rejected the adoration of their relics.

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(1)See Renaudet, op. cit., p. 629. He says that Lefèvre did not reject the worship of the saints. He offers no proof.

(2)"Let us care for the stigmata of Christ and glory in them; unless true religion can be found in the others, on the other hand it is probably superstition; let us follow what is safe; what is dubious let us relinquish." Paul. Epist., Gal. VI, D35.

(3)Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. I, p. 45.

(4)Comment. Initiat., John XII, 94.

(5)Ibid., Matt. V, 40.

(6)Paul. Epist., Titus I, 3.

The Practices of the Church

While Lefèvre did not feel the necessity of breaking with most of the doctrines of the Church, he did not hesitate to repudiate many of its practices, when he felt that they were not in accord with the Scriptures. Concerning the efficacy of works, he did not agree with the opinion of the Roman Church nor with that of Luther. He sought rather to combine the two and show their interrelation in the same program. He demonstrated that

"purgant igitur opera legis", (1)

and that after faith entered into a life, works were the

"signum vivae et fructiferae fidei".(2)

"Sed age, inquires macerationes carnis, ut jejunia, vigilia, ruditas, pauperitas, nichili facienda? Nequaquam dixerim; sed quando oportet sunt carni multipliciter adhibenda, - - - Haec illi adhibenda non inficias ierim.(3) - - - sed haec sunt poenitentiae signum."(4)

Therefore if the Church ordains a fast,

"abstinendum est. Nam sanctis jussionibus parere justitia est et non parere injustitia, (5) recognising that - non in his consistit regnum Dei, sed in justitia quae illis plerumque annexa est."(6)

(1)"the works of the law purify".

(2)"the sign of a living and fruit bearing faith". Paul. Epist., Romans III, 29.

(3)"But come, you ask, do the macerations of the flesh, such as fasting, vigils, nakedness, poverty make for nothing? I do not say so, but when it is necessary are there not manifold macerations of the flesh to make use of - - That these have been used profitably, I may not deny.

- - but these are a sign of penitence."(3) Ibid, Col., III, 13.

(4) Ibid., Hebrews VI, 22.

(5)"It is necessary to abstain. For it right to obey the holy commands and wrong not to obey." Ibid., Hebrews VI, 22.

(6)"the kingdom of God does not consist in this, but in the justice which for the greater part was added to these." Ibid., Romans XIV, 121.

If this is understood then Pilgrimages, penitences, vows and similar practices of the Church are all right, but no dependence for salvation is to be put on them.

" Sunt qui abstinent a cibis et potibus et in his quoque magnum bonum esse putant. Verum neque in cibo neque potu neque in abstinentiis eorum consistit regnum Dei, sed in justitia et pace et gaudio in Spiritu Sancto. Alii sunt qui voverunt carnum abstinentiam. Esto se voto astrinxerunt et vinculum sibi injecerunt, quod forte Deus non possebat. Idcirco abstinent magnum bonum est, sed in hoc quod justitiam servant."(1)

Like Luther and Erasmus, Lefèvre felt that it was unnecessary to enter orders to serve God.

"Unicam enim est religio, unicam religionis fundamentum et unicus religionis scopus unicumque caput Christus Jhesus superbenedictus in secula. Sunt tamen diversi religionis status et gradus. Nam hi in saeculo manent Christo servientes: his saeculum fugientes antris claustrisque se propter Christum occludunt: omnes tamen seu in saeculo manentes at non secundum saeculum viventes, seu saeculi fugam arripientes et solitudinibus se occludentes religiosos Christi se nominare debent - - - Ergo nostras religiosae vitae observantias sub nomine Christi servemus, et audito nomine Christi qui omnia unit charitatem servabimus ad omnes sine qua nulla constat religio. Nullus audebit se alio meliorem existinare, aut alium Domini sui servum judicare."(2)

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(1)"There are those who abstain from food and drink and think that in this there is great good. Truly the kingdom of God consists neither in food nor drink nor in abstinence from them, but in justice and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. There are others who pray for abstinence from the world. Be it so: they have taken orders upon themselves by a vow to God and have thrown themselves into chains, which perchance God does not impose. But great good is not in this because they abstain but because they serve justice." Pauli Epistolae, Romans XIV, 121.

(2)"Verily there is only one religion, one foundation of religion and one aim of religion, and one head, Jesus Christ, blessed above all in the world. Nevertheless there are diverse conditions and degrees of religion.

The Sacraments

He applied his theory of justification to the sacraments of the Church as well as to the doctrine of works, with the same result. He allowed nothing to supplant the gift of God as the only means of justification.

"De même qu'il écarta les logiciens terministes et scotistes qui introduissaient, dans la philosophie, des problèmes stériles, indignes de la sciences et de la raison aristotélicienne il rejette les théologiens modernes, dont la subtilité matérielle n'a pas compris l'âme mystique du Christianisme primitif."(1)

Even as he recognised in works the signs of a living faith, so he accounted sacraments the expressions of spiritual life.

From this principle, his conclusion concerning baptism robs it of any inherent power and makes it merely a symbol.

"Et ablution circa nos materialis aquae in baptismo non justificat: sed signum: sed signum est justificationis ex fide Christi, sensibilia enim symbola:

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"Some remain in the world serving Christ: others, fleeing the world, hide themselves in caves and cloisters because of Christ. All, however, either remaining in the world or not living in the world, seizing flight from it and hiding themselves in solitude, deserve to be called consecrated to Christ. Therefore let us heed our observances of religious life under the name Christ, the name of Christ having been heard which binds all together; let us preserve charity for all, without which no religion stands. Let no one venture to think himself better than another, or to condemn another servant to his Lord." Pauli Epistolae, I Corinthians I, 3.

(1)"In the same way that he discarded the terminist and scotist logicians, who introduced worthless questions into philosophy, he rejected the modern theologians whose forced subtlety did not comprehend the mystic soul of primitive Christianity." Renaudet, *Préréforme et Humanisme*, p. 632.

"spiritualium rerum et divinarum infusionum sunt signa et illorum sensus est harum vero fides est signum inquam est huiusmodi ablutio justificationis ex fide Christi."(1)

Baptism then is but a sign or symbol of our justification and of our union with Christ in His death and sufferings,(2) and "sign or symbol" is the extent of its significance.

The application of this principle to the Mass forced him to the conclusion that it was not a repeated sacrifice.

"Ergo quae in ministerio sacerdotii ejus quotidie peraguntur non tam sunt iteratae oblatione quam unus ejusdem et quae semel tantum oblata est victimae memoria ac recordatio - - - Neque aliud mysterium continet quam ex praesentia corporis et sanguini oblatis illius divinae et omni salvificae oblationis satisfactionisque memoriam, quae omni sacrificio et omni oblatione ad finem usque mundi Deos est acceptior."(2)

Though the Mass is not a repeated sacrifice, yet the real presence of Christ is in it. This was approximately the opinion of Luther, though Lefèvre never worked out a dogmatic statement of his position.(3) Because of the presence of Christ in the Mass it is necessary to come to

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(1)"And with us cleansing in the baptism of material water does not justify; but it is a sign: however, the sign is of justification through faith in Christ, truly a fitting symbol: they are the signs of the infusion of divine things of the Spirit, and the idea of the one is that of the other - namely, that faith is a sign, I say, cleansing of this sort is of justification by faith in Christ." Pauli Epist., Ro.IV, 31.

(2)"Those things which in the ministry of the priests are executed daily are not so much done over and over in sacrifice as the record and memory of one victim offered once for all - - Another mystery is embraced in the presence of the body and shed blood of that divine one and the offering for the salvation and satisfaction of all, which is more acceptable to God than all sacrifice and all offering from now to the end of the world."Ibid., Heb. VII, 35.

(3)Graf, Essai etc., p. 70.

this celebration in the right attitude.

"Magna ergo veneratione: ad id augustissimum mysterium accedere oportet, quoddum in terris adhuc esset instituit - - - Ad sancti sanctorum contactum quis accedere ausit nisi mundus: ad regem regum suscupiedum: nisi venerabundus: ad indicem omnium: nisi tremebundus."(1)

For it is not a light thing that the

"regis regum quem adorant angeli ac venerentur"(2)

should descend to join with men. Great preparation should be made to receive Him; this preparation consists in having perfect faith.(3)

Lefèvre believed that penances helped to keep the body under control and therefore favored the confessional. However, confession must be made to God if it is to be effective. The priest hears the confessions in order to help out the ignorant. He aided them in their confession, taught them how to pray, and imposed a penance upon them in order to correct them. All this is done in secret so that Christ alone hears and He alone forgives. If the confession is not made to God or if it consists in a superficial act, then it becomes valueless.(4)

The sacrament of marriage and the marriage state

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- (1)"Therefore it is necessary to come to this most awful mystery with great reverence because it has been ordained just as long as it has been on the earth - - Who would dare to approach the door of the Holy of holies unless pure? to receive the King of kings unless reverent? to the judge of all unless trembling?" Pauli Epist., I Cor. XI, 80
(2)"the King of kings Whom the angels adore and revere."
(3)Ibid., I Cor. XI, 82.
(4)Ibid., Ephesians II.

came in for some discussion. After a long dissertation on Philippians IV, 1, Lefèvre came to the conclusion that Paul was married,(1) but that he led the life of a celibate. For

"Coelibatus et vita omnem fugiens carnalem contactum - - - longe praeferenda est nuptiis sanctorum enim purior et spiritualior. - - - Pecatum non est, extra autem thorum non continere: peccatum est.(2) -- $\frac{1}{2}$ Virginitatis status coniugis erat praeferendus."(3)

Because of the greater freedom and reduced responsibility, Lefèvre argued for celibacy.(4) As for there being any merit in the state of celibacy, Lefèvre rejected the idea, and held with Paul that the resulting freedom for service is the chief gain.(5)

Conditions in the Church

Lefèvre was not blind to the condition of the Church about him. He had been in Rome and had seen the Vatican court under Innocent VIII, Alexander VI and Julius II. He could not help noticing the state of affairs. It was inevitable that he should make some comparisons between the ideal church described in the writings of Paul and the Church about him.

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(1)Pauli Epistolae, Phil. IV, 1, Examin.

(2)"A celibate life avoids contact with all worldliness - indeed it is a more holy, more pure and more spiritual life, by far to be preferred to marriage." "Marriage is not wrong, except it is incontinent: this is wrong." Ibid, I Cor. VII, 42.

(3)"The unmarried state is preferable to the married." Ibid., I Cor., VII, 49.

(4) Ibid., I Tim. XIV, 17.

(5) Ibid., Romans XVI, 135.

"O quam indecorum est videre episcopum compotores sollicitantem, ludis intentum aleas, pyrgos aut tesseras tractantem, canibus et avibus occupatum et aucupantem, ululantem ad corniculae aut ferae aucupina, gyneceum intrantem et virgunculos gremis tenentem molles cum suaviis sermones miscentem."(1)

He was very outspoken in describing the cause of this state. He realised that one of the poisons in the Church's life was its leadership. These leaders were worldly men who had not come into the Church for religious reasons.(2) Another cause of these conditions was the regulation of the Church that the priests should be celibate. Though he believed that celibacy was the more desirable mode of life, yet Lefèvre saw the evil of forcing it on a man.

"Ad tempore usque Gregorii Septimi qui ordinis fuit Cluniacensium adhuc sacerdotibus et diaconis licebat virginem habere uxorem - - Apostolicum nuptiarum ritum retinnerunt Graeci: neque nuntare voluerunt; agamiam acceptaverunt aliae Ecclesiae: unde plurimi per deteriorem incontinentiam lapsi in pedicas inciderunt diaboli."(3)

He gave a third and more basic reason for the decline of the Church. This was the lack of the knowledge of the

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(1)"O how scandalous it is to see the clergy associating with drunkards, intent on the game of dice, handling the dice-box and tally, watching and engrossed by the ace-point, crying aloud to the jack-daws or lying in wait for animals; going into women's apartments and catching the young girls with pleasant breasts, mingling sermons with kisses." Pauli Epistolae, I Tim. II, 16.

(2) Ibid., II Cor. VII, 33.

(3)"Up to the time of Gregory VII, who was of the house of Cluny, it was lawful among the priests and deacons to have a virgin for a wife. - - The Greek Church retained the rite of marriage from the Apostles: neither did they wish to reject it; they accepted the experience of other churches: that very many having fallen through a worse incontinence, fell into the power of the snares of the devil."Ibid., I Timothy III, 12.

Gospel. This lack he felt even when he was writing the "Psalterium Quincuplex".

"Ab eo tempore quo ea pietatis desiere studia, coenobia periere, devotio interiit, et extincta est religio, et spiritualia pro terrenis sunt commutata, caelum dimissum et accepta terra."(1)

In considering the state of the Church, he exclaimed of the leaders:

"Quomodo enim scientur averitate, qui scire noluerunt veritatem. Et quomodo lucentes lampades habuerunt; qui etiam lucentia extinxerunt. O Christe lux vera illucesce: et has ut illi eloquiorum lumen videre possint et videntes salvari elide tenebras."(2)

These undesirable conditions among the leaders had had evil effects among the common people.

"Avaritia et turpis quaestus multos errores induxit in Ecclesia, cum circa alia tum circa doctrinas quae ad quaestum plus faciunt quam ad pietatem - - - Si ex stulta populi devotione ad unum ligneum truncum sit spes quaestus si apes dolosi (ut ait quidam) refulserit nummi, truncus mutatur in aurum, ut ob materiae pretiositatem stulti populi devotio ageatur ad quam pariter crescat et quaestus."(3)

(1)"Since the study of piety has ceased, the convents are fallen off, devotion is dead, religion is dead and they have exchanged earthly things for heavenly." Psalter. Quin., Praefatio, fol. 1 r.

(2)"Indeed in the same manner they are known by falsehood, since they do not wish to know truth. And likewise they have lighted lamps, who indeed extinguish the Light. O Christ, the true light, shine upon these so that they may be able to see the light and seeing, be saved from the destruction of the infernal regions." Paul. Epist., I Cor. IX, 61.

(3)"Avarice and shameful profit introduced many mistakes into the Church, since about other things as well as about the doctrines, they do those things which are for shame rather than for piety. If hope is unfulfilled because of the silly devotion of the people for this object of worship: if the hope of deceitful money (as one says) should smile upon them, the object of worship would be changed for gold, just because of its value, the devotion of the foolish people is disturbed and the shame grows equally." Ibid., Titus I, 3.

The monastic orders also had suffered, and no longer had their former apostolic fervor and ideals.(1)

Like Luther, he objected to playing upon the superstition of the people in the sale of indulgences.

"Ideo et rejiciendi sunt et despiciendi qui humano ingenio ad quaestum praedicant verbum Dei. Nam ejus modi in synaeritate Dei non praedicant, neque ut ante Deum, sed ut ante homines, et canponatores sunt verbi Dei potius quam verbi Dei praedicatores."(2)

Lefèvre also questioned the value of prayers offered in Latin which the people did not understand.

"Maxima pars hominum cum nunc orat nescio si spiritu: tamne mente non erat. Nam in lingua orat; quam non intelligit."(3)

But what is to be the remedy of these evils? Lefèvre had a double answer. First he would the Church return to the study of the Gospel, to the meditation upon the Sacred Scriptures,(4) to the teachings of the Apostles and to the preaching of the Word of God in its purity, with no thought of gain.(5) His second answer came from his study of Prophecy. He was convinced that the time for Christ's return was close at hand. The signs indicated to him it was near.(6)

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(1)Pauli Epistolae, I Thess. IV, 8.

(2)"Therefore they deserve to be cast aside and despised, who teach according to human device, to make gain of the Word of God. For this kind do not proclaim the loving care of God, neither as before God, but before men, and they are slanderers of the Word of God rather than its eulogists." Ibid., II Cor. II, 11.

(3)"The greatest part of men do not understand in the spirit when it is spoken: so much less in the mind. For it is spoken in a language which they do not understand."

(4)Ibid., I Tim. IV, 21.

(5)Ibid., I Tim. VI, 41.

(6)Ibid., II Tim. III, 18.

In Mohammed, Lefèvre saw the fulfilment of the prophecy of the first beast.(1) He was anxious that the second coming might be soon, and prayed that Christ should return to His Church and raise it up and purify it.(2)

The similarity of Lefèvre's views and those of the later reformers is quite obvious in reading his commentary on the Epistles of Paul. The question naturally arises, If Lefèvre preceded Luther in the discovery and statement that justification is dependent on God alone, did he also precede him in the contemplation of a break with Rome? This can be definitely answered in the negative. Indeed he desired to stop all such movements and keep the unity of the Church.

"Servanda est unitas spiritus in vinculo pacis unitas corporis Christi quae est una sancta Ecclesia catholica, unita spei aeternorum bonorum, unitas domini, unitas fidei, unitas baptismatis; ex his unitatibus servatis ad eam quae est consummatio omnium solo Deo in ipso et sua infinibili unitate illam tribuente perventur unitatem."(3)

Consistency of his Opinions

On most points Lefèvre's conclusions in the "Pauli Epistolae" represented his stand throughout the rest of

(1) Pauli Epistolae, II Thess. II, 5.

(2) Ibid., I Tim. III, 13. See also his discussions of the evils of the church and the signs of the times here.

(3) "The unity of the spirit must be kept in the bonds of peace, the unity of the body of Christ which is the one holy Catholic Church, the unity of the hope of eternal blessings, the unity of the Lord, the unity of faith, the unity of baptism; conserving all these unities in God Himself alone and in His indivisible unity which gives that unity." Ibid., Eph. IV, 10

his life. In his next commentary, "Commentarii initiatorii in quatuor Evangelia", he reiterated his stand with some additions and few changes. He made no change in his doctrine of redemption: it still remained for him the union of the believer with Christ,(1) this union being brought about through faith in Him.(2) Christ made the offering for sin once and for all,(3) and this is the only means of salvation which even the apostles had to accept.(4) No one can depend on himself for his salvation, for salvation does not come from man's works but from the work of Christ.(5) It is not limited by God, for He desires that all should partake and excludes no one.(6) Lefèvre continued to reject works in any form as a means of salvation. Man is unable to acquire any merit for himself. He must depend entirely on the grace of God.(7)

"Absit ergo, ut apud deum cogitemus ullum nobis tanquam debitum esse meritum, quantum cumque pie, sancte, religioseque voxerimus. At Christo qui deo natura est equalis proinde in illo solo, non in nostro merito quod nullum est."(8)

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(1) Commentarii Initiatorii, Luke XXIV, 204.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Ibid.

(4) Ibid., Luke XXII, 174. Cf. Luke XI, 99 and John XI, 92.

(5) Ibid., Matthew X, 103.

(6) Ibid., Matthew XXVIII, 287. See also John XI, 92.

(7) Ibid., Luke I, 20.

(8) "There fore, let the idea be gone, that we think anything is owing us from God, as it were a debt, and as long as we plead, let us plead with piety, sanctity and right attitude. For we are justified in Christ, Who is equal in nature to God, therefore in Him alone, not in our own merit which is nothing." Ibid., Luke XVII, 143.

Works are the signs of a living faith,(1) products of a true penitence,(2) the true expression of a Christian life. Without the inward life they are vain.

"Externa profecto sine interna nihil est, nisi forte merahypocrisis: at interna etsi exterior absit aliquid est: et multo forte maior que ubi haec et illa adsunt, ut in Christo et apostolis qui rigorem illum asperitatemque vitae non expresserunt."(3)

He enlarged his estimate of the authority of the Scriptures,(4) and became more emphatic in his criticism of the worship and practice of the church. In his preface, he boldly declared

"ade, ut praeter alia multa a tempore Constantini, quo primitive illa quae paulatim declinabat."(5)

His attitude toward worship remained the same, that worship belongs to God and Christ alone.(6) He again made exception of the Virgin,(7) and accepted the adoration of Mary.(8) He emphatically excluded all adoration of the saints,(9) and also of their relics.(10) Though he did not advocate

(1)Comment. Initiat., Luke VII, 73.

(2)Ibid., Matthew III, 17.

(3)Ibid., Luke III, 41."Certainly nothing is external unless it is internal, except perchance mere hypocrisy; and the internal is of great importance even when the external is absent:how much more when both are present, as in Christ and the apostles, who did not devise that rigor and austerity of life."

(4)Ibid., Ad Christianos Lectores. See also Matt. XVI.

(5)Ibid., Ad Christianos Lectores, A 3 r. "See that in many ways, from the time of Constantine, from which earliest time the church has declined little by little."

(6)Ibid., Mark XVI, 104.

(7)Ibid., John IV, 32.

(8)Ibid., Matt. II, 11 and Luke II, 25.

(9)Ibid., John XIV, 109

(10)Ibid.

the abolition of prayers to the saints and to the Virgin,
he did say:

"Sed forte dicet hic quispiam: Non ergo licet accedere ad Christum invocata virginis matris, et sanctorumque ut velit et dignetur eorum pro nobis preces suscipere, quo modo ecclesia frequenter orare solet? Non id dico. Sed si sic accederetur maior fiducia est in suffragio aut illius gratiae super alios donatae virginis aut sanctorum quorumcumque etiam omnium, que in Christo solo: is non bene accedit. Quod si sola humilitas id facit, tota fiducia in patre misericordiarum, et in Christo filio eius coniecta, bene accedit."(1)

He continued to hold the same opinion on prayers for the dead and purgatory.(2)

In his estimate of penance he retained the opinion that he had expressed earlier, that it must be the expression of a true penitence or it is worthless.

"Est enim populos vere poenitens qui ad bona fidei resipiscens, justificationem non ex operibus illis esto divinae legis sunt expectat (sunt enim debita) sed ex gratia.(3)

Est enim resipiscentia, sententiae mutatio conversio reversioque ad Deum, motio quae praevio fit spiritus sancti adventu sanctum et desiderabile nomen: et si illam sanctam resipiscentiam quandoque haec sequantur * * * * *

(1)"But perchance someone says here: Is it not lawful to draw near to Christ, having invoked the Virgin Mother and the saints, in order that He may listen and think their prayers for us worthy of answer, in which manner the Church frequently is accustomed to speak? I do not say this. But if you have thus drawn near, is there greater faith in the favor either of the grace of the virgin, having been placed over all, or in the favor of the saints or in the favor of Christ alone? God is not acceptably approached in this manner. Rather, if humility alone does this, complete trust in the Father of mercies, having been interpreted in Christ, brings us close." Comment. Initiat., John XII, 94.

(2) Ibid., Luke XVI, 141.

(3)"For if a people are truly repentant, who turn again to the good works of faith, they do not look for justification from works, as from divine law (for they are owed) but from grace." Ibid., Luke VII, 73. (4)"For , repentance has

This is in substance what he had said in his former work and this principle covers the entire group of questions that have to do with fasting, pilgrimages, eating of meat or refraining from eating and similar church observances.(1)

In the same way the sacraments ordained by the Church are not the means of salvation, but the sign or seal placed on the condition that each represents. Baptism is the sign and seal of the new life in Christ,(2) the eucharist is the expression of the believer's union with Him.(3) Lefèvre kept the accepted opinion that Christ was corporeally present in the elements of the mass(4) but he laid more stress on the necessity for faith in the partaker in order to perceive His presence and profit by it.

"Non enim quia teris signa sacramenti ad modum manducantis, manducas: sed quia alit et vivificat spiritum. Spiritus ergo est qui manducat, non corpus: non est aliquid conterere aut immutare, sed immutari potius, deficari, in ac vita aeternam transire: et hoc sit mediante fide. Huius manducationis sacramentum ut sacramentum, et sacramentalis manducatio, ut huiusmodi signum est: neque facit quicque sacramentum sine fide, at fides sine sacramento multum potest."(5)

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been revived, it is a change of mind, a conversion, a return to God, an impulse which has caused by the sacred advent of the Holy Spirit going before; not by the affliction of the flesh, nor by maceration, nor even by sacrifice(non carnis, afflictio, non maceratio, non denique mactatio) though sometimes these follow the holy repentance as a sign." Comment. Initiat., Matthew III, 17.

(1)See Ibid., Matt. XI, 110; VI, 53; Luke III, 41; et al.

(2)Ibid., John I, 11, 13.

(3)Ibid., John VI.

(4)Ibid., Matthew XXVI, 247.

(5)Ibid., John VI, 54. "Indeed you do not eat the sacrament for the sake of eating, but because it lightens and revives the spirit. Therefore it is the spirit which eats, not the body; one does not eat to change, but rather to be changed,

He argued further against the inherent merit of this sacrament without faith by saying that Judas partook of it and later became apostate.(1)

His opinion of the evil condition of the Church had not lessened. He used the three denials of Peter as an allegory of the three stages in the decline of the Church.(2) The fault for this decline lay with men, who, though they had the light yet so great ~~was~~ was their folly, preferred darkness rather than the light and would not come to the only cure for their evil condition.(3) This condition did not need to exist for Christ could heal the Church.(4) The need for healing existed, not only in Asia and Africa, but in Europe also.

"Maxima pro parte Europaeis nox est."(5)

The only possible solution for this condition lay in preaching the pure, undefiled gospel, freed from the inventions of men,(6) in a return to the worship of Christ, "deus homo", for "Christus est omnia, verbum dei omnia".(7) There must

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to be purified, and to enter into eternal life. And this is accomplished by means of faith. This sacrament of eating, as a sacrament, and the sacramental eating, is a sign; neither can the sacrament accomplish anything without faith, or faith much without the sacrament."Comment. Initiat., John VI, 54.

(1)Ibid.

(2)Ibid., Matthew XXVI, 263.

(3)Ibid., John IX, 74.

(4)Ibid., Ad Christianos Lectores, A 2 r.

(5)Ibid., John IX, 74. "The greatest part of Europe is in night".

(6)Ibid., Luke V, 56.

(7)Ibid., Mark IX, 72. Ses his Christian Ten Commandments.

be a return to the faith of the primitive church which produced so many martyrs.

"Et hoc sit cunctis unicum studium, solatium, desiderium scire evangelium, sequi evangelium, ubique promovere evangelium. - - - Cuius solius studio Pannonia, Italia, Germania, Gallia, Hispania, Britannia, imo universa Europa, Asia, Africa felix esse potest."(1)

He was quite hopeful that the time for the preaching of the gospel was near(2) for he expected the imminent return of Christ to be all in all.(3) He did not take the position that a break with the Church was the means to bring about this end. Indeed he took the other side and held that in Christ it was not right to have sects and divisions.(4)

His "Commentarii in epistolas Catholicas" did not come up to the excellence of his two previous commentaries, "Pauli Epistolae" and "Commentarii Initiatorii in quatuor Evangelia". However, in view of the persecution he had suffered at the hands of the Sorbonne, it is of interest to note the points in which he differed from the Roman Church.

His opinion of works remained unchanged; he identified them as signs of a living faith.(5) The mass he saw as the

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- (1)"And in all things let this be the one purpose, the one solace, the one desire, to know the gospel, to follow the gospel and to promote the gospel everywhere. - - Only through the zeal of those(who do this) will it be possible to make Hungary, Italy, Germany, France, Spain, Britain, indeed all Europe, Asia, Africa happy."Comment. Initiat., Praefat. A 2 r.
(2)Ibid., Mark XIII, 79.
(3)Ibid., John IV, 34.
(4)Ibid., John IV, 31.
(5)Epist. Cath., Jas. V, 18.

symbol of our union with Christ(1) and in it

"illis arca signum erat praesentia divinitatis sic sacramentum corporis - - est praesentis."(1)

He introduced a new figure into his estimate of the Church. He identified Babylon as Rome, and the description of Babylon with Lucifer as king he applied to Rome.(2) He wrote on one new point in this commentary. He attacked the claim, by the Roman Church, of an especial priestly office and argued that each man is his own priest in Christ, as far as approaching God is concerned; but he allowed that the priest had a function in the administration of the sacraments and in the proclamation of the Word of God.(3) Lefèvre recognised the danger of such statements but did not lose courage nor retract from his position on the things he counted essential, for he felt that the time was soon to come when Christ would come and restore all things.(4)

Throughout all his commentaries there is a freedom of thought, a freshness in approach, an earnestness of purpose and a depth of religious feeling that cannot but impress the reader. In spite of the faults in exegesis and philology, and the occasional incongruity of interpretation, there is a value to his work that cannot be missed. He was

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(1)"As to them the ark was the sign of the divine presence, this sacrament of the body - - was a sign of the presence." Epist. Cath., I John V, 21.

(2)Ibid., I Peter V, 12.

(3)Ibid., I Peter II, 5.

(4)Ibid., Jude 17.

a commentator whose primary purpose was to lead his reader into a richer spiritual life and was the first man of his age to use scholarly methods to accomplish this end.

J. Reception of his Commentaries

In his own day Lefèvre's Biblical commentaries received a wide reading and much recommendation as was natural when so famous a man as the Picard professor turned to this new field. His "Psalterium Quincuplex" was acclaimed by Wolfgang Pratensis and Beatus Rhenanus, in Paris, as a new step in the study and explanation of the "supreme science".(1) In Alcalá, Francis Ximenes expressed his approval of the work of the editor and of his method.(2) And in Grenoble, Alain de Varrennes wrote to Bouelles that all scholars had read with joy Lefèvre's commentary and were awaiting his other works "pour l'enrichissement de la pensée chrétienne."(3) This work also penetrated into Germany, where a copy fell into the hands of one Martin Luther, who used it as his guide in his own commentary on the Psalms.(4)

The second and more worthy of Lefèvre's works received much wider recognition. The fact that he dared to put out his own translation beside the Vulgate and to defend it, did not pass unnoticed. When Erasmus was preparing his public-

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(1) Renaudet, *Préréforme et Humanisme*, p. 516.

(2) *Ibid.*, p. 517.

(3) *Ibid.*

(4) P. Smith, *Life and Letters of Martin Luther*, p. 22.

ation of the Greek New Testament, he cited Lefèvre as his authority and precedent for such a daring innovation.(1) And later, when writing of the basis of theological teaching, Erasmus again referred to Lefèvre's work as an authority.(2) Lefèvre's "Pauli Epistolae" also went far afield and Luther owned and used a copy of it as his guide during the summer semester of 1515 in his lectures on Romans.(3) This is an important sidelight on the Reformation, for Luther's study of Romans contributed much to his doctrinal thinking and in this study he had Lefèvre's work as a guide. Luther expressed his opinion of Lefèvre in a letter to Spalatin.

"Nam et Stapulensis, viro alioqui (bone Deus) quam spirituali et sincerissimo, haec intelligentia deest in interpretando divinas literas."(4)

This estimate by Luther rested on the importance which Lefèvre attached to works, for Luther in his overemphasis of faith was led to reject the epistle of James as the "epistle of straw" and for this reason he could not appreciate Lefèvre's emphasis on works.

Not all comment on his work was favorable. His opinions did not pass unnoticed by the Sorbonne and as early as 1515 they expressed a desire to question him on his writ-

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(1) Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. I, p. 25.

(2) Ibid., p. 29 ff.

(3) P. Smith, Life and Letters of Martin Luther, p. 23.

(4) "And indeed this understanding is lacking in Lefèvre (Stap.) in himself (praise God) a man exceedingly spiritual and sincere, in the interpretation of the Scriptures." Herminjard, op. cit., p. 26.

ings.(1) His friends were not content to see him go undefended and Cardinal Marco Vigerio wrote an Apologia for him.(2)

Quarrel with Erasmus

Out of the second edition of Lefèvre's "Pauli Epistolae" there grew a very interesting quarrel with Erasmus, which illustrates the spread of Lefèvre's work and the reputation that he had in that day. In his translation of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Lefèvre worked on the theory that the original had been Hebrew, and that his manuscript was only a Greek translation. With this in mind, Lefèvre translated Hebrews II, 7

"Minuisti eum paulominus a deo",
instead of the Vulgate translation

"Minuisti eum paulominus ab angelis".(3)

He had noted in his work on the Psalms that the Gallican and Roman translations had rendered Psalm VIII, 6 "a Deo" by "angels" instead of God. He spoke of the matter in his first work,(4) and when this passage recurred in Hebrews he changed it to suit the Hebrew, and said that this was not worthy of the reasoning of Paul and was the error of the Greek translator.(5) Erasmus disagreed with this opinion, and thought that Lefèvre's translation was

(1) Renaudet, Préréforme et Humanisme, p. 654.

(2) Ibid., p. 654, note 5.

(3) "Thou has made him a little lower than God" and "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angles." Psalt. Quin., Psalm VIII, 6.

(4) Ibid, Ps. VIII, 6, Expositio. (5) Pauli Epistolae, Heb. II, 5.

"inadmissible for either psalm or epistle and solved no difficulty in the latter."(1)

Erasmus would have solved the problem by translating it

"Thou hast made him for a little time lower than the angels".(2)

Moreover in his "Annotations" Erasmus raised some question concerning the authenticity of the Epistle to the Hebrews.(3)

Lefèvre objected to these corrections at three points.

First, he regarded it as impious to say that Christ had been made lower than angels and the "most abject of men";(4)

secondly, Lefèvre would not agree to the translation of

Βραχὺ as a "short time", and sought to demonstrate from

Homer that Erasmus was wrong in this translation. He quoted

Athanasius, Chrysostom and Jerome against Erasmus' author-

ities, but wisely concluded that it was not authority but

truth that gives the victory.(5) Finally, Lefèvre objected

to the doubts raised by Erasmus concerning the authenticity

of the Epistle.(6) He concluded his discussion with these

words:

"Et hic nostrae disceptationis cum viro quidem per amico benevolo susceptae: finem facimus. Quam eo libertius suscepti: quo materis ipsa discussione visa est dignissima et ad eum virum qui michi charissimus est et quod auget dilectionis affectum: qui doctissimus visa est, vigilantissimus, eloquentissimus, et clarus theologicae professionis affector plurimum linguarum probe gnarus ac de re literaris universa que optime meritus. Qui puto boni consulet: que ad plennis agnoscendam veritate et eam quidem veritatem in qua errare periculosom et probe nosse pulcherrimum est nostra hactenus cura insudarit praesertim cum ipse nobis stimulum respondendi addiderit. Quem etiam oratum velim

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(1) Drummond, Erasmus, vol. I, p. 323. (2) Ibid., p. 324.

(3) Ibid. (4) Smith, Erasmus, p. 178. (5) Pauli Epist., Heb. II, 5.

(6) Ibid.

"ut pro foecundiore ingenio et dicendi gratia ad nostra adiciat: si illi non fatissecisse videbor, quis et rear hac in parte fecisees satis: vel abunde."(1)

Erasmus did not hear of Lefèvre's remarks on this subject for more than a year.(2) When he was informed of it, he bought one of Lefèvre's books and read for himself. In fourteen days he wrote a reply in which he defended himself and his opinions and "read Faber(Lefèvre) an admirable lecture on Christian charity and forbearance".(3) In all this discussion, if any one needed a lecture on "Christian forbearance" it was Erasmus, for Lefèvre kept his discussion to the question, while Erasmus, as was his wont, attacked Lefèvre personally.(4) Erasmus wrote Lefèvre a very friendly letter(5) and asked that the quarrel be dropped, but Lefèvre did not answer it or the other letters

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(1)"And here we make an end of our debate with the man undertaken, surely, in gracious friendliness. Which I have undertaken more freely than he, in the discussion of the matter he has seemed most worthy, and to this man who is most charitable to me and who increases the bond of affection, who is most learned, most diligent, most eloquent and clear in theological teaching which he follows, very learned in many languages and in all literature, and very deserving. Who, I think, deliberates for good and it is our care to work for truth thus far and indeed to err in truth is dangerous but to associate with it is quite lovely, especially when he gave an added motive for answering. Which entreaty indeed I desire that he should add to ours, because of its fruitful nature and grace of speaking. - - - - - If it pleases you, let this be enough." Pauli Epistolae, Hebrews II, 5, Examin.

(2)Drummond, Erasmus, p. 324.

(3)Ibid.

(4)Graf, Essai etc., p. 55 ff.

(5)This letter is translated in Drummond, op. cit., p.179 and in Mangin, Life of Erasmus, vol. II, p. 14.

that followed.(1) Erasmus made a great deal of this discussion, and proclaimed his victory over "that Frenchman" but at the same time he expressed regret at the existence of the quarrel.(2) Lefèvre, on the other hand, said very little about it and seems never to have considered an answer to Erasmus' "Apologia".(3) After considerable correspondence with mutual friends, Erasmus was assured that Lefèvre held no enmity against him and there the matter rested.(4) In the preface of his "Commentarii Initiatorii in quatuor Evangelia", Lefèvre acknowledged his debt to Erasmus for the work Erasmus did on the Greek New Testament and expressed his friendship for him.(5) The whole affair was largely much ado about nothing on the part of Erasmus, but the fact that Erasmus could so readily procure a copy of Lefèvre's work, when he was some distance from Paris, shows how widely known Lefèvre's books were and the discussion also illustrates the reputation Lefèvre had, since Erasmus considered him a worthy opponent.

K. Contribution through his Commentaries

Lefèvre's contribution to the Reformation through his commentaries falls into four fields. In none of these was his work complete but in each of them he introduced a new

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(1) Drummond, Erasmus, p. 179.

(2) Ibid. (3) Graf, Essai etc., p. 60.

(4) Ibid., p. 60, 61.

(5) Commentarii Initiatorii, Ad Christianos Lectores, A 3 v.

approach and a logical method of arriving at the conclusion. The first field is that of textual criticism, where he used modern methods for the first time in his attempt to secure a dependable text. The second field is that of the mode of interpretation, in which Lefèvre broke with the old school and their verbose, involved dialectic method as prone to become sterile and almost worthless. He used the Scriptures as the interpreter of themselves and explained the real meaning of the text. He was the first really modern commentator in this field. The third field is that of doctrine, in which he established a new basis of authority. The Reformation generally elevated the Bible as the final authority in matters of religion and Lefèvre introduced this standard in France, indeed almost in Europe, for his first two commentaries were close to being the first books to express this idea. In his works he held up the Church's organization to the light that came from the Scriptures. The Church's doctrines, practices and government were reviewed. Wherein they failed to come up to the standard in the Bible, they were condemned. Further, Lefèvre pointed the way to the correction of existing evils. The field of religion was the fourth in which Lefèvre's commentaries made a contribution to the Reformation. Even more than in doctrine, his commentaries gave to the Reformation in France its color by his definition of religion.

To him religion was not creed or ritual, but a real and vital fellowship with God. In his commentaries, the doctrines of the Church were accepted or rejected according to their confirmation to this central idea. This conception of religion was the guiding principle of Lefèvre and his associates in the first phase of the Reformation in France characterized by the work of the "Group of Meaux".

CHAPTER SIX

CONTRIBUTION THROUGH THE GROUP OF MEAUX

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As Luther gave practical expression to his ideals at Urfurt, and Zwingli to his at Zurich, and Calvin to his at Geneva, so Lefèvre had the opportunity, for a brief time, to give expression to his at Meaux. The work at Meaux represents the first popular and practical expression of the Reformation in France. Though destined to failure because of desertion by its leaders, yet the work there was the first phase of the French Reformation and in many ways exhibited most of the characteristics of the French movement. Any understanding of the movement in France depends largely on an understanding of the origin, the motives and the results of the efforts of "the Group of Meaux", for Meaux was the dividing point. Thence the various members either went to join the reformers of Germany and Switzerland or they returned to the fold of the mother Church. From the standpoint of this thesis, the work of this group will be considered as the chief demonstration of the ideals of Lefèvre. At Meaux, surrounded by congenial friends, from the year 1521 to 1525 he was permitted and encouraged to carry out the principles which he had formulated in the years of study and writing at Paris.

A. The Group of Meaux

Guillaume Briçonnet

The initiator and protector of the reform at Meaux

was Guillaume Briçonnet. On March 19, 1516 Francis I climaxed a series of preferments extended to Guillaume Briçonnet by making him Bishop of Meaux.(1) He was the younger son of Guillaume Briçonnet, Archbishop of Rheims and Cardinal of Malo.(2) The elder Briçonnet, Count of Montbrun, had been in civil service under Louis XI until he passed into the hierarchy of the French Church.(3) As an expression of royal appreciation for services rendered, Louis bestowed on him the rich abbey of St. Germain-des-Prés and the Archbishopric of Rheims; in virtue of that dignity he had anointed Louis XII at his coronation.(4) Though now in the uniform of the Church, Briçonnet remained in the service of the king and, at the king's request, left Rome to assist in the convocation of the council of Pisa.(5) Thus he faced the dangers of an open break with the Pope.

His son, also named Guillaume Briçonnet, was born in 1470, before the father entered the priesthood.(6) Little is known of his youth. His education was pursued in the University of Paris at the College of Navarre, which he entered in 1486.(7) He

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(1) Baird, Rise of the Huguenots, p. 72.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. I, p. 3, note 1.

(4) Farmer, Essays etc., p. 21.

(5) Baird, op. cit., p. 72.

(6) Herminjard, op. cit., p. 3, note 1.

(7) Renaudet, Préréforme et Humanisme, p. 384, note 1.

"se fit remarquer de bonne heure par son amour pour l'étude et par sa bienveillance pour les gens de lettres."(1)

It is interesting to note that the supervision of the young man's education was entrusted by his father to Josse Clichtove.(2) It was probably through Clichtove that Briconnet and Lefevre became acquainted, when Briconnet studied theology under the supervision of Lefèvre's former student.

The royal favor which had been enjoyed by the father was extended to the son also. He was successively made archdeacon of Rheims, archdeacon of Avignon, bishop of Lodève by 1489, when he was nineteen years of age and still in the university.(3) When once out of the university, both Louis XII and Francis I entrusted important missions to him.(4) They also added two substantial honors to his already extensive list by giving him, in 1507, the rich abbey of St. Germain-des-Prés and, in 1516, the bishopric of Meaux.(5)

Shortly after his appointment to Meaux, Francis I sent him as a special envoy to the Papal court, and

"a close acquaintance with the court of Rome revealed to him many things in which he thought there was urgent need of reform".(6)

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(1)"early brought himself into prominence by his love of study and his benevolence toward men of letters." Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. I, p. 3, note 1.

(2)Clerval, Jud. Clichtovei, p. 8-12.

(3)Renaudet, Préréforme et Humanisme, p. 384.

(4)Farmer, Essays etc., p. 22.

(5)Guill. Farel, p. 102.

(6)Farmer, op. cit., p. 22.

But in placing the beginning of Briçonnet's reformatory activities with his trip to Rome, Farmer did not go back far enough. Briçonnet had had this tendency toward reform for many years. As early as 1507, when first appointed Abbot of St. Germain-des-Prés, he attempted to put into effect his reformatory ideas with the result that many monks left the abbey.(1) Their departure left vacancies in the abbey and this enabled Briçonnet to invite Lefèvre, with some of his friends, to take up his residence there. This he did in the year 1507.(2) For some time afterwards Lefevre appears to have been secretary to Briçonnet and to have assisted in his attempts at reform.(3) Besides the work at St. Germain-des-Prés, Briçonnet showed himself a friend of reform in other ways. He was ardently interested in any reform movement in the Church and became a member of any group organized for that purpose. A friend of Jean Standonck, a member of the reformatory council of Pisa, an inspirer of reforms in monasteries, he was everywhere recognised as a reformer.(4) This was known even to the Pope, Leo X, and he used his knowledge to win Briçonnet's consent to the infamous Concordat by promising to aid him in his struggle with the monks of St. Germain-des-Prés.(5) Briçonnet combined with this reforming tend-

(1) Renaudet, *Préréforme et Humanisme*, p. 453 ff.

(2) *Ibid.* (3) *Ibid.*, p. 497, note 2.

(4) Renaudet, *op. cit.*, pp. 542, 563, 565, 566, et al.

(5) *Ibid.*, p. 585, note 4.

ency a whole hearted love of letters and of humanists.(1)

Brignonnet brought this reforming zeal to his new bishopric. Reinspired for the task by his last visit to Rome where the evils of the papal court impressed upon him again the need for this work, he returned to the effort to correct the abuses within his new diocese. Upon investigation of the diocese of Meaux, he discovered that in the entire diocese he had but fourteen priests whom he considered fitted for their duties.(2) He found monks filling the pulpits in place of the priests, and in their preaching they usually related some story from the Golden Legend and begged for contributions.(3) Brignonnet planned to change all this. To accomplish this change he needed assistance and naturally he turned to the man who had helped him in his work at the Abbey. Therefore he invited Lefèvre to come out to Meaux and to work with him there. In 1521, some time before October, Lefèvre accepted Brignonnet's offer. He forsook Paris to take up his abode at Meaux.(4) Either before his arrival or shortly after, there was gathered at Meaux that group of scholars and reformers known as the "Group of Meaux".(5)

In order to appreciate the character of the work done by them and to show Lefèvre's influence upon the work, it is worth while to describe briefly each person in the group.

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(1) Renaudet, Prereforme et Humanisme, p. 453.

(2)

(3) Farmer, Essays etc., p. 2.

(4) Jourdan, Movement towards Cath. Reform, p. 258.

(5) Barnaud, Jacques Lefèvre, p. 58.

Gerard Roussel, Michel d'Arande, Martial Mazurier, Pierre Caroli, Guillaume Farel, François Vatable, Jacques Pauvin and Marguerite d'Angoulême comprised the group. Because of their importance, Roussel, Marguerite d'Angoulême and Guillaume Farel will receive a more detailed treatment. One authority adds Josse Clichtove but there seems to be no evidence that he was with Lefèvre at Meaux.(1)

Gerard Roussel

Gerard Roussel represented the movement inaugurated by Lefèvre in all its strength and its weakness. More than any other he was the embodiment of Lefèvre's principles and attitudes. He was born in Vaquerie near Amiens about the year 1480.(2) Like Lefèvre, he was a Picard. He attended the College of the Cardinal Lemoine where he became the student and close friend of Lefèvre.(3) His education continued until he received his doctorate in theology.(4) He followed in the footsteps of his master in four ways. First he joined him in the publishing of philosophical works, for as early as 1502 he collaborated in the publication of a book on Mathematics;(5) later he published two books of Boethius to which he added a commentary on the mystical application of numbers. He followed these mathematical works by two editions of Aristotle's Morals.(6)

(1) Nouvelle Biographie, article, Roussel, and Briçonnet.

(2) Revue de l'Agenais, Gerard Roussel, p. 340.

(3) Nouvelle Biographie, article, Roussel.

(4) Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. I, p. 79, note 1.

(5) Renaudet, Préréforme et Humanisme, p. 416.

(6) Revue de l'Agenais, vol. 43, Gerard Roussel, p. 340-1.

These labors earned for him some recognition in learned circles, for Erasmus, in a letter to Lefèvre, desired to be remembered to him.(1) Roussel also, for a time, followed Lefèvre in the teaching profession, lecturing in the College of Cardinal Lemoine.(2) He did not remain in that long, however, for he was named cure of Busancy in the diocese of Rheims.(3) It was from his work here that Briçonnet called him to Meaux in 1521.(4) The third way in which Roussel followed Lefèvre was his interest in the mystics.(5) He aided his teacher in the publishing of their writings and shared with him the mystical view of religion.(6) Finally he followed him to Meaux where he was joined, for a time, by his two brothers, Michel and Arnaud Roussel, and they all worked with Lefèvre in forwarding the program of the group.(7) While at Meaux, Roussel was given important positions. Briçonnet made him successively cure of Saint-Saintin and canon treasurer of the cathedral at Meaux.(8) Because of these offices he had permission to preach throughout the diocese.(9) Roussel was as like Lefèvre in character as he was in conduct. He was of blameless life, gentle and peace-loving.

(1) Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. II, p. 16, note 2.

(2) Ibid., vol. I, p. 79, note 1.

(3) Ibid., vol. I, p. 79, note 1.

(4) Ibid.

(5) Bulletin de la Soc. d'histoire du Protest. franc., vol. IV, Article Quietiste Mysticisme, by C. Schmidt.

(6) Ibid.

(7) Biographie Nouvelle, Art. Roussel.

(8) Revue de l'Agénais, op. cit., p. 341.

(9) Biographie Nouvelle, Art. Roussel.

Also he was of the same mind on the important subject of the unity of the Church. This was the deciding factor when at Strassbourg he had to make a choice.(1)

Michel d'Arande

Another prominent member of this group, Michel d'Arande, was the counter-part of Roussel. "A native of the environs of Tournay"(2) he came to Paris and entered the circle of Lefèvre's friends.(3) Beyond this, little is known of his early life. When Lefèvre resorted to Meaux, d'Arande was among those who came with him. He seems to have been a close friend of Roussel and Farel.(4) He is of double interest in a study of this phase of the French Reformation, for he combined the missionary zeal of the group with high intellectual attainments. The authors of the new biography of Guillaume Farel credit him with showing to Lefèvre and Farel the folly of prayers to the saints.(5) He might be called the "missionary" of the group of Meaux, for it was he that was sent to court as their representative. While there he read the Scriptures to the "little trinity".(6) Marguerite sent him into her duchy of Berry "for the purpose of preaching the gospel there".(7) In character and purpose he was very sim-

(1) Baird, Rise of the Huguenots, vol. I, p. 84.

(2) Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. I, p. 66, note 5.

(3) G. Farel, p. 109.

(4) Ibid.

(5) Ibid.

(6) Ibid.

(7) Herminjard, op. cit., vol. I, p. 205, note 3.

ilar to Lefèvre and Roussel, and like them he did not identify himself with the Protestant movement, though they did not return to the Catholic doctrines but kept the "biblicist" convictions.

Guillaume Farel

There were others of a different tendency in the group. The most prominent of those who were of the revolutionary type of the later Protestants was Lefèvre's close friend and disciple, the young, fiery Guillaume Farel. Farel was born in the village of the Farels near Gap in the year 1489.(1) He came of a noble family and was reared in the atmosphere of pious devotion to the Church.(2) After an imperfect early education at home he persuaded his family to send him to the University of Paris to complete his training. They consented and he entered the University in 1509.(3) Here he became a student of Lefèvre. He was admitted into the innermost circle of Lefèvre's friends where he became also the close friend of Roussel and d'Arande. Teacher and pupil had much in common, and went about their religious observances together.(4) In 1517, Farel secured the degree of Master of Arts and was given, probably through the influence of Lefèvre, a position as a teacher in the College of Cardinal Lemoine.(5)

(1)Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. I, p. 178, note 2.

(2)G. Farel, pp. 96, 98.

(3)Ibid., p. 99.

(4)Herminjard, op. cit., vol. II, p. 43.

(5)G. Farel, p. 103.

For some time he fulfilled the "function of regent".(1) During all this time he shared with Lefèvre his interest in philosophy(2) and religion. Lefèvre, in turn, shared his entire religious life with Farel and was instrumental in turning Farel to the study of the Scriptures.(3) Humanly speaking, Lefèvre was responsible for Farel's conversion, as Farel himself wrote:

"Mais, quand Dieu ce père très clément, prenant en pitié mon erreur, se fit connaître à moi par le moyen d'un pieux frère (Lefèvre), comme le Dieu qui seul veut être aimé et vénéré, le seul qui puisse sauver et rendre heureux, le seul qui efface les péchés par Christ, mediateur et avocat, propitiateur des péchés parce qu'il purifie tout par son sang, mon esprit conduit à Lui par des circonstances diverses, - - - s'attacha à Lui seul. Dès lors toutes choses prirent un nouvel aspect l'Ecriture devint mieux comme les prophètes plus évidents, les apôtres plus clairs, la voix du Christ reconnue comme celle du berger, du maître, du guide."(4)

The study of the religious development of Farel is of great interest, for he carried to its logical conclusion

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(1) Boulaeus, Hist. Universit. Paris., vol. vi, after G. Farel, p. 103.

(2) G. Farel, p. 103.

(3) Farmer, Essays on French History, p. 10.

(4) Farel, A Tous Seigneurs. "But when God, the very merciful Father, taking pity on my errors, made Himself known to me by means of a pious brother (Lefèvre) as the God Who desires only to be loved and revered, the only One Who is able to save and to render happy, the only One Who blots out sins through Christ, the mediator and advocate, the propitiator for sins because he purifies all by His blood, my spirit was led to him by different circumstances and attached itself to Him alone. From that time all things took on a new aspect, the Scriptures became better known as the prophets were more evident, the apostles more clear, the voice of Christ I recognised as that of a shepherd, the Master, the Guide." See also Herminjard, op. cit., vol. II, p. 43, notes.

that tendency, as expressed by Lefèvre, of the substitution of the authority of the Scriptures for the authority of the Church. At the time of his call to Meaux, whither Farel went in 1521, Lefèvre was the leader and Farel was his disciple. For some time their relation remained so, but in 1523 Farel left Meaux. He was of too bold a temper to draw back from the path to which the principle of Scriptural authority pointed, so he soon left and each took his own way. Little is known of his work there, and he did not long remain with them but left some time before the group was broken up.(1) But while there, he probably entered into the work of the group with his customary fire and ability.

Jacques Pauvin

Jacques Pauvin and Farel were kindred spirits. Another Picard, Pauvin had profited by the teaching of Lefèvre at the College of Cardinal Lemoine. A "jeune homme, mais lettré et de grande sincérité"(2) he had been invited to Meaux by Briçonnet and entered into the spirit and work of the group. He has the distinction of being its only martyr. The fact that ^{he} first made a retraction of his errors takes little credit from his later firm stand for the truth.(3)

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- (1) Baird, Rise of the Huguenots, vol. I, p. 83.
(2) Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. I, p. 291, note 1.
(3) Doumergue, Vie de Calvin, Vol. I, p. 107.

Vatable and Mazurier

Just as there were some in the group who carried the principles of Lefèvre to their conclusions and went to the Protestant side, so there were others who reacted against them and returned to the Catholic party. Two of those who returned to the Catholic Church were Francois Vatable and Martial Mazurier. Neither of them was a former student of Lefèvre. Vatable, later famous as a Hebrew scholar and lecturer and as one of the founders of the College of France,(1) was another Picard. He had not specialised with Lefèvre in philosophy but had turned to the study of Greek and Hebrew.(2) He was of those who followed the Picard philosopher and from his contacts with Lefèvre he drew such an interest in the work of reform that he also was found at Meaux, one of the more prominent workers.(3) Mazurier was the outstanding preacher of the group. A native of Limoges,(4) he had completed his education in Paris, becoming a doctor of theology in 1510.(5) He was a devoted friend of the new learning.(6) Shortly after his acquisition of the doctor's degree, he was appointed Principal of the College of Saint Michel.(7) Though he had not studied under Lefèvre he was counted one of the "Fabrists";

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(1) Jourdan, Movement etc., p. 252. Also Renaudet, op. cit., p. 613.

(2) Renaudet, Préréforme et Humanisme, p. 613.

(3) Baird, Rise of the Huguenots, vol. I, 73 ff. Also Jourdan, op. cit., p. 269.

(4) Herminjard, op. cit., vol. I, p. 16, note 6.

(5) Renaudet, op. cit., p. 594.

(6) See Lefèvre's letter to Reuchlin. Herminjard, op. cit., p. 15 ff.

(7) Renaudet, op. cit., p. 594; Baird, op. cit., p. 76.

for that reason he was summoned by the Bishop of Meaux from his college to aid in the reforming work.(1) The bishop appointed him curate of the church of St. Martin.(2)

Pierre Caroli

There remains one man of the group who did not fall into any of the above three categories. Pierre Caroli was not a follower of Lefèvre in the sense in which Roussel and d'Arande were, nor was he an extremist like Farel, nor yet a reactionary like Vatable and Mazurier. He was more of a weather-vane than any of them, for several times he changed sides. He went to whichever side offered him the most.(3) Though a student of Lefèvre, he was not of the intellectual caliber of Vatable or Farel.(4) He did have considerable ability as a preacher and debater, being one of the better preachers of the group.

Marguerite d'Angoulême

Marguerite d'Angoulême, Princess of the realm and sister of the King of France, completed the group. Strictly speaking, she did not belong to them, for her contact with them in their work was limited to a few days. But she was their "friend at court" and exerted her great influence upon her brother for their encouragement and protection. And though absent from them in body,

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(1) Baird, Rise of the Huguenots, vol. I, p. 76.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Walker, John Calvin, p. 196.

(4) He was a doctor of theology and thus a member of the Sorbonne. Doumergue, Vie de Calvin, p. 109.

she was always present in spirit. So great was her regard for them that in later life she gave an asylum to several of them. For these reasons she is included in the discussion of the group.(1)

Marguerite was born April 11, 1492, in Angoulême. Because her father, Count of Angoulême, was third in line of succession, she and her younger brother, Francis, were educated very carefully. An apt scholar, she became well versed in both modern and ancient languages. From her studies she became and always remained a friend of learning and of scholars.

"Les savants lui étoient chers, les malheureux lui étoient sacrés, tous les humains étoient ses frères, tous les Française étoient sa famille. Elle ne divisoit point la société en orthodoxes et en hérétiques, mais en oppresseurs et en opprimés, quelle que fût la foi des uns et des autres; elle tendoit la main aux derniers, elle reprimoit les premiers sans leur nuire et sans les haïr. Il y a bien loin de ces grâces, de ces douces vertus d'une princesse aimable, au zèle du syndic Béda qui quettoit les hérétiques et du conseiller Verjus qui les bruloit."(2)

Through her contacts with the leading literary men

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(1) Cummings, Thesis, The Group of Meaux.

(2)"The learned were dear to her, the unfortunate were for her sacred, all human beings were her brethren, all Frenchmen were her family. She did not divide society into orthodox and heretics, but into oppressors and oppressed, whatever was the faith of both; she held out her hand to the latter, she restrained the former without injuring them or hating them. These graces, these gentle virtues of a lovable princess were indeed far removed from the zeal of the Syndic Béda, who lay in wait for heretics, and from that of the Councillor Verjus, who burned them." Gaillard, François Premier, tome III, p. 545.

of her day, she developed her own literary ability. Of her studies it was philosophy and religion that attracted her most. These two, after the fashion of the day, she kept together and fed the one from the other. Her religion was a compound of evangelical truth and Platonic mysticism which is not always easy to understand. In her lengthy correspondence with Briçonnet, her mystical side is shown and in her "Mirror of a Sinful Soul" her appreciation of the evangelical doctrines.(1)

She was so close to her brother, Francis I, and to her mother, Louise de Savoie, that the three of them were known as the "little Trinity". Francis often referred matters of state to his sister and mother and was guided by their advice. Much of the credit that went to Francis as a sponsor of humanism belonged rather to his sister to whom he committed such affairs. Their mutual love and trust was the salvation of more than one friend of Marguerite in the days of persecution.

At what time Briçonnet and Marguerite became acquainted is not known. Probably they knew each other at court, where certainly Briçonnet could not miss the Princess and Marguerite must have known the bishop who had the favor of her brother. Their acquaintance was such that on June 20, 1521, Marguerite wrote to him for counsel and requested his prayers for herself and her brother.(2) One of the

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(1)Cummings, Thesis, Contribution of Marguerite, chapter VI.

(2)Herminjard, Correspondance etc., p. 67.

results of this correspondence was that in October of that same year, Marguerite, accompanied by her mother and their court, were the guests of the bishop at Meaux for eight days.(1) What they saw there so interested the Princess that she continued to be the friend and advocate of this movement at court for the rest of her life.

This was the group with which Lefèvre worked after his arrival at Meaux. This was an assembly fit to command the respect even of their opponents. Well educated, awake to existing conditions and earnestly desirous of reform, they set themselves to the task of correcting the abuses as they found them in the diocese of Meaux. Well might Rémond, who found it hard to say anything good of these men, write of them

"tous compagnons d'école qui avaient regente à Paris, hommes éloquentes, et bien versés aux bonnes lettres et aux langues. Des mains de ces gens a été pétri le levain de l'hérésie en France".(2)

A more earnest, capable and purposeful group of men would have been hard to find in France.

Lefèvre naturally had great influence with these men.

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(1)Famrer, Essays etc., p. 23.

(2)"they were all companions of the school who had taught at Paris, eloquent men, and well versed in letters and languages. From the hands of these men has been scattered the leaven of heresy in France." Florimond Rémond, l'histoire de l'hérésie, p. 845.

"On reconnaît l'influence de Lefèvre dans plusieurs actes de l'évêque." (1)

It is not too much to say that not with the bishop, but through the bishop, Lefèvre outlined the program of the group. The group, as has been shown, were either former students of Lefèvre, as were Roussel, d'Arande, Caroli, Farel and Pauvin; or were closely connected with him in his work at Paris, as Briçonnet, Mazurier and Vatable. He was their natural leader and it was no more than right that he should assume leadership at Meaux. A study of the program and work of the reform there shows clearly his guiding hand.

B. The Program

The program of the reformers at Meaux, which was at first twofold, soon became threefold. It was primarily an attempt to restore the Church as a minister to the religious needs of the people. To do this it was necessary to correct two abuses in church conduct. First, by some means, to persuade the clergy to remain at the parishes and to perform their duties. This the bishop attempted to accomplish by decrees, ordering them to stay at their places and to attend to their work. Here Briçonnet met his first opposition, for many of the priests would not return to their parishes and resorted to lawsuits to

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(1) "One recognises the influence of Lefèvre in many of the actions of the bishop." Graf, Essai etc., p. 95.

save themselves from it. This involved Briçonnet in many litigations. He won this fight finally; and wherever the priest could not fill his own pulpit the bishop insisted that some responsible and capable preacher be appointed to the place.(1)

Briçonnet went further than merely requiring his priests to remain in their places. He definitely set himself to replace the poor preaching in his diocese by good preaching. To do this he had to oppose the Franciscan friars who had been occupying the pulpits. The bishop forbade them this privilege in parts of his diocese and thus cut them off from a considerable source of their revenue. This action resulted in another lawsuit, from which the bishop again emerged the victor. But this won for him the lasting enmity of the Franciscans.(2)

The outcome of these double reforms was to change completely the worship of the church in the diocese. The two above mentioned measures had been carried out in part when Lefèvre arrived. The next steps clearly show his influence. Through the bishop, he substituted the Gospel for the miraculous tales in the mouths of the preachers.(3) And to make their reform permanent, they based it on instruction of the people.

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(1) Jourdan, *Movement towards Cath. Reform*, p. 253 ff.

(2) *Bull. de la Soc. d'hist. du Protest. franc.*, vol. XLIV, p. 9 ff, gives a complete discussion of this lawsuit.

(3) Baird, *Rise of the Huguenots*, vol. I, p. 75.

C. The Work

With Lefèvre in Meaux, assisted by his students and friends and supported by the bishop, the work proceeded rapidly. It was pushed forward in two directions, among the common people and at court. Because the attempt to win the court was carried on largely by correspondence, there are more records of the progress of this phase of the work than of the other. But it was the work among the common people that really brought forth fruit, as far as the Reformation was concerned.

At Court

As has been mentioned, in October, 1521, Marguerite and Louise, with their attendants, spent eight days at Meaux. Some time before this Marguerite, under considerable mental strain, had written to Briçonnet and had asked his advice and prayers for herself and her husband. She had added

"et vous priant que, si congnoissez que le temps feust propre, que maistre Michel peust faire ung voyage, ce me serait consolacion".(1)

Briçonnet was more than willing to grant her request, and d'Arande went to her to become her almoner for some years. He was more than this however. He was the missionary at court, advantageously situated to win Marguerite and, through her, Louise and Francis, to the support of

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(1)"and they pray you that, if you think that the time is right, that Master Michel be permitted to make a journey, this will be a consolation to me." Herminjard, op. cit., p.67.

the program of reform. And it seemed for a time that success would attend his efforts, for daily he read portions of the New Testament to the royal trio.(1) On their visit to Meaux, from which they went directly to Francis' side, Marguerite and Louise had ample opportunity to hear the plans and see the work of the group. Obviously they were much impressed with it all, for they promised their support to these reforms. Later in the same year Marguerite wrote to assure Briçonnet that

"le Roy et Madame ont bien deslibéré de donner à cognoistre que la vérité de Dieu n'est point heresie - - and that "vos piteux désirs de la reformation de l'Eglise ou plus que jamais le Roy et Madame sont affectionnés."(2)

This was not all. Marguerite further reported to him that Louise was reading the Scriptures daily.(3) Louise herself left a very interesting memoir in her Journal about this time.

"L'an 1522, en decembre, mon fils et moi, par la grâce du Saint-Esprit, commencasmes à cognoistre les hypocrites, blancs, noirs, gris, enfumés et de toutes couleurs, desquels Dieu par sa clemence et bonté infinie, nous veuille preserver et déffendre; car si Jésus-Christ n'est menteur, il N'est point de plus dangereuse génération en toute nature humaine."(4)

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(1) Williams, Pearl of Princesses, p. 135.

(2) "the King and Madame have resolved to let it be known that the truth of God is not heresy - - and that your pious desire for the reformation of the Church is more than ever favored by the King and Madame." Herminjard, op. cit., vol. I, p. 78.

(3) Williams, op. cit., p. 135.

(4) "The year 1522, in December, my son and I, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, began to perceive the hypocrites, black white, grey, brown and of all colors, from whom may God, of

Nor was Francis uninterested. The translation of the Gospels and the Epistles of Paul was printed at his express command.(1) Indeed so favorable was he that Lefèvre interpreted his attitude to mean that,

"telle est l'intention du debonnaire roy tant de cueur que de nom très-chrestien, en la main duquel Dieu a mys si noble et excellent royaume, que la parolle de Dieu soit purement presche par tout son royaume, à la gloire du père de miséricorde et de Jésuschrist son fils."(2)

But neither Louise nor Francis was of the type to appreciate this movement; and when it seemed to be to their disadvantage to support the reform against the Sorbonne, they withdrew it.(3)

The king, his sister and mother were not the only ones at court to be interested, however. Many of the nobles were attracted to these teachings, and, perhaps because of the illustrious name of Lefèvre, many humanists also. In fact it became the "popular" thing at court, so that, instead of the usual popular songs, verses from Clement Marot's version of the Psalms were sung.(4)

This was to a great extent, merely the court following the

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"His infinite mercy and goodness, defend and protect us; for unless Jesus Christ lies, there is no more dangerous race in humanity." *Journal de Louise de Savoie*, p. 23.

(1) Herminjard, *Correspondance etc.*, vol. I, p. 85, note 2.

(2) "such is the intention of the debonair in heart as in name truly very Christian, in whose hand God has placed so noble and excellent a kingdom, that the word of God is to be purely preached throughout his realm, to the glory of the Father of mercy and of his Son, Jesus Christ." *Ibid.*, p. 168.

(3) This will be covered in the succeeding chapter.

(4) Marguerite of Navare, *Heptameron*, Intro., p. xliii.

king and when the king changed the court changed with him. There was one noble who was an exception, Louis de Berquin. He had been attracted to the teachings of Lefèvre and continued to hold them, inspite of the change at the court. He will be discussed later.

Among the Common People

The results are not so easily traced among the common people. The only records that exist are in the letters of the group which refer to this work.(1) Jourdan has pointed out that these letters do not agree together in their estimate of the success of the reform. It is evident that the main plan was put into effect. Roussel, Vatable, Caroli and Mazurier were actively working on the field, preaching and teaching; and were carrying out the restoration of worship to the common people along the lines of Lefèvre's ideas.(2) As to the results of this work, there are two points of view. Lefèvre, July 6, 1524, in a letter to Farel, who had left Meaux some time before, related that the New Testament translated into French had been received with impressive eagerness by the common people, to whom it was read every Sunday and holy days, throughout the diocese.(3) Lefèvre rejoiced also in the favor of the king who had kept their way free from the obstacles which some had wished to put in the way of the

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(1) Herminjard, op. cit., vol. I, letters of Lefèvre, Roussel and Pauvin to Farel. See Jourdan, op. cit., p. 275.

(2) Ibid., Pauvin to Farel, vol. I, p. 291.

(3) Ibid., Lefèvre to Farel, p. 221.

spread of the Word.(1) He probably referred to the attempt of the Sorbonne to have Parlements prohibit the sale of the vernacular version.(2) This optimistic outlook was shared by his younger compatriot, Jacques Pauvin, also expressed in a letter to Farel, in which he recounted the success of Roussel and the courage of Caroli.(3)

On the other side there was Gerard Roussel, who, when he wrote to Farel, expressed the opinion that though the Word of God was preached in all its purity, the necessary strength to withstand the attacks of the Sorbonne was lacking.(4) Of this fact he himself is an example. Jourdan thinks that the picture painted by Roussel more truly portrays the opinion of the group and the actual state of affairs.(5) But in judging these letters it must be remembered that shortly before several things had combined to bring about depression in the sensitive soul of Roussel. The recent loss of Mazurier and Caroli and Pauvin himself through forced retraction, coupled with the action of Clichtove when he published his treatises against Luther, created in the mind of Roussel a feeling of helplessness. Roussel's letter gives a disproportionately dark picture of conditions. It is the expression of the helplessness

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(1) Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. I, p. 220.

(2) Ibid., p. 220, note 8.

(3) Ibid., pp. 291, 292.

(4) Ibid., p. 235 ff.

(5) Jourdan, Movement towards Catholic Reform, p. 275 ff.

and futility felt by Roussel in the fight against what he considered to be invincible odds.

The work at Meaux showed many signs of success. The people were interested and became eager disciples of this new teaching. Oecolampadius, some time previous to Lefèvre's letter to Farel, had written to the Bishop and had suggested that to the regular preaching the teaching of the Scriptures be added. This suggestion Briçonnet immediately put into effect by commissioning Gerard Roussel to read, at Meaux, the Epistles of St. Paul and to explain them in French to a gathering of both sexes.(1) Moreover he chose the most evangelical preachers to perform similar duties in the more important churches in the diocese.(2) As an aid to this teaching and to supply the people with the Scriptures in their own tongue, Lefèvre did not join extensively in the active work of preaching but set himself to the task of translating the Bible into French.(3) He gave most of the years 1522 and 1523 to the work of translating the New Testament, which was published at Meaux. These translations were either sold or, if the people were unable to buy, were given to the common people. The generosity of Briçonnet made possible this distribution of the portions of the New Testament to those who

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(1) Herminjard, op. cit., vol. I, p. 220 ff.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Baird, Rise of the Huguenots, vol. I, p. 77 ff.



La sainte Bible



en francois / translatee selon

la pure & entiere traduction de Sainct Hierome /
de rechief conferee & entierement reuistee se-
lon les plus anciens & plus correctz ex-
emplaires. Du sus Vng chascun
Chapitre est mis brief
argument.



Avec ce sont deuy tables / dont lune est pour les di-
uersitez daucunes manieres de parlerz figuratifz & de
diuers motz quant a leur propre signification: L'autre
table est poüe trouuer les Epistres & Euangiles de
toute l'annee / avec brief recueil des ans du monde.



Aultre plus L'interpretation daucuns noms
Hebraiques / Chaldeens / Grecz / & Latins.

En Anuers / pour Antoine de la Haye /
demourant au Pay de nostre Dame.
An. M. D. & pli.

Lum. Gratia & Priuile-
gio Imperiali.



were unable to buy. These portions were eagerly accepted and the success of this work among the common people so impressed Lefèvre that he wrote:

"Vix crederes, posteaquam libri gallici Novi Organi emissi sunt, quanto Deus ardore simplicium mentes, aliquot in locis, moveat ad amplexandum verbum suum. Sed juste conquereris, non satis late invulgatos."(1)

D. The Translation of the Scriptures

Though the translation of the Old Testament was not completed while Lefèvre was at work in Meaux, yet it was partly accomplished while he was there,(2) and the New Testament was completely translated and published there. For this reason the work of translation may rightly be counted as a part of Lefèvre's work. For the purposes of this study it will be included in this discussion of his contribution through the group of Meaux.

Lefèvre's translation of the New Testament appeared first. It was published in two parts; the first contained the four Gospels and was published June 6, 1523,(3) the second was completed November 5, of the same year. The second part was issued in three portions; first the Epistles of Paul and the Catholic Epistles, printed October 17, second the books of the Acts of the Apostles, October

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(1)"You can hardly imagine with what ardor God is moving the minds of the simple, in some places, to embrace His word since the books of the New Testament have been published in French, though you will justly lament that they have not been scattered more widely among the people." Herminjard, op. cit., vol. I, p. 220.

(2)He published the translation of the Psalms at Meaux.

(3)Herminjard, op. cit., p. 133 ff.

31, and the last, the Apocalypse of John, November 5. They were combined and published as a complete New Testament the next day, November 6, 1523.(1) All of the printing was done at the house of Simon de Colines.(2) This was followed, February 17, 1525, by a translation of the Psalms to which Lefèvre added an "Argumens" at the end. Simon de Colines printed this also.(3) Enforced flight from Meaux to Strassbourg put a stop to the work of translation for a while, but the sight, as described by Roussel in a letter to Briçonnet,(4) of the daily instruction of the people in the Scriptures that was being carried on at Strassbourg and of the work of some men there who were making a translation from the original languages gave Lefèvre the necessary impetus so that when he returned to France Lefèvre completed his translation of the Old Testament, which was published in four volumes.

"Le premier Volume de l'ancien Testament contenant les cinq premiers Livres de Moyse, translatez en Francois selon la pure et entiere Version de S. Hierosme"(5)

was printed at Antwerp by Martin l'Empereur September 28, 1528.(6) The second volume contained
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- (1) Prosper Marchand, Dictionnaire Historique, art. Lefèvre.
- (2) Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. I, p. 159, note 1.
- (3) Marchand, op. cit., p. 253.
- (4) Herminjard, op. cit., p. 405 ff.
- (5) "The first volume of the Old Testament containing the first five books of Moses, translated into French according to the pure and complete version of St. Jerome."
- (6) Marchand, op. cit., p. 253.

the historical books from Joshua to Job; the third included his earlier translation of the Psalms with Job and the rest of the Hagiographa; the fourth completed the Old Testament with the Prophets and the books of the Maccabees.(1) The Old and New Testaments were combined and printed at Antwerp, December 10, 1530. Because of the recent action of Parlement, Lefèvre was unable to have his work printed in France and for this reason, by the Privilege of the emperor, it was printed at Antwerp at the house of Martin l'Empereur.(2)

This translation was published several years after that of Luther, but it is not fair to Lefèvre to say that Luther's work inspired him to do it, for he had many years before recognised the need for such a translation,(3) and had finally accomplished it. Just what was its value? To give a just answer to that question it is necessary to consider Lefèvre's equipment for the work, and to endeavor to ascertain the texts he used, and finally, to study the style of the work itself in the light of his purpose.

Equipment and Texts

Lefèvre's equipment for this task was not of the best. He was not more than incidentally acquainted with Hebrew,(4) though in the translating of the Psalms he had

(1) Marchand, Dictionnaire Historique, art. Lefèvre, p. 253.

(2) Jourdan, Movement etc., p. 298.

(3) Pauli Epistolae, I Cor. XIV, 101.

(4) See chapter V, p. 107.

the assistance of Vatable.(1) This lack of knowledge of Hebrew meant that he had to depend on the Vulgate entirely for his translation of the Old Testament. For his work in the New Testament he was more adequately equipped by his considerable knowledge of Greek. Yet here again was a weakness, for he was not the master of Greek style that Erasmus and Bude were. However his knowledge of Greek freed him from a slavish following of the Vulgate and, thanks to Erasmus' Greek New Testament, he was able to check the Vulgate with a good Greek text.(2)

Just what texts Lefèvre used in his work is not known for sure.(3) For the New Testament, he used, in all probability, the Greek of Erasmus' New Testament and for the Old Testament, as he himself stated, he followed the Vulgate of St. Jerome.

"Les auteurs de la Bible Françoise d'Anvers(Lefèvre's) n'ont pas suivy si exactement l'ancienne Edition Latin, qu'ils n'ayent consultez quelquefois les Originaux, qui leur ont servy pour juger des meilleures lecons des Exemplaires Latins, ou pour limiter le sens de l'ancien Interprete. Par exemple, au chap. 1 de l'Epistre du Romains, v. 4, ils ont traduit avec Erasme, 'qui est déclaré Fils de Dieu'; au lieu qu'il y a dans la Vulgate 'qui praedestinat^{us} est Filius Dei'."(4)

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(1)Vatable was a Hebrew scholar of distinction.

(2)See Lefèvre's opinion of Erasmus in the Praefatio of his commentary on the gospels.

(3)Quievreux, La Traduction du Nouveau Testament de Lefèvre d'Etapes, p. 118.

(4)Simon, Histoire Critique des Versions du N.T., p. 326.

"The authors of the French Bible of Antwerp have not followed very exactly the old Latin edition, as they have sometimes consulted the originals, which have helped them to judge some better readings than the Latin copies, or to limit the

La sainte Euangile

de Jhesuchrist: selon saint Matthieu.

La genealogie de nostre Seigneur Jhesu Christ: avec le mariage de la vierge Marie.



Chapitre premier.

Abraham iusques a David / sont quatorze generations. Depuis David iusques a la transmigration de Babilone / sont quatorze generations. Et de puis la transmigration de Babilone iusques a Christ / sont quatorze generations. Et la generation de Jhesu Christ estoit telle: Et come Marie mere de Jhesu fut baillee pour espouse a Joseph: deuant quilz eussent / elle fut trouuee auoir conceu du saint esperit en son ventre. Mais Joseph son espoux qui estoit iuste / et ne la voullant diffamer / la voulut secretement laisser: mais ce pensant / voicy l'ange du Seigneur qui apparut a luy en son dormir / disant: Joseph filz de David / ne crains point recevoir Marie ton espouse: car ce qui est conceu en elle / est du saint esperit: elle enfantera un filz / et tu appellera son nom Jhesus / car il sauvera son peuple de leurs pechez. Et tout ce a este fait / afin qu'il fut accompli ce qui auoit este dict du Seigneur par le prophete / disant: Voicy une vierge conceuera en son ventre / et enfantera un filz: et son nom sera appelle Emmanuel / qui est interprete / Dieu avec nous. Joseph donc esueille de son dormir / feist ainsi que l'ange du Seigneur luy auoit commande / et print avec soy son espouse. Et ne lauoir pas congneue quant elle enfanta son premier naiz: et appella son nom Jhesus. Et comment les sages vindrent adorer / et comment les enfans furent occis.

saint esperit qui enlumine la conscience / pour accomplir la loy. nativite Luc. 1. 2. 26.

laisser pour reuerberer / come appert Is. 5. 2. 19. 26

Luc. 2. 6. D. Esai. 7. 14. 4 Christ est appelle Emmanuel / de ce qui ayt pris chair humaine. Jesei omer qui a dit. Paigne a nous / qui est pauvre / et frere. Hebr. 1. 1. 1. Le filz nest pas dit premier naiz / pour ce que apres que celuy eust le benoyme auquel appartenoit la benediction du premier naiz Luc. 2. 2. 26

Chapitre. ii.

Livre de

la generation de Jhesu Christ / filz de David / filz de Abraham. Abraham engendra Isaac. Isaac engendra Jacob.



Jacob engendra Judas et ses freres. Judas engendra Phares et Zaram de Thamar. Phares engendra Esron: et Esron engendra Aram. Aram engendra Aminadab: et Aminadab engendra Naason. Naason engendra Salomon: et Salomon engendra Booz de Raab. Booz engendra Obed de Ruth: et Obed engendra Jesse. Jesse engendra le roy David: et le roy David engendra Salomon de celle qui fut femme a David. Salomon engendra Roboam: et Roboam engendra Abia. Abia engendra Asa: et Asa engendra Josaphat. Josaphat engendra Joram: et Joram engendra Osi. Osi engendra Joatham: et Joatham engendra Achaz. Achaz engendra Ezechias: et Ezechias engendra Manasses. Manasses engendra Amos: et Amos engendra Josias. Josias engendra Jechonias et ses freres / en la transmigration de Babilone. Et apres la transmigration de Babilone: Jechonias engendra Salathiel. Salathiel engendra Zorobabel: et Zorobabel engendra Abiud. Abiud engendra Eliacin: Eliacin engendra Afors: Afors engendra Sadoc: et Sadoc engendra Acim. Acim engendra Eliud: et Eliud engendra Eleazar. Eleazar engendra Matthieu: et Matthieu engendra Jacob. Et Jacob engendra Joseph



Quant Jhesus fut naiz en Bethleem cite de Juda / au temps du roy Herode: Voicy les sages vindrent de Orient en Hierusalem / disant: Qui est celui qui est naiz roy des Juiz: car nous auons veu son estoile en Orient: et le sommes veu adorer. Le roy Herode oyant ce / fut trouble / et toute la cite de Hierusalem avec luy. Et assemble tous les Princes des Prestres / et les Scribes du peuple: et senquerroit de luy ou Christ deuoit naistre. Et iceulx luy dirent: En Bethleem cite de Juda. Car il est ainsi escript par le prophete: Et toy Bethleem terre de Juda tu nes point la plus petite entre les Princes

Ceste Euangile le mostre assez que ces sages icy nestoient ne roys ne Princes: mais comme dit Strabo / qui estoit de leur temps / estoient gens sages / qui enseignoient au peuple / les diuinites / ainsi que Moyses au peuple d'Israel / qui estoient les Prestres des Perseens. J. 1. 9. Fran. 7. 9. Mich. 5. 2. 1. 2. Gouuerner est prestre qui domine par doctrine

Luc. 1. 6. 2. Comment Christ est dit filz de David. ac. Voicy en Genese. 29. a. Genese. 21. a. Paratip. 2. 4. Ruth. 4. d. Roip. 12. f. Roip. 11. g. Jcy selon les Hebreux est entremis: Joachim et Joachum engendra Paratip. 1. d. Christ signifie omer / comme appert. Roip. 1. Jhesu Christ dote le gaigne de la divine promesse

Lefèvre did not always follow Erasmus, but rather used Erasmus' text as a check on the Vulgate.(1)

Purpose and Style

Lefèvre gave his purpose in making this translation in his "Epistre a tous Chretiens et Chretiennes" printed as his preface to the translation of the Gospels June 8, 1523.(2) Taking his authority from the apostle Paul that "now is the acceptable time", Lefèvre went on to say:

"Et affin que ung chascun qui a cognoissance de la langue gallicane et non point du latin, soit plus dispose a recepvoir ceste presente grace, laquelle Dieu, par sa seule bonte, pitie et clemence, nous presente en ce temps par le doulx et amoureux regard de Jesuchrist, nostre seul sauveur, - vous sont ordonnees en langue vulgaire, par la grace d'icelluy, les evangiles, selon le latin qui se lit communement par tout, sans riens y adjouster ou diminuer, affin que les simples membres du corps de Jesuchrist, ayans ce en leur langue, puissent estre aussi certains de la verite evangelique comme ceulx qui l'ont en latin."(3)

This purpose must be remembered when it comes to the question of the style. There is no doubt that Lefèvre's style left much to be desired. The chief reproach

meaning of the old interpreter. For example, in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, verse 4, they have translated with Erasmus, 'who is declared the Son of God'; instead of the way it is in the Vulgate 'who is foreordained the Son of God.'

(1) See Acts XIII, 2.

(2) Given in full in Herminjard, op. cit., p. 133 ff.

(3) Ibid., pp. 133-4. "And finally that each one who has a knowledge of the French language and not of the Latin, will be the more disposed to receive this proffered grace, which God alone by his bounty, pity and mercy, offers us at this time out of His kind and loving regard for Jesus Christ, our only Savior, - through his grace there has been ordained for you in the common language, the Gospels according to the Latin which is commonly read by all, without anything added or taken away, finally that the simple members of the body of Jesus having this in their language, also will be

against his translation is its inelegance. This was the result of following

"trop servilement dans sa version l'ordre des mots du latin et du grec."(1)

Here again the purpose is an explanation. He desired to make a translation that neither "adjoute ou diminue" the original so that he followed the order of the Latin too closely perchance, but not to the extent of rendering the meaning obscure.(2) Lefèvre was writing primarily for the common people and he always kept this in mind. He strove to be simple for those who would read. He sacrificed style in order to be plain. Indeed he was almost contemptuous of elegant style and remarked, a propos of Erasmus' Paraphrases, that it was dangerous to try to be more "elegant" than the Holy Spirit.(3) With this view point he naturally was at pains to be simple. Another point that might be expressed in extenuation of his style was the atmosphere which surrounded him in the days when he translated the Old Testament. Luther, in the days when he made his translation, was in perfect security, but Lefèvre, though under the protection of the Queen of Navarre, was none too safe, and liable to arrest at any time.

* * * * *
"able to be as certain of the evangelical truth as those who have it in Latin."

(1)"too servilely in his version the order of the Latin and Greek words." Quievreux, La Traduction etc., p. 53.

(2)Ibid.

(3)Smith, Erasmus, p. 188.

Copie du Priuilege.



Charles par la diuine clemence Empereur des Romains
 tousiours Auguste/Roy de Germanie/ de Castille/ de Le
 on/ de Grenade/ Darragon/ de Nauarre/ de Naples/ de
 Cecille/ de Mailloque/ de Sardaigne/ des Isles Indes/
 terre ferme/ de la mer Oceane/ & cete. Archiduc D'austrice
 Duc de Bourgongne/ de Lothric/ de Brabant/ de Lembourg/ de Lu
 xembourg/ & cete. Conte de Flandres/ Dartois/ de Bourgongne Pa
 latin & de Haynnau/ de Hollande/ de Zeelande/ de Ferrette/ de Hage
 nault/ de Namur/ & cete. Prince de Swaue/ Marquis du saint Em
 pire. Seigneur de Frise/ de Salins & de Halines: & donateur en
 Asie & en Afrique. A tous ceulx qui ces presentes verront / Salut.
 De la part de nostre bien ayme Martin L'empereur Imprimeur resi
 dent en nostre ville Danuers/ nous a este remonstre: Comme en Lan
 trente dernier a la supplication/ & eu sus ce laduis de L'Inquisiteur de
 la foy & des Theologiens de nostre vniuersite de Louvain/ nous luy
 ayons consenty & accorde de pouoir imprimer certaine translation en
 Francois de la sainte Bible / avec deffense que nul autre ne la pour
 roit imprimer en dedens deux ans. Et combien que ledict remonstrât
 en ayt fait imprimer / vendre & distribuer certaine quantite & nombre:
 Neantmoins na encoire a beaucoup pres sceu recouurer les fraiz & des
 pens par luy soustenus dauoir faict dresser ladicte translation & im
 pression qui luy tourne a grand interest / & plus fera nestoit que dere
 chif il faice faire nouvelle impression / & obtiengne de nous nouvel
 les lettres doctroy & deffenses en tel cas pertinentes/ pour le temps de
 trois ans prochainement venantz. Dont attendu ce que dict est/ & que
 ladicte translation a este veue & visitee par lesdictz Inquisiteurs &
 Theologiens de nostre dicte vniuersite de Louvain/ il nous a tres hum
 blement faict supplier & requerir. Scauoir faisons que nous ces cho
 ses considerees/ audict suppliant inclinans a la dicte requeste / auons
 ottroye / consenty & accorde / ottroyons / consentons & accordons de
 grace especial par ces presentes quil puist & pourra imprimer & faire
 imprimer la Bible que dessus lespasse dung an prochainemēt venant
 a compter du jourdhuy datte de cestes. Sans que deuiāt ledict temps
 aucuns Libraires / Imprimeurs ny autres puyssent icelle Bible im
 primer ou faire imprimer. Sy donnons en mandement a noz ainez &
 feaulz les Chief President & gens de noz priue & grand Consault
 Chanselier & gens de nostre priue conseil en Brabant / Marcgraue/
 Escoutette Danuers/ & a tous autres noz Justiciers/ officiers & sub
 iectz qui ce regardera & chascung deulx en droit soy / & sicomme a luy
 appartiendra / le faicent / seuffrent & laissent plainement & paisible
 ment ioyr & vser/ sans luy faire/ mettre ou donner aucun destourbier
 ou empeschement au contraire. Car ainsi nous plaist il. Donne en
 nostre ville de Bruxelles le. xxi. iour de Novembre. An de grace Mil
 Cinq cens trente & trois. De nostre Empire le. xiiij. Et de noz regnes
 des Espaignes/ des deux Siciles & autres le. xiiij.

Under such conditions it was not possible to do the best work.

The Bible of Antwerp

In spite of these handicaps, this Bible of Antwerp was a noteworthy and valuable contribution. The Old Testament is comprised of CCCXCVI (396) folios and the New Testament of CI(101). It is a beautiful volume(1) bound in heavy cardboard covered with leather, gilt edged, and printed in Gothic letters. There are many fine woodcuts throughout the book and there is a fine portrait of the translator as the frontispiece. Preceding the body of the work is a "Copie du Privilege" remarkable for the statement that this translation had been passed by the Inquisitor of the Faith and the theologians of the University of Louvain.(2) A calendar of holidays, an epitome of the Scriptures, a Prologue to the readers, an index of the books of the Old and New Testaments accompanied by explanatory notes, and two tables explaining the names and difficult terms that occur in the Bible all precede the text of the Scriptures.

In the body of the work it is interesting to note that Lefèvre called I & II Samuel I & II Kings and so had I, II, III, IV Kings.(3) He also followed the Vulgate

(1) The four copies examined differed very materially as to state of preservation and quality of paper and binding. The best one of the four, printed in 1541, is described. It is a large octavo volume bound in folio.

(2) Simon takes exception to the truth of this assertion, in Crit. des Versions du O.T., p. 333.

(3) He assigned I & II Kings to Samuel however.

in the inclusion of the Apocrypha to the extent of not separating them from the other books, but included them in the Vulgate order. However he did indicate a difference between them and the canonical works by indenting the titles of the Apocrypha in the index and in a final explanatory note at the end of the index. He accompanied his index with some critical notes on authorship. The book of Job was attributed to Moses and the book of Wisdom to Philo. Esther, Ezekiel, Daniel and the twelve minor prophets were assigned to "les hommes de la grande synagogue".(1) The accompanying photostatic copies of representative pages illustrate the woodcuts and type used and give a specimen of his style.

Throughout the book there are many marginal notes which are brief explanations of the text. Occasionally these notes are explanations of the original languages.(2) In discussing these notes, Simon somewhat unfairly drew the conclusion that the "authors" (as he considered the translator) did not go either to the Greek or Hebrew sources.(3) In this he contradicted himself.(4) Quievreux differed with Simon, and rightly so, when he concluded his discussion of Lefèvre's texts with the statement that

"le texte de Lefèvre concorde toujours avec celui d'Erasme".(5)

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(2) See Psalms VIII & XXII, and John X.

(1) Index of the O.T.

(3) Simon, Crit. des Versions du N.T., p. 328

(4) See Ibid., p. 326.

(5) Quievreux, La Traduction etc., p. 18 ff. "the text of Lefèvre always agrees with that of Erasmus."

Other marginal notes are cross references to different parts of the Scriptures,(1) or explanations of the situation in which the verse falls.(2) In other words, Lefèvre the translator did not completely hide Lefèvre the commentator.(3)

Influence of Lefèvre's Translation

Lefèvre's translation of the Bible was not the first attempt to put the Scriptures into French. As early as the thirteenth century there had been a partial translation but not of the complete Bible.(4) This version had been revised and republished in 1477 or '78 by Julien Macho and Barthelemy Buyer, both doctors of theology and members of the Augustine order.(5) Quievreux suggests that Lefèvre was acquainted with and used this translation, but, if that was the case,(6) it had little or no influence upon his.(7) Another version with which Lefèvre undoubtedly was familiar(8) had been made by a former friend and patron of Lefèvre, Jean de Rely, Bishop of Angers. According to Lefèvre's discussion of it, the Bishop, the confessor of Charles VIII, had, at the king's request, translated and published the Scriptures in 1496.(9) This version was

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(1) See photostat of Matthew I.

(2) See Matthew III et al.

(3) See note on John I, 2.

(4) S. Berger, *La Bible Française au Moyen Age*, p. 111 ff.

(5) *Ibid.*

(6) There seems to be little basis for this idea.

(7) Quievreux, *La Traduction etc.*, pp. 25, 28-29. See also O. Douen, *La Bible Française avant Lefèvre d'Étaples*, *Bull. de la Soc. Franc. Protest.*, vol. XL, p. 541.

(8) Herminjard, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 160.

(9) *Ibid.*

little more than another edition of the "Bible historique" or a very free translation of the historical books of the Bible.(1) Berger, in his work on the French Bible in the Middle Ages, aptly terms Jean de Rély's Bible the "mère des Bibles du Moyen Age".(2)

All students of the Bible in France agree that there is a great similarity between the Bible of Rély and that of Lefèvre.(3) This is only natural. But Lefèvre by no means followed it closely. In fact he did not altogether approve of it for he found in it many "faults, additions and diminutions" which he set out to correct in his own work.(4) Quievreux well expressed the relation between the two when he wrote:

"En publiant sa traduction du Nouveau Testament, Lefèvre d'Étaples n'avait pas l'intention de donner un texte absolument nouveau, traduit directement et entièrement sur le grec. Son but était avant tout de faire une version populaire, qu'on put lire à l'église, aux différents offices, et mettre entre les mains de tous. L'oeuvre correspond bien à l'intention de l'auteur."(5)

Lefèvre took great care to make his translation more

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(1) Berger, La Bible Française au Moyen Age, p. 309.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Quievreux, op. cit., pp. 29-38; Berger, op. cit., pp. 309-320; O. Douen, op. cit., pp. 541 ff.

(4) Herminjard, Correspondance etc., p. 160.

(5) Quievreux, La Traduction etc., p. 53. "In publishing his translation of the New Testament, Lefèvre d'Étaples did not intend to give an absolutely new text, translated directly and entirely from the Greek. Before all his aim was to make a popular version that could be read in the churches, by different offices and placed in the hands of all. The work corresponded well to the purpose of the author."

accurate than any of his predecessors and therefore he held closely to the text. This as has been seen, led to criticism of his style, and

"sa traduction manque parfois d'élégance mais elle est toujours simple et claire, bien différente en cela de celle de ses predecessors, tel que J. Macho et Jean de Rély".(1)

M. Ed. Reuss has demonstrated in great detail how the translation by Lefèvre has formed the basis of all the later French Protestant translations of the Scriptures.(2) His study is largely concerned with the translation of Robert Olivetanus, in which he shows the dependence of Olivetanus on Lefèvre. It is true that Olivetanus often changed Lefèvre's translation, but these corrections were, for the most part, substitutions of more modern words for obsolete or of words better understood in the locality of Olivetanus. Occasionally he corrected Lefèvre but he did not always better the meaning; more often he marred it.(3) Reuss summed up the comparative accuracy of these corrections by saying:

"En tout cas, sa (Olivetanus) traduction ne répond pas mieux au grec que celle de Le Fèvre".(4)

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(1) Quievreux, La Traduction etc., p. 53. "his translation lacks sometimes in elegance but it is always simple and clear, much different in this from that of his predecessors, such as J. Macho and Jean de Rely."

(2) Revue de théologie, Serie 3e tomes III, IV.

(3) Ibid., vol. IV, p. 31.

(4) Ibid., p. 33. "In any case, his translation does not correspond better to the Greek than does that of Lefèvre."

Reuss concluded that

"on voit déjà par ce premier extrait, dans lequel j'ai eu soin de noter les moindres variantes, que le texte d'Olivetan, à part quelques rares suppressions de vieux mots français, est identiquement le même que celui de Lefèvre."(1)

The importance of Lefèvre's influence on Olivetanus is well expressed by Baird.

"Beside from its own merits, the version of Lefèvre d'Étaples formed the basis for the subsequent version of Robert Olivetanus, itself the groundwork of many later translations."(2)

In his translation, Lefèvre gave the basis for all later versions, for Calvin revised the text of Olivetanus, in 1559, the Pastors of Geneva revised Calvin's in 1588, and in different degrees Desmaretz, Osterwald and Martin were influenced by it.(3)

Protestants were not the only ones that used it for the basis of their revisions. S. Berger showed how this translation formed the basis for the really fine version published by the theologians of the University of Louvain and approved by the Sorbonne.(4) This substantiates the assertion by Quievreux that Lefèvre's work formed

"la base de toutes celles que les protestants et les catholiques allaient faire pendant 3 siècles."(5)

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(1)Ed. Reuss, op. cit., p. 21. "one sees already by the first extract, in which I took care to note the least variants, that the text of Olivetanus, apart from some rare suppressions of old words, is identically the same as that of Lefèvre." See also p. 23.

(2)Baird, Rise of the Huguenots, vol. I, p. 78.

(3)Quievreux, La Traduction etc., p. ii.

(4)Berger, La Bible Française etc., pp. 309-320.

(5)Quievreux, op. cit., p. ii; also p. 53.

"the basis of all those that were made by the Protestants and Catholics for the following three centuries." Quiev., op. cit., p. 53.

E. Contribution through the Group of Meaux

It is commonly understood that the work of the Group of Meaux represents the opening phase of the Reformation in France. Though this movement never openly broke with the Catholic Church, yet it was the first practical expression of the religious principles that later inspired the Huguenot movement, and other reformatory activities in the kingdom of France. It has been shown that the work at Meaux, although under the ostensible guidance and protection of Briçonnet, was yet the product of the teachings of Lefèvre, as put into practice by his friends and students. Therefore a discussion of the contribution of Lefèvre to the larger movement through this group resolves itself into an estimate of the influence of the work of the group on the Reformation.

Their influence can be traced in four directions. First there is the abiding result of their four years work with the people in Meaux itself.

"Therefore when the light of the Reformation commenced to arouse all Europe the doctrines found earliest fruition in France at Meaux, already prepared and already themselves earnestly seeking spiritual truths."(1)

So skilfully and thoroughly had this teaching been done at Meaux that

"Meaux was the cradle of the French Reformation. Here was the earliest spiritual awakening of the masses - the first Protestant church - the
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(1)Maury, R.L., The Huguenot Martyrs of Meaux, p. 151.

"first pastor, the first who were burned alive at the stake; it was the first after Paris (by special instruction of Catherine de Medici) to suffer the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, the first to become almost entirely converted; the first to open its gates to King Henry IV., and the foremost in constancy and faithfulness to 'The religion'. Theirs was the first pastor who suffered for his religion, Pierre Le Clerc, burnt alive there in 1546, and theirs was also the last, Jean Broca, a prisoner for 'the religion' in 1775 in the hideous dungeon of the Old Chateau."(1)

The second place in which the influence of Lefèvre through the work of the group can be traced is at the court of Francis. Here he had two illustrious followers, his personal friend and protectress, Marguerite of Navarre, and the king's favorite, Louis de Berquin. Marguerite, won over to the movement by her contacts with Lefèvre, Brignonnet and Michel d'Arande, remained their friend, disciple and protectress in the stormy days that followed, and gave to Lefèvre and Roussel an asylum from their persecutors. Her house was always open to those who were persecuted for their ideas with the result that among others, she entertained for some time, one Jean Calvin at Nerac when he fled from danger at Paris.(2)

Louis de Berquin was a nobleman of Artois who, because of his "uncommon acuteness of mind and his great attainments in letters and science"(3) was highly regarded by his contemporaries and particularly by his sovereign.

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(1)Maury, Huguenot Martyrs etc., p. 150.

(2)Doumergue, Vie de Calvin, vol. I, p. 402.

(3)Baird, Rise of the Huguenots, p. 128.

He combined a blameless life with his mental accomplishments. When the Sorbonne persecuted Lefèvre, de Berquin reacted in favor of Lefèvre and turned to a study of his writings. These led him on until he became an ardent follower of the ideas of the reformation. He adhered to these new ideas in the face of great persecution which, in spite of all the efforts of Marguerite to prevent it, resulted in his public execution by burning April 17, 1529.(1) It might truly be said that Lefèvre's influence gave to the movement its first noble martyr.

The third direction in which his influence might be traced is more indirect than the two preceding ones. It is the influence that he exerted through the lives of the members of the group in their later work of reform. Under this head two names stand out. In Jacques Pauvin the group of Meaux had its martyr.(2) In Guillaume Farel, the group had its revolutionary firebrand. He went out into France preaching the doctrines of the Swiss and German reformers. He was largely responsible for the progress of the work at Basle and Geneva, and also contributed, whenever possible, to the work in France and at Strassbourg. It is impossible to trace all the influence of a teacher, so it can never be known to what extent Lefèvre forwarded the reformation in France. There is much evidence that he more largely affected this movement both in France and in other countries than is generally

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(1) Jourdan, Movement etc., p. 297. (2) Baird, op. cit., p. 91.

acknowledged.

The fourth and most important direction that shows Lefèvre's influence is, of course, his translation of the Bible. While it must be recognised that there were political, economic and social aspects of the Reformation, yet it was primarily a religious movement. The basis of this movement was the substitution of the authority of the Scriptures for the authority of the Church. The Church had its representatives who spoke the language of the people in presenting her claims, and if the Reformation was to win it must have its authority in a form intelligible to the people. For this reason, the Scriptures were translated into German, English and French within a few years. And what Wycliff was to the English Bible Lefèvre was to the French. It has been shown how all the succeeding Protestant translations depended on Lefèvre's and for this alone French Protestantism owes an incalculable debt to Lefèvre in that he gave the movement the medium through which it reached the people.

"Au point de vue des expressions, il est, si on peut ainsi s'exprimer, le père de notre terminologie biblique protestante."(1)

If he had had no other connection with the movement this would have entitled him to a high place in the ranks of those who paved the way for the Reformation in France.
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(1) Quievreux, La traduction etc., p. 54.

"In point of view of expressions, he is, if one might so express it, the father of our protestant Biblical terminology."

As Quievreux has so well expressed it:

"Le Premier, Lefèvre d'Étaples nous a donné une vraie traduction, contenant le texte original en entier et rien que ce texte. A ce titre il a droit à toute notre reconnaissance, et on peut le placer au premier rang parmi les Pères de la Réforme en France."(1)

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(1) Quievreux, op. cit., p. 54.

"Lefèvre d'Étaples was the first to give us a true translation, containing the complete original text and nothing but this text. On this account he is entitled to our complete recognition and deserves to be placed in the first rank among the Fathers of the Reformation in France."

CHAPTER SEVEN

LEFÈVRE AND THE SORBONNE

VII. Lefevre and the Sorbonne.

A. Early Opposition - - - - -	pp. 219 - 221.
B. The "Three Marys" - - - - -	" 221 - 227.
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It has been noted several times in the preceding pages that Lefèvre's work was interrupted by opposition from the Sorbonne. These instances of opposition and Lefèvre's reaction to them are of great importance to a correct understanding of his work and character. Opposition, as always, not only drew out Lefèvre's true character but also opened up larger fields of service. It showed him in his strength and weakness. When it drove him out of Paris, Meaux offered a larger field for his work. And when opposition forced him from Meaux, it resulted in his gaining access to the royal library at Blois and afforded him greater facilities in his work of translating the Old Testament. That finished, opposition again drove him from Paris to Nerac which afforded a more promising field and a haven for his last years. This chapter will be devoted to the description of the different occasions of persecutions, their results in Lefèvre's life and their climax in his retirement to Nerac.

A. Early Opposition

"Entre l'Ecole qui n'abdiquait pas et l'humanisme de plus en plus hardi, le conflit, des 1510, apparaissait inévitable. La paix, toutefois, dura quatre ans encore, jusqu'à la date où la querelle de Reuchlin fut portée devant l'Université."(1)

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(1) Renaudet, Préréforme et Humanisme, p. 591. "Between the School which would not abdicate and the humanism growing more and more hardy, the conflict, from 1510, appeared inevitable. Peace, however, endured four years longer, until the date when the quarrel of Reuchlin was carried before the University."

The basis of the differences between the humanist group, of which Lefèvre was a member, and the reactionaries, of which the Faculty of theology, the Sorbonne, was the leader, was, in the beginning, the new learning which was being introduced into the colleges of France. When Reuchlin's case came before the University, he wrote to Lefèvre and asked his aid,(1) Lefèvre did all in his power to help. When the University decided against him, Lefèvre wrote a letter to Reuchlin explaining why and describing the character of their opponents in no complimentary terms.(2) The stand that Lefèvre took in this matter did not pass unnoticed. When in the end Reuchlin was acquitted by the Pope, his opponents, the Dominicans, turned their animosity on his friends and adherents, and in particular on Lefèvre.(3) Lefèvre continued to be a leader in the program to reform the educational curriculum of the universities, and the language used by him and his fellow-workers in describing those who held to the established order was not such as to endear him to his opponents.(4)

It is not to be wondered at that the Sorbonne welcomed an opportunity to attack him. Evidently they were on the look-out for such an opportunity, for they found even in his Psalterium Quincuplex material about which

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- (1) Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. I, p. 9.
- (2) Ibid., p. 15.
- (3) Graf, Essai etc., p. 82.
- (4) Renaudet, Préréforme etc., p. 146.

they wished to question him. This was evidently a minor matter. The fight was going against the "obscurantists". Erasmus' Enchiridion had been published in 1501(1) and in 1509(2) it was followed by his "In Praise of Folly". Both of these books bore unflattering testimony to the conditions existing under the old regime. When Lefèvre added his voice to Erasmus' and criticised freely the manner of life within the church and the monasteries, the Sorbonne ranked him with Erasmus as an enemy.(3) There is nothing from which it might be inferred that this influenced him one way or the other in his work.

B. The "Three Marys"

Up to this time, however, Lefèvre had done nothing for which he might be accused of heresy. It is true that in the "Pauli Epistolae" there was much that showed the beginning of a break with the existing conditions and ideas, but the purpose of his book was to promote a deeper religious life and his remarks along any other line were only incidental. He did not go out of his way to differ with the church's doctrine. He was not averse to thinking about the doctrines of the church, however, and in the beginning of the 1518 he published his first work against one of them.(4)

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(1) Smith, Erasmus, p. 56.

(2) Ibid., p. 117, note 1.

(3) Renaudet, Préréforme etc., p. 655.

(4) Barnaud, Jacques Lefèvre, p. 53

"De Maria Magdalena et triduo Christi disceptatio ad clarissimum virum Fr. Molinaeum Christianiss. Regis Francisci I Magistrum."(1)

The accepted opinion of that day was that Mary Magdalene, Mary the sister of Lazarus, and the sinful woman of Luke VII were one and the same person; the hymns and the office of St. Mary Magdalene in the Breviary of Gregory the Great were founded on this opinion.(2) Lefèvre wrote his treatise to disprove this. The book was divided into two parts; the first part dealt with the question of the three Marys; the second dealt with the question of the length of Jesus' stay in the tomb. In his treatment of the question of the three Marys Lefèvre examined carefully the accounts of the four gospels that refer to these women and came to the conclusion that the traditional view was erroneous. He examined the writings of the Church Fathers and against the authority of Gregory the Great,(3) its chief supporter, Lefèvre opposed the opinions of Augustine,(4) Ambrose,(5) Origen,(6) Chrysostom(7) and Jerome.(8) To solve the problem, Lefèvre put forward the suggestion that there were two Magdalenes. In the second part of his book, Lefèvre

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- (1) The book, bound in the same cover with his later writings on the same subject, is in the Harvard College Library.
(2) Graf, Essai etc., p. 82.
(3) De Maria Magdal., fol. 4 v.
(4) Ibid., fol. 18 v.
(5) Ibid., fol. 9 v.
(6) Ibid., fol. 10 r.
(7) Ibid., fol. 10 v.
(8) Ibid., fol. 11 r.

again referring to the Scripture records, demonstrated that Jesus' body did not remain in the tomb three days and nights. In his first contention Lefèvre opposed the tradition of the Church concerning a relatively unimportant woman and in the second he opposed the Scriptural teaching concerning the length of Christ's stay in the tomb. It is an interesting commentary on the thinking of his day to notice how these two treatises were received.

The book created quite a stir, but in his second assertion he was not opposed or refuted by the regular churchmen. Erasmus differed with it however.(1) The traditionalists, evidently considering tradition more essential and consequently more worthy of defense, attacked vigorously his treatise on the three Marys. It seems strange today that this question should arouse any great interest, but at that time it excited a lively controversy that went beyond the borders of France and involved men from Germany,(2) and England.(3) Monks and theologians from many places came to the defense of the "one Mary". Etienne Poncher sent Lefèvre's treatise to John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester and chancellor of the University of Cambridge, and asked him to write a refutation of it. This Fisher did in a dissertation en-

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(1)Graf, Essai etc., p. 86.

(2)Stunica. See also Herminjard, op. cit., vol. I, p. 49.

(3)Fisher.

titled "Roffensis Episcopi de unica Magdalena libri tres", (1) published in 1519, in which the bishop tried to reverse Lefèvre's arguments, and refuted Lefèvre's contention that there were two Magdalenes. Lefèvre retracted this statement concerning the two Magdalenes but continued to insist upon the identity of the three women, in a second treatise, "De tribus et Unica Magdalena disceptatio secunda". (2) Josse Clichtove, his friend and pupil, joined the controversy in his defense with a treatise sustaining Lefèvre's assertions. (3) Bishop Fisher wrote two more articles, one against Clichtove and another against Lefèvre. Lefèvre was everywhere written against, spoken against, and even subjected to ridicule and abuse in sermons. Concerning this abuse he remarked:

"Je suis attiré tant de malveillance, que plusieurs ont entrepris contre moi des apologies qu'il faudrait plutôt appeler des invectives - - Mais instruit des préceptes de Jésus-Christ j'ai résolu de ne jamais rendre injures pour injures à personne, quoiqu'on s'efforce sur les tribunes et dans les sermons à exciter contre moi la haine de la foule." (4)

This matter might have rested there if Lefèvre had ceased writing. But in the second part of his second dissertation on the Three Marys he attacked another doctrine of the Church. For some time the happy tradition had been maintained that Saint Ann, the mother of the

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(1) All the treatises of Bishop Fisher in Harvard College Library. (2) Also in the Harvard College Library.

(3) Herminjard, Correspondance etc., p. 49, note 5.

(4) Graf, Essai etc., p. 84-5. "I have drawn so much ill-will that several have undertaken apologies against me which

Virgin Mary, had had three husbands, Joachim, Cleophas and Salomas, that she had born to each husband a daughter and each daughter had received the name Mary. These three Marys had wed respectively, Joseph, Alpheus and Zebedee; the first Mary had become the mother of Jesus, the second the mother of James the Less and Jude, and the third of James and John.(1) Lefèvre demonstrated the error in this tradition also and showed that Anne had been married but once and then to Joachim. Salomas was merely a masculinization of Salome.(2)

If the treatise on the Three Marys had raised a storm, this one raised a tempest. His statement in his work that in doing this he was true to the Church carried no weight with his opponents. They attacked him violently. Lefèvre realised what he was doing, for when a friend remonstrated with him that he was treading upon dangerous ground, and that, as he was destroying the ground of faith and of worship, he might well expect them to cry against him "Ferte citi flammas, liber ardeat, ardeat auctor".(3) To which Lefèvre replied:

"Je ne crains rien. Je ne crois pas qu'il puisse

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it is necessary to call invectives. But being instructed by the precepts of Jesus Christ, I have resolved never to return injury for injury to any one, although they strive from the rostrum and in their sermons to excite against me the hatred of the foolish."

(1)Graf, Essai etc., p. 85.

(2)De tribus et Unica etc., p. 65.

(3)De Maria Magdal., fol. 85 v., after Graf, op. cit., p.86.

"y avoir du danger là où l'on chasse l'erreur de l'esprit des Chrétiens, pour leur montrer la vérité - - - Si quelques-uns me condamnent publiquement au feu avec mon livre, j'implorerai contre ce feu la rosée céleste pour l'éteindre."(1)

Just what Lefèvre's friend foresaw came about.

They attacked him on all sides. Monks condemned him without reading his books; preachers heaped insults upon him, called him impious, ignorant, audacious; and affirmed that the reading of his books was dangerous, contrary to the faith and to the Church, and declared that they should be burned.(2) Representatives of the Carmelites, Franciscans and Dominicans wrote against him. Lefèvre made no answer for he saw no honor in such disputes.(3)

The matter however did not rest there but was taken up by a self-appointed champion of Lefèvre who defended him against the friars and theologians, particularly against one Claude Salin, a doctor of the Sorbonne.(4) This battle was waged at Metz, but it changed its center of action shortly, for the Sorbonne took an interest in it and proceeded to pronounce sentence on these works. Headed by Noel Béda, of whom more later, the Sorbonne

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(1)De Maria Magdal., fol. 85 v., 88 v. after Graf, op. cit., p. 86."I fear nothing. I do not believe that there is any danger in that or when one would dispel error in the spirit of Christians, to show them the truth. - - If some people condemn me publicly to the fire with my book, I will implore against the fire the celestial dew to put it out."

(2)Herminjard, op. cit., vol. I, p. 54, notes 3 and 4.

(3)Ibid., p. 53 ff.

(4)H. C. Capito. Herminjard, op. cit.

declared, November 9, 1521, that any who held Lefèvre's position concerning the Three Marys was a heretic. Not satisfied with this, recommendation was made to Parlement that Lefèvre should be punished as a heretic. But Lefèvre was well known at court and had many powerful friends there. Francis I had no intention of allowing this distinguished man to be condemned. Accordingly he charged his confessor, Guillaume Petit, to examine the books in question and report to him. The report was favorable to Lefèvre and the king ordered Parlement to stop proceedings against Lefèvre.(1) That ended this matter. But as, some time previous to this, Briçonnet had invited Lefèvre to join him at Meaux, Lefèvre was very glad, in the midst of the prosecution, to leave Paris and the quarelling theologians of the Sorbonne for the peace of the capital of Brie.

C. His Opponents

The events of the next few years brought into prominence certain leaders of the Sorbonne in their fight not only against Lefèvre, but also against all progress of learning. As they figure largely in the development of the Reformation as the party of the opposition, it is necessary to consider them and their leader, Noel Béda. The Sorbonne had been noted for two apparently contra-

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(1) Barnaud, Jacques Lefèvre, p. 56.

dictory principles of action; on the one hand they resisted the encroachment of Papal authority in France with all their strength and influence and supported the kings of France in their resistance to the Popes. So active were they in carrying out this policy that the anti-Papal attitude came to be called "Gallican" in contrast to the "Ultramontane" or Papal attitude. An example comes out of this very period. When Leo X had succeeded in securing the withdrawal of the Pragmatic Sanction and the signing of the Concordat by Francis I, the University of Paris with the full consent of the Sorbonne rose up in opposition to this treaty and only after many remonstrances were they forced to submit.(1) On the other hand, as if to demonstrate their loyalty to the Church, they set themselves up as defenders of its doctrines and faith. Luther knew of their anti-papal policy when he referred his case to them, but evidently he did not understand their attitude toward the doctrines of the Church or he would never have done so. The two most famous instances of their defense of the Catholic doctrine are, first, the work of John Gerson, chancellor of the University, in procuring the condemnation and execution of John Huss at the Council of Constance, and, second, their condemnation of Luther in 1521. They exhibited their attitude toward any innovations in the realm of doctrine in this latter

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(1) Baird, Rise of the Huguenots, vol. I, p. 37 ff.

decision when they

"condemned the writings of the German monk to the flames on the ground that they were seductive, insulting to the hierarchy, contrary to Scripture and schismatic" and professed "that such sentiments as he uttered were a denial of the first principles of faith, an unblushing profession of impiety, an arrogance so impious that it must be repressed by chains and censures - nay by fire and flame, rather than refuted by argument,"(1)

they not only expressed their opposition but also indicated the method which they planned to use to combat such ideas, namely, chains and the stake.

Noel Bédier

The man who was largely responsible for such a statement and who led the Sorbonne in the fight against other heretical ideas was Noel Bédier, or Natalis Bédier, generally referred to as Noel Bédier. Bédier is well known for many things in connection with the history of Protestantism, not the least of which was his relation to John Calvin, when Calvin was a student under him in the College of Montaigue. Bédier came to Montaigue about 1502 at the request of his friend and former teacher, Jean Standonck.(2) At the death of Standonck he was appointed head of the college in 1509,(3) which placed him in a strategic position to enforce his reactionary ideals. He represented in himself the reaction from all that

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(1) Baird, op. cit., p. 109.

(2) Renaudet, Préréforme et Humanisme, p. 346.

(3) Ibid., p. 546.

was new, whether it was in learning or in religion. He was "l'esprit le plus mutin et le plus factieux de son temps".(1) He embodied the reformatory principles of the movement that was interested in the reformation of the external practices of the Church, but he had no sympathy with nor understanding of the ideas of the Fabrists or the Lutherans. In virtue of his position at Montaigne he had a prominent place in the meetings of the doctors of theology and

"il consacra peu à peu toute son activité brouillonne aux affaires de la Faculté de Théologie."(2)

The Sorbonne elected him their Syndic. This put him in a position to make his opinions felt throughout France and the entire learned world. He was a man of vehement temper and attacked any one without fear. He used his tongue and pen indefatigably to advocate his extreme ideas. In his war against innovations and innovators he attacked Luther, Estienne, Lefèvre, Reuchlin, Erasmus, Henry VIII of England and finally Francis I of France, who banished him, but not soon enough. Bédac expressed his opinion of this new learning before the king, when, in a speech in which he opposed himself and his faculty to the employment of language professors in the University, he maintained that the Greek tongue was the cause

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(1) Doumergue, Vie de Calvin, vol. I, p. 72.

(2) Renaudet, op. cit., p. 459. "more and more he consecrated his mischief-making activity to the affairs of the Faculty of Théology.

of heresies.(1)

He first came into the arena against Lefèvre on the occasion of the controversy concerning the Three Marys. He wrote a book controverting Lefèvre's position on this question and followed it with another refuting Lefèvre's contentions concerning Anna's three husbands. In the following years Bédard wrote several books against Lefèvre.(2) He had no fear, no self-control, only a passion against anything that broke with the old order. Such a man was the leader of the Sorbonne in the days when the Reformation first appeared in France.

D. Opposition at Meaux

By the Monks

Contrary to Lefèvre's hopes when he accepted the offer of the Bishop of Meaux, the work there was not allowed to remain in peace. When Briçonnet identified Lefèvre with his efforts at reform in Meaux, he earned the suspicious surveillance of the Sorbonne, who were loath to lose Lefèvre as their victim. Another circumstance that turned the Sorbonne against this movement was that the distinction between the teaching of Lefèvre and the teaching of Luther at this time was very slight, and the Sorbonne had just condemned the teachings of

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(1)General Biography, article, Bédard.

(2)Nouvelle Biographie, Article, Bédier.

Luther. Also the workers at Meaux were in correspond-
ence with the reformers of Germany and Switzerland.
Their preaching was quite "Lutheran" in character. Such
actions were sure to bring upon them the censure, if not
worse, of the Sorbonne.

When Brigonet prohibited the Franciscans from
preaching in parts of his diocese he earned for himself
powerful and bitter enemies, who promptly appealed his
decision to Parlement. From that time on they watched
him that they might accuse him. Despised though the
monks undoubtedly were, yet there is no denying that they
were very powerful opponents. They elevated themselves
to the position of defenders of the faith and as such were
in opposition to the program of the Group. The extent
of this opposition is illustrated by the reply of a monk
to Lefèvre. Lefèvre and some friends were talking with
some of the partisans of the old abuses and Lefèvre express-
ed the hope that

"l'Evangile auroit lieu au Royaume de France,
et qu'on ne prescheroit plus les songes des hommes."(1)

A Dominican monk, de Roma, replied with heat:

"Moy et autres comme moy, leverons une cruciade
de gens, et ferons chasser le Roy de son Royaume
par ses subjectz propres, s'il permet que l'Evan-
gile soit presche."
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(1)Herminjard, Correspondance etc., p. 483. "the Gospel
would spread throughout the realm of France, and that no
longer will the dreams of men be preached." "I and others
like me will raise a crusade and we will drive the king
from his realm by his own subjects, if he permits the
Gospel to be preached."

It was not long before these watchful enemies had opportunity to accuse the bishop in Paris.

By the Sorbonne

Just when the Sorbonne first started action against Brignonnet is not definitely known. The dates on the face of his synodical decrees are in 1523.(1) Herminjard quotes a fragment from Antoine Froment in which he described the work being carried on at Meaux in 1524 with all its force and with the full approval of the bishop.(2) The letters of Roussel, Lefèvre and Pauvin written also in 1524 suggest no diminution of zeal on the part of the bishop though Roussel knew of the opposition of the Sorbonne.(3) On the other hand, the date of these decrees coincides with the date of the departure of Farel from Meaux, and they seem most applicable to him.(4) It seems almost incredible, however, that Brignonnet should have changed his plans so soon when his correspondence with Marguerite gives no indication of such a change.(5) But whatever the dates may have been, the main events are well known.

Brignonnet knew that he was treading on dangerous ground and knew also that the day might come when he would be forced to change. A Catholic historian pre-

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- (1) Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. I, p. 153 & 154.
 - (2) Ibid., p. 158, note 4.
 - (3) Ibid., p. 231 ff.
 - (4) Baird, Rise etc., p. 83, note 2.
 - (5) Herminjard, op. cit., pp. 181 ff.

served this statement of the Bishop:

"Even should I, your bishop, change my speech and teaching, beware you change not with me."(1)

This was a premonition of the opposition which was rising against him.

Failure of Briçonnet

When the first sign of opposition came, Briçonnet, probably considering himself secure in the protection of Marguerite, defied his accusers and returned accusation for accusation. He styled the Sorbonne Pharisees and false prophets,(2) and in a sermon preached in answer to the speech of a rash monk, he attacked the "caffars cordeliers"(3) as the "source et fontaine de toute hérésie, et "quod cordigeri sunt pseudoprophete, scribe et pharisei."(4) In his correspondence with Marguerite he was bolder and denounced the clergy as "l'estat par la froideur duquel tous les aultres sont gellez", and "celluy qui tous ruyne".(5) But this boldness did not last long, for he lost his courage. He was beset both at Paris and at Meaux. At Paris, the Sorbonne was against him and at Meaux, the monks and some of his clergy opposed him. He was no Luther to stand against rulers, monks, and theologians. He wavered and

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(1) Baird, Rise etc., vol. I, p. 77, from Fontaine, Catholique Historique.

(2) Gaillard, Francois Premier, vol. VI, p. 409.

(3) Berger, Process contre G. Briçonnet, Bull. vol. XL, p. 13.

(4) Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. I, p. 186, note 2.

(5) Ibid., p. 186.

was persuaded to publish under his name three synodical decrees. In the first of these, which was addressed "Aux fidèles des son diocèse"(1), Briçonnet purports to say that Luther was a man

"qui en renverse tout l'ordre hiérarchique, bouleversé et détruit l'état qui contient tous les autres dans le devoir".(2)

He went on to inveigh against Luther and his books with which "le monde presque entier est rempli"(3) and to threaten those who possessed or read them.

"Nous interdisons en consequence par ce décret synodal à tous et chacun des fidèles de notre Diocèse, de quelque état, rang, ou condition qu'ils soient, et ce sous menace de l'excommunication et des autres peines, d'acheter, lire, posséder, colporter ou d'approuver, justifier et communiquer dans les réunions publiques et les conversations privées, les livres du dit Martin ou ceux dont il passe pour être l'auteur; leur enjoignant au contraire d'avoir, immédiatement après la publication du présent décret, à se débarrasser de ceux de ces livres qui pourront se trouver dans leurs mains, dans leur maisons ou partout ailleurs, et à les détruire par le feu."(4)
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(1) Herminjard, Correspondance etc., p. 153 ff.

(2) Ibid., p. 154. "who is opposed to the entire hierarchial order and who would destroy the estate which keeps all the others in the right."

(3) "nearly the whole earth is filled."

(4) Ibid., p. 155. "We interdict, for this reason, by this decree to all and each of the faithful of our diocese, of whatever estate, rank or condition they may be, and under the threat of excommunication and of other pains, to buy, read, possess, carry or "approuver", justify and communicate in public meetings or in private conversations, the books of the said Martin or those of which he passes as the author; enjoining them on the contrary, immediately after the publication of this present decree, to rid themselves of those of these books which they are able to find in their hands, in their houses or wherever else, and to destroy them by fire."

This is very different from the tone of his letters of the same date and of the later letters of the group.

The second synodical decree was addressed "Au clerge de son diocese" and was similar in character and content. He wrote against those who "abusant de l'Evangile"(1) have preached

"que le Purgatoire n'existe pas, et que, par consequent, il ne faut pas prier pour les morts, ni invoquer la très-sainte vièrge Marie et les Saints."(2)

He exhorted his clergy to be faithful in the proclamation of these truths and in the observances of these acts of worship.(3)

Evidently the Sorbonne was still unsatisfied with what had been done, for in December of that year Briçonnet published another decree addressed to his clergy in which the license to preach was taken from those who were "Lutheriens de cette sorte" and they were not permitted to preach or teach "expressement sous peine d'excommunication et anatheme" in his diocese.(4)

If Briçonnet hoped that the publishing of these decrees would procure peace for him he was mistaken. The Sorbonne had not yet forgotten Lefèvre. In the year 1523, at the instigation of Béda, Parlement entered the scene again with a condemnation of Luther's works,

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(1)Herminjard, op. cit., p. 157. (2) Ibid. "that purgatory does not exist and therefore it is not necessary to pray for the dead nor invoke the holy Virgin Mary and the Saints." (3)Ibid., p. 157-158. (4) Ibid., p. 172.

of Melancthon's defense of Luther and finally of Lefèvre's commentary on the Four Gospels. "Un grand nombre de propositions"(1) were taken from his commentary and were condemned. He refused to retract them and was ordered to be cast into prison with Berquin. Again, thanks to Marguerite, Francis intervened and saved him. The king appointed a commission, composed of several prelates and some doctors of theology, to examine the propositions in the accusations.(2) When the report was given to him totally in favor of the accused, Francis wrote a letter to Parlement in which he extolled the graces and accomplishments of Lefèvre and ended by ordering Parlement for the second time to let Lefèvre alone.(3)

The End of the Work at Meaux

In spite of the king's orders, from this time on Meaux was kept under close observation. Meaux was recognised by both sides as the battleground of the movement in France and both sides brought to bear on the workers there all the influence at their command. On the one hand Farel, now at Strassbourg, and Oecolampadius both wrote to Roussel and urged him to more decisive measures.(4) The Sorbonne, on the other hand, kept close watch on them. At one time they sent a delegation to

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(1) Barnaud, Jacques Lefèvre, p. 84. 25 pages of errors.

(2) Graf, Essai etc., p. 105.

(3) Du Plessis, Histoire de l'Eglise de Meaux, vol. II, p. 382. There is a copy of the letter in the book.

(4) Herminjard, op. cit., pp. 270 & 274.

listen to Briçonnet preach. This he did and, for their benefit, preached the existence of purgatory and the efficacy of prayers for the dead, and encouraged his hearers to pray to the saints and worship the Virgin Mary.(1)

About this time events seemed to play into the hands of the reactionaries. Francis I was taken prisoner by Charles V of Spain at Pavia, February 24, 1525, and Marguerite went to Spain to nurse him in his sickness and to effect his release.(2) Louise de Savoie was left regent of France, which was unfortunate for she was not as distinctly favorable to the reform as her children. When the Sorbonne persuaded Parlement, Parlement had no great difficulty in persuading her that it was to the interest of the state to stamp out heresy.(3) Moreover, Louise needed the support of the Pope and chose to gain it by acceding to the policy of the Sorbonne. So she set herself to persecute heretics. To do this effectively, the regent appointed a commission to try Lutherans, which received the wholehearted approval of the Pope. This was the beginning of the Inquisition in Paris. The commission, when appointed, struck twice, both times close to the group of Meaux. Louis de Berquin and Jean Leclerc were both arrested. Briçonnet was invited to come before Parlement and answer to the charges

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(1) Jordan, Movement towards Cath. Reform., p. 283 ff. Also Du Plessis, op. cit., vol. I, p. 328 ff.

(2) Baird, Rise etc., vol. I, p. 122 ff.

(3) Ibid., p. 123 ff.

brought against him. The investigation of his case was given to the inquisitorial committee. Briçonnet objected to this and pleaded for a trial before the entire court. This was refused him. Previous to this both Vatable and Mazurier had left Meaux and had recanted from their errors. Mazurier is credited with persuading Briçonnet to change his front and this he did. Further he gave guarantees to the court that Meaux would be safe from heresy.(1) On his return to Meaux he gave his approval to the persecution set on foot there. This marks the end of Briçonnet as a reformer.(2)

But what of Lefèvre? Had he been unmolested? By no means. Béda had seen to that. He had written two books against Lefèvre in which he pointed out errors found in Lefèvre's writings. Let it be said in his favor that before he did this work he wrote to Lefèvre and counselled him to correct himself. This Lefèvre declined to do and when Briçonnet was summoned before Parlement, another summons was sent out for Caroli, Roussel and Lefèvre.(3) Both Marguerite and Francis wrote from Spain in their behalf and in spite of the reluctance of Parlement the matter was dropped.(4) Lefèvre and Roussel did not risk the regard which Par-

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(1) Baird, Rise etc., vol. I, p. 82 ff.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. I, p. 402, note 2.

(4) Ibid., p. 403, note 4.

lement might or might not have for the absent king's command but sought safety in flight to Strassbourg sometime late in 1525.(1)

The faculty of theology listed fifty propositions from Lefèvre's books which they claimed were heretical.

"We ought to believe the Word of God by means of the Spirit and not through the presumption of our own intelligence."

What you have you have by the bounty of God in Jesus Christ and not in any way by your own merits.

Salvation is never in our power but only in the grace of God.

The pasture of the soul is in the word of God alone,

Leave all the doctrines and ordinances that men have imposed and follow only one Pastor and one Doctor who is Jesus Christ."(2)

These propositions were declared "Diabolica inventa et haereticorum figmenta" and the book was declared worthy of the flames with all those who composed it or who read and preached it to the people.(3)

With the flight of Lefèvre and Roussel from Meaux, the first phase of the French Reformation came to a close. The persecuting work of the Sorbonne seemed crowned with success. Shortly before their flight, the work at Meaux produced its first martyr when Jean Leclerc was burned at Metz. Not long after their flight Jacques Pauvin, the first martyr of the group, shared his fate at Paris.(4)

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(1) Barnaud, Jacques Lefèvre, p. 81. (2) Graf, Essai etc., p. 118 ff. gives thirty-two of the propositions. (3) Ibid. (4) Baird, Rise etc., p. 89 ff.

E. At Strassbourg

Lefèvre and Roussel fled to Strassbourg and spent the winter of 1525-6 in that city. They were joined by Michel d'Arande, also a fugitive from the Sorbonne. They were heartily received in Strassbourg by Capito, Bucer and Count Sigismond of Hohenlohe. Lefèvre and Roussel were both under pseudonyms, Lefèvre had chosen Antonius Peregrinus and Roussel, Joannes Tolninus.(1) Lefèvre evidently found it necessary to change again, for Roussel, in a letter back to Meaux, referred to him as Coracinus.(2) But his false names did not hide his identity. He was soon known even to the boys on the street.(3)

This visit was of particular interest in Lefèvre's life for it brought him into personal contact with the most revolutionary reformers. Here he met, talked with, and was exhorted by, fiery apostles of the revolt from Rome. Pierre Toussain and Lefèvre's old disciple, Guillaume Farel, both attempted to persuade him and Roussel to come out openly and join them. Toussain related his attempt and its results in a letter to Oecolampadius.

"Fabrum sum alloquutus, et Ruffum, sed certe Faber nihil habet animi. Deus confirmet eum et corroboret. Sint sapientes quaestum velint, expectent, different et dissimulent; non poterit praedicari Evangelium absque cruce. Haec cum video, mi Oecolampadi, cum video animum.
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(1)Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. I, p. 406, note 5.

(2)Ibid., p. 408.

(3)Ibid., p. 411, note 8.

"Regis, animum Ducis sic propensum ad promovendum Christi Evangelium, ut nihil magis, et eos qui soli negocium hoc promovere deberent, secundum gratiam illis datam, illorum institutum remorari, certe continere me non possum a lachrymis. Dicunt certe: Nondum est tempus, non venit hora. Et hic tamen non habemus diem neque horam."(1)

This letter raises two questions; first, what was Lefèvre's attitude toward the Reformation outside of France; and second, why did he never come out and openly join the reformers and make a distinct break with Rome? This he never did. There is no doubt that Lefèvre was much attracted by the writings of Luther and Zwingli, for in a letter to Farel he thanked Farel for the pamphlets he had sent and expressed his appreciation of the thought of the writers.(2) In another letter, however, he regretted the attitude of the author of a satire which Farel had sent him.(3)

The usual answer to the second question is to acc-
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(1)Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. I, p. 447.
"I have spoken to Lefèvre and Roussel, but certainly Lefèvre has not a particle of courage. May God confirm and strengthen him. Let them be wise as they please, let them wait, procrastinate, and dissemble; the Gospel will never be preached without the cross. When I see these things, when I see the mind of the king, the mind of the duchess as favorable as possible to the advancement of the Gospel of Christ, and those who ought to forward this matter, according to the grace given them, abstracting their design, I cannot refrain from tears. They say indeed: 'It is not yet time, the hour has not come'. And yet we have here no day or hour. What would not you do had you the Emperor and Ferdinand favoring your attempts."

(2)Ibid., p. 206.

(3)Ibid., p. 220 ff.

cept Toussain's estimate and to brand Lefèvre as a coward. But Lefèvre, gentle and meek though he was, was no coward. If he had been a coward he would not have refused to retract the errors which the Sorbonne found in his writings; if he had been a coward he would have done as Mazurier, Vatable, Briçonnet and Caroli and would have made his peace with the Sorbonne; if he had been a coward he would not have dared to publish his second work on the Three Marys, when he knew full well that the stake might be at the end of the controversy; if he had been a coward he would not have dared to complete and publish his translation in the face of the order of Parliament against all translations. The explanation must be sought elsewhere.

There is a threefold explanation of his refusal to go with his friends. First of all, in 1525 Lefèvre was ninety years old and a ninety-year-old man, unless of a different caliber than the gentle Lefevre, does not break all the ties of his life. Secondly, to join with the reformers conflicted with his ideal of the unity of the Church. These men were wanting him to help break that unity which was so dear to him and which he hoped to see established once more. His hope was to reform from within. Finally, there is the reason given by Erasmus:

"De regno quod scripsi, plebem lingua temperare magistratum nihil gerere, nisi ex ipsorum sententia, senatu movere, qui a doctrina ipsorum dissentiunt: conjicere in carcerem, qui verbo ipsos tetigerit, faederibus sese communire, au non hoc est regnare? Damnavit hoc illis egregius ille vir Jacobus Faber, quum metu cesserat Gallii, et in Germaniam concesserat."(1)

The policies of the reformers, perhaps of necessity, were too political to suit Lefèvre. He was interested in reforming the church, not in setting up a new government. Lefèvre agreed with the doctrines of the reformers but rejected their political practices.

F. Work at Nerac

Francis I and Marguerite returned to Paris on the 17th of March, 1526, to find that their instructions concerning Lefèvre and Roussel had not been completely obeyed by Parlement. Francis was highly displeased with this and ordered all proceedings against them to cease. He then recalled both Lefèvre and Roussel to his court where they were taken under the protection of Marguerite again. She procured for Lefèvre the position of tutor for the king's two daughters and his third son, who had the unusual name Abednego. He was

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(1)Allen, Opus Epistolarum des. Erasmi Rotterdami, after Drummond, D. Erasmus, vol. II.

"As to what I wrote concerning their affecting sovereignty is it not affecting sovereignty to govern the common people with their tongues, to suffer the magistrates to do nothing but what they approve, to put out of the Senate those who differ from them in point of doctrine, to cast those into prison who speak a word against them, and to strengthen themselves by alliances? This is what that excellent man, Jacques Lefèvre, who had for fear fled from France into Germany, condemned in them."

was encouraged in his work of translating by the king, who charged him, in collaboration with Roussel, to translate the homilies of Chrysostom on the Acts. It would seem that since he was under the protection of both Marguerite and Francis Lefèvre should have been safe. But Bédà feared neither man nor master. He drew up a list of errors from the works of Lefèvre and Erasmus and prevailed upon the Sorbonne to condemn them.(1) Francis met him by referring this list to a public meeting of the faculty of the entire University.(2) The king went further and interdicted Bédà's book which had been printed without the necessary permission of Parlement. He then wrote to the University and remonstrated with the faculty for their treatment of Lefèvre and Erasmus.(3)

About this time Marguerite removed her court to Blois and took Lefèvre with her. Here he was appointed librarian of the royal library in which position he was free to complete the translation of the Bible and his commentary on the Catholic Epistles. But even here he was not left in peace.(4) The insatiable Bédà still pursued him.

In 1528 events took a turn in favor of those who opposed the reform. The council of Sens, forerunner of

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(1) "Erasmi Roterodami Apologia ad eximium virum Jac. Fabrum stapulensem."

(2) Graf., Essai etc., p. 119 ff.

(3) Bulaeus, Hist. Univers., vol VI, p. 200.

(4) Barneud, Jacques Lefèvre, p. 106.

the Council of Trent, was held in Paris from February 3 to October 9, 1528.(1) The question of Heresy arose, to which the council expressed itself definitely in opposition. It proposed to follow the example of Constantine, Theodosius, Clovis and Charlemagne by persecuting the heretics.(2) This resolution they put into effect in Provence.(3) Two other councils, one at Bourges and the other at Lyons, followed this example.(4) An unfortunate example of iconoclasm helped to turn the opinion of Francis against the reformers. On the morning of May 31, 1528, Paris awoke to find an image of the Virgin thrown down and mutilated, "qui fut une grosse horreur à la chrestiente".(5) Francis seemed to resent this greatly and from that time gave his approval to the work of persecution. On July 3, 1528, Denis de Rieux was burned publicly, with the king an approving spectator.(6) Lefèvre was not forgotten. Beda, encouraged by the change in the king's attitude, issued another book, "Apologia contra clandestinos Lutheranos", which was directed against Lefèvre and Erasmus. As though to give force to this new threat, Louis de Berquin, a favorite of the king whom the king had twice saved from a heretic's death,(7)

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(1) Lavissee, Histoire de France, vol. V, part 2, p. 358.

(2) Ibid.

(3) Vienot, Histoire de la Réforme Française, p. 101.

(4) Ibid.

(5) Baird, Rise etc., p. 141, note 2.

(6) Vienot, op. cit., p. 101 ff.

(7) Baird, op. cit., p. 128 ff.

was again arrested and tried for heresy. In spite of Marguerite's appeals to her brother, the king did not interfere and Berquin was burned April 17, 1529. ⁽¹⁾ The Sorbonne was in power and seemed irresistible. It was only a matter of time before Lefèvre would be summoned to appear before Parlement. If the king had not interfered in favor of de Berquin, what chance was there that he would interfere in Lefèvre's favor? Marguerite and Lefèvre evidently thought that the chances were slight for, at Lefèvre's suggestion, Marguerite undertook to get him out of danger. Accordingly she wrote to Anne de Montmorency, grand master of the royal household and marshall of France.

"Mon neveu - Le bon homme Fabry m'a escript qu'il s'est trouve un peu mal a Bloys, avecques ce qu'on l'a voulu fascher par dela. Et pour changer d'air, (il) iroit volentiers veoir un amy sien pour un temps, si le plaisir du Roy estoit luy vouloir donner congie. Il a mis ordre en sa librairie, cotte les livres et mis tout par inventaire, lequel il baillera a qui il plaira au Roy. Je vous prie demander son congie au Roy, et me faire scavoir de sa bonne sante et de vos bonnes nouvelles, et ferez singulier plaisir a celle qui est
vostre bonne tante et amye,
Marguerite. (2)

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(1) Baird, Rise etc., p. 144 ff. Marguerite's letter to her brother is given in Herminjard, op. cit., vol. II, p. 168 ff.

(2) Herminjard, op. cit., vol. II, pp. 250-1.

"The good man Fabry has written to me that he has had some little trouble at Blois. He would willingly go for a change of air to visit one of his friends for a time, if it were the king's pleasure to give him his conge. He has put the library in order, numbered the books, and made an inventory of them which he will deliver to whomsoever the King wishes. I beg of you to ask the king for his conge and let me know how he is and good news of yourself, and thereby you will give peculiar pleasure to her who is your good aunt and friend.

The request was granted and Lefèvre, sometime before August, 1530, left Paris forever and went to Nerac in Navarre, where Marguerite made her court from that time forth.(1)

Little is known of Lefèvre's stay in Nerac. Most Protestant biographers and writers follow Graf's short summary of this part of his life.

"Il partit ainsi en 1531 pour Nerac, ou il vécut tranquille jusqu'à sa morte - - - Le jeune Calvin fugitif vint visiter le veillard in 1533 et lui demander des conseils. Il mourut en 1537."(2)

But more is known of his stay in Nerac than that. While there he revised and republished his translation of the Bible, which appeared April 6, 1534.

"Mais en 1534, lorsqu'il se sentit appuyé par une édition critique plus, il ne recula pas devant l'introduction de ces corrections marginales faites sur l'original. Et c'est ainsi que Lefèvre donna la première Bible en français, ou l'on put constater sans peine les différences souvent considérables qui existent entre la Vulgate et les originaux. On comprend aisément qu'une pareille arme de polémique entre les mains du peuple fut rigoureusement proscrite par l'Eglise catholique. En effet, les éditions de 1534 (et de 1541) bien que munies de l'approbation des docteurs de Louvain et des privilèges de l'empereur Charles-Quint, furent classées, sur la demande du roi catholique Philippe II et du duc d'Albe, gouverneur des Pays-Bas, parmi les Bibles défendues, dans l'appendice joint à l'Index des livres défendus au concile de Trente. Aussi furent-elles détruites
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(1) Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. II, p. 251, note 5.

(2) Graf, Essai etc., p. 120.

"Thus he left, in 1531, for Nerac where he lived tranquilly until his death - - The young fugitive Calvin came to visit the old man in 1533 and to ask his advice. He died in 1537."

"avec la dernière des rigueurs."(1)

Lefèvre and Calvin were together at Nerac for about eight days. This was the meeting of the old and the new.

"Quelle moment en effet que cette visite! Toute le passé de la Réforme française, et toute son avenir. Le centenaire Le Fèvre transmettant ses vœux, avec ses conseils au jeune Calvin! la première période, celle du Fabrisme, qui se fermait et la seconde, celle du Calvinisme, qui s'ouvrait. Quelque chose comme la transmission d'un sceptre spirituel."(2)

Unfortunately neither Lefèvre nor Calvin left any record of this meeting. All that is known comes from Beza's account when he wrote of this visit, in his life of Calvin, that

"Le bon veillard reçut le jeune homme et le vit avec plaisir, augurant qu'il serait un instrument de l'établissement du royaume céleste en France."(3)

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(1)Laune, La traduction de l'Ancien Test. de Jac. Lefevre. p. 44 ff, after Doumergue, Vie de Calvin, vol. I, p. 401, n. 2. "But in 1534, when he felt that he was enforced by a more critical edition, he did not recoil when forced to make an introduction of marginal corrections made on the original. It is thus that Lefèvre gave the first Bible in French where one can verify without difficulty the difference often considerable, which exist between the Vulgate and the original versions. One easily understands that such a weapon of polemic was rigorously proscribed by the Catholic church. Indeed the editions of 1534 and of 1541, although fortified by the approval of the doctors of the Louvain and provided with the privilege of the Emperor Chas.V, were classed by the Council of Trent, at the insistence of the Catholic king Philip II and the duke of Alba governor of the Netherlands, among the proscribed Bibles, in the appendix added to the Index of forbidden books. For this reason they were suppressed with the utmost severity."

(2)Doumergue, Vie de Calvin, vol. I, p. 402. "What an event indeed was this visit, all the past of the French Reform and all its future. The centenary Lefèvre transmitting his vows with his advice to the young Calvin! the first period, that of Fabrism, was closing and the second, Calvinism, was opening. It was as though it was the transmission of a spiritual scepter"

Protestant writers have been content to end Lefèvre's work with his withdrawal from Paris.(1) But the Catholic historian, Florimond de Rémond, showed more appreciation of Lefèvre's character and influence when he traced the "heresy" of Navarre to Lefèvre as its source.

"Lefèvre - - - lived a long time in the territory of the King of Navarre, sowing so many doubts and scruples in the consciences of those who would hearken to him, pretending at the same time to be a Catholic. I remember formerly to have seen his tomb, when the Church of Nerac was standing, whereon are the words: 'Corpus homo, mentemque Deo, bona cuncta relinquo - Pauperibus, Faber haec, dum moreretur ait.'" No change was then made in religion, or in the ceremonies of the Church. The king and queen of Navarre, though their devotion was observed to be cooled by having conversed too freely with the fugitives of Meaux, continued their usual way of life."(2)

If Marguerite was the mother of the Huguenot movement in Navarre, Lefèvre was the father.

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From page 249, note (3) Beza, Vie de Calvin, after Barnaud, Jacques Lefèvre, p. 109.

"The good old man received the young man with pleasure, foreseeing that he was to be an instrument for the establishment of the kingdom of heaven in France."

(1) For example, Jourdan, op. cit., p. 299 and Graf, op. cit., p. 120.

(2) Remond, Histoire de la Naissance de l'Hérésie, book VII, chapter 3, pp. 846-7.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONTRIBUTION OF LEEVRE TO THE REFORMATION

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Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples died at Nerac in 1536,(1) and was buried there in the churchyard. To attempt to discuss the value of his life to the Reformation is a great task, but one that needs to be done in all justice to him. Such a discussion will form the first part of this chapter, while the latter part will be given over to a consideration of his character and religion, in which an attempt will be made to answer the question "Was Lefèvre a Protestant?".

The treatment of his contribution to the Reformation will be divided into three parts, the first being an estimate of his influence on the movement in lands beyond France; the second, an estimate of his influence on the movement toward reform within the Catholic Church; and finally, his contribution to the Rise of the Reformation in France.

A. Contribution to the Movement outside of France

Originality of Lefèvre

"The soil, in France, was well prepared: the new ideas were expanding in men's minds, but there was needed a man of genius, a 'gigantic' personality, to give the vital impetus. He came; and, as Von Polenz has expressed it, 'The trumpet blast which Luther, in the year 1517, sounded, in Germany, awakened all the spirits in France.'"(2)

The above quotation closed Farmer's popular essay

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(1) Graf is mistaken in the date he gives. See Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. III, p. 399, note 5.

(2) Farmer, Essays etc., p. 52 ff.

on the Rise of the Reformation in France and it expresses the opinion of most historians on the subject of Lefèvre's contribution to the rise of the Reformation in France.

But is this a fair statement of the real facts of the case?

Herminjard expressed the same idea more outspokenly when he wrote:

"Le Fèvre était encore, deux ans après avoir publié son commentaire sur St. Paul, 'plongé en idolâtrie et en grosse ignorance'. Il n'en sortit que peu à peu et lentement, sous l'influence du mouvement inauguré par Luther, et qui, pénétrant en France, y fit éclore et fructifier les germes d'émancipation religieuse qui étaient demeurés jusque là, chez Le Fèvre et dans son entourage, vivants, sans doute, mais cachés."(1)

In the same passage, Herminjard dated the beginning of the Reformation in France in 1520. In this manner, these men, recognizing the greatness of Luther, attempt to credit him with the entire reformation movement. It is impossible to diminish Luther's greatness, for, humanly speaking, he was the originating force of the Reformation, and the greatest of the reformers, but to credit him with starting the movement in France is to give him honor for something he did not do and to take this honor away from one who has been greatly underestimated.

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(1)Herminjard. Correspondance etc., vol. I, p. 239, note 38. "Lefèvre was still, two years after the publication of his commentary on St. Paul, 'plunged in idolatry and grosse ignorance'. He emerged from it little by little and finally, under the influence of the movement inaugurated by Luther, and which, penetrating into France, caused the germs of religious emancipation, which had remained up until then, in Lefèvre and his following, living without doubt, but hidden, to bud and bear fruit."

The basis for Herminjard's statement, and in this Farmer merely follows Graf and Herminjard, are the remarks made by Farel concerning his own and Lefèvre's attitude toward the worship of saints, belief in purgatory, attitude toward the Pope, the Mass and the Virgin Mary.(1) Because Lefèvre retained much of his old attitude toward these Catholic beliefs, they, and other historians, accuse him of "ignorance and idolatry". But consider Luther himself - in 1519, Luther still believed in purgatory, the worship of the saints and in transsubstantiation.(2) It was not until 1543 that he rejected the elevation of the sacrament, and as late as 1520 he concluded his sermons with "Ave Maria".(3) Every one recognises that Luther needed time for the development of his thought, but for some reason this time is denied Lefèvre and historians would have him a full blown revolutionary Protestant in 1512 or they refuse him credit for being the originator of the Reformation in France. The development found in Luther was also in Lefèvre, but, as he was a much older man, it was not so rapid.

Further, in crediting Luther with originating the reform in France, the historians are mistaken. Farel, in 1525, wrote to a colleague of Luther as follows:

"Dici non potest quam officiat Gallis hoc dissidium. Non pauci, inter se in sinum, de eucharistia non inepte tractabant, sicut et ante annos aliquot, etiam publicis concionibus, Sanctorum

"invocatio reprobata et Purgatorium. In qua re versores librorum Martini male fratribus consulant, qui priora ejus opera, in quibus nonnihil Sanctorum invocationi et Purgatorio defertur, non repurgant. Nam legentes haec non pauci a veritate resiliunt."(1)

In other words, the doctrines of the group around Lefèvre were further away from Roman doctrines and practice than were Luther's pamphlets. Lefèvre, instead of being led by Luther, was ahead of him.

B. Influence in Germany

In place of attempting to show that Lefèvre's thought depended on Luther, it is more appropriate to study to what extent Luther was influenced by Lefèvre. This is not hard to do nor is it the advancing of an unsupported theory. One of the editors of the most complete edition of Luther's works paid this significant tribute to Lefèvre's influence on the thought of Luther.

"Die voranstehenden Vorlesungen Luthers über den Psalter bekunden an zahlreichen Stellen, dass eins der hervorragendsten Hilfsmittel, deren er sich bei der Ausarbeitung bedient, die Psalmenausgabe gewesen ist, welche der französische Humanist Lefevre d'Étaples (Faber Stapulensis) in Paris zuerst 1509, dann in zweiter Auflage 1513 veröffentlicht hatte. Diesem Werke entnahm Luther nicht allein den Text des Hieronymianischen Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos, auf den er unablässig vergleichend zurückweist; er entnahm auch den gelehrten Anmerkungen zahlreiche Anregungen für seine eigene Auslegung: vor allem aber fand er hier einen her-
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(1) Herminjard, op. cit., p. 397. "It is not possible to tell how this discussion among the French may be hindered. Not a few among them have been discoursing not indiscreetly concerning the mass, just as, for a few years, even the invocation of the saints and of purgatory has been rejected in public meeting. In which thing the works of Luther are not interpreted favorably by the brethren, especially his former works, in which a little of the invoking of the saints and of purgatory is reported. For not a few of these works shrink from the truth."

"hermeneutischen Grundsatz ausgesprochen, den er mit Lebhaftigkeit sich aneignete. Den Stapulensis stellt sich in scharfen Gegensatz gegen einen 'sensus literalis', vermöge dessen man den Inhalt der Psalmen zeitgeschichtlich auf David und Evangelisten dieselben auf Christus bezogen haben, so erklärt auch er nur denjenigen 'sensus literalis' anerkennen zu können, 'qui est intentiones prophetae et spiritus sancti in eo loquenti'. Mit grosser Zuversichlichkeit bekennt sich Luther zu demselben hermeneutischen Prinzip, und so steht seine Psalmenauslegung trotz aller Abweichung in Einzelfragen in enger geistiger Verwandtschaft mit diesem Commentar des französischen Gelehrten. In welchem Masse jedoch der Wittenbergen theolog von seinem Vorgänger gelernt habe, das zeigt in lehrreicher Weise ein Fund, der erst vor wenigen Monaten - für unsere Lutherausgabe gerade rechten Zeit - gemacht worden ist."(1)

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(1) D. Martin Luthers Werke, vol. IV, p. 463.

"Luther's outstanding lectures on the Psalms in numerous places show that one of the most prominent aids from which he served himself in this elaboration has been that edition of the Psalms which the French humanist, Lefevre d'Etapes, Faber Stapulensis, published in Paris in 1509 first, then a second edition in 1513. From this work, Luther not only took out the text of Jerome's psalter, according to the Hebrew, to which he constantly referred by comparison, but he also took out the learned notes (annotations) in many instances for his own exegesis; but above all, he found here set forth the fundamental principles of interpretation, which he was quick to take for his own. For Stapulensis set himself in decided opposition to the 'sensus literalis', because of which one would interpret the contents of the Psalms historically, of David and his time. To him the Psalms are prophetic songs, and as the Apostles and the Evangelists have interpreted these of Christ, so he expounds also the 'sensus literalis' only to know "what is the intention of the prophet and of the Holy Spirit speaking through him". With great assurance Luther adopts this principle and so his edition of the Psalms, in spite of a few minor particulars, stands in close spiritual relationship with the commentary of the French scholar.

Dr. Kawerau relates the discovery, in 1885, by Dr. Schnorr, of a copy of the Quincuplex Psalterium of Lefèvre with marginal notes and annotations written in Luther's hand. This was a copy of the 1509 edition, which means that, previous to 1513, Luther was studying Lefèvre's principles of interpretation and this formed the basis of his own interpretation of the Psalms.(1) N. Weiss,(2) commenting on this remarked that

"on ne pourra pas soutenir que c'est la une idée secondaire dans le développement religieuse et théologique du réformateur saxon. Ce n'est, du reste, pas le seul exemple de l'influence exercée par Lefèvre d'Étaples, manifestement antérieur à Luther, au point de vue de théologique, en Allemagne."(3)

In illustration of this statement he cited the discovery of a treatise of Lefèvre's on Matthew XVI which had been annotated in German, perhaps by Luther.(4)

Lefèvre had relations also with other German reformers. Wolfgang Capito, the Alsatian reformer, had been acquainted with Lefèvre's ideas through his contact with Josse Clichtove. In a letter to his bishop, Capito expressed approval of the methods used by Clichtove in the explanation of religious matters.(5) Martin Bucer, Count

(1)D. Martin Luthers Werke, vol. IV, p. 464.

(2)Editor of the Bulletin of the Soc. of French Protestantism.

(3)Bull. d'histoire de la Soc. du Protest. franc., vol.47, p. 49 ff. "It is not possible to maintain that this was a secondary idea in the religious and theological development of the Saxon reformer. Finally, this is not the only example of the influence exercised by Lefevre manifestly previous to Luther, in the field of theology in Germany."

(4)Ibid.

(5)Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. I, p. 21, note 2.

Sigismond of Hohenlohe and other reformers of Strassbourg were well acquainted with the French humanist and reformer.

In short, it may be said of Lefèvre as it was of Erasmus, that, in Germany, "he laid an egg which Luther hatched".

C. Influence in Switzerland

It is not so easy to trace Lefèvre's influence on Zwingli. It is known that Zwingli used Lefèvre's commentary on the Psalter, but the extent to which this influenced him is not known. Lefèvre and his friends were well acquainted with Zwingli's companion, Oecolampadius, and exchanged ideas with him.(1) It was through Farel that Lefèvre's influence was manifest in the reform in Zurich.

Farel

Of those who were influenced by the French reformer, Calvin and Farel remain yet to be considered. There is no question as to the fact of Lefèvre's influence on Farel. It was more than even Farel would admit. He did give credit to his teacher's influence for two things. First, Lefèvre introduced him to the study of the Scriptures as the supreme authority in religion, and to the study of Hebrew and Greek that he might the better understand them;

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(1)Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. I, p. 220.

secondly, the older man implanted in his mind the idea of the necessity for the coming reform. But more than this, it was while in the company of Lefèvre at Meaux that Farel was converted, and from this conversion Farel drew the germ and more of that religious fervor which later marked his ministry. They separated later, but this was due rather to temperment than to difference in essential doctrine.(1)

John Calvin

One other phase of the Reformation outside of France, remains yet to be noticed, namely the Geneva as represented by John Calvin. As a rule, Calvin is portrayed as one who came to his intellectual and religious conclusions independently, but later historians, without meaning to rob Calvin of any credit for his work, have found that his development was not so immediate but that he grew into the convictions which marked his later life.(2) Doumergue, whose life of Calvin is probably the most authoritative work on the great reformer, gives Lefèvre's influence a marked place in Calvin's developemnt.

"Un des points les plus caractéristiques de la théologie calviniste, toute le monde le sait, c'est 'l'honneur de Dieu'. Le Réformateur français se distingue ici du Réformateur allemand et du Réformateur suisse. Peut-on savoir d'ou lui vient cette originalité caractéristique?

Il ya lieu de remarquer qu'un autre Réformateur français, Farel, dans son 'Sommaire' souligne lui aussi cette glorification de Dieu par le fidèle; que le grand imprimeur 'français', Robert Estienne,

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(1) D'Aubugne, History of the Reformation, vol. III, p. 384 ff.
(2) Hyma, Christian Renaissance, p. 279 ff.

"dans son 'Sommaire' place en tête de sa Bible latine, à partir de 1532, exalte, lui aussi, la souveraineté de la volonté divine. C'en est bien assez, semble-t-il pour nous faire penser au maître de Farel, au premier Réformateur français, le Fèvre d'Étaples. Dans la préface de son Commentaire de 1512, le Fèvre expose l'idée de la complète dépendance, du complet néant de causes secondes. De plus l'explication de l'Oraison dominicale, continue dans le Commentaire sur les Évangiles de le Fèvre, diffère de celle de Luther. Celle de Calvin lui ressemble. C'est la même préoccupation, non pas du fidèle, mais de Dieu.

Et M. Max Scheibe conclut: 'Calvin était en relations avec les amis de le Fèvre, en particulier avec son disciple Roussel. Sans doute les Réformateurs allemands ont été les maîtres décisifs de sa pensée évangélique. On peut cependant penser que, d'une manière générale, sur ses sentiments religieux, sur la forme que ses pensées exégétiques ont prise, la tendance de le Fèvre a exercé de l'influence'."(1)

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(1) Doumergue, Vie de Calvin, vol. I, p. 550 ff.

"One of the most characteristic points of Calvinistic theology, as every one knows, is the Sovereignty of God. The French reformer is distinguished in this respect from the German and Swiss reformers. Can we tell whence this characteristic originality came to him?

There is occasion to notice that another French reformer, Farel, also stresses in his 'Summary' this glorification of God by the faithful; that the great French printer, Robert Estienne, in his Latin Bible and in his 'Summary' also exalts the sovereignty of the divine Will. That is really sufficient, it seems, to cause us to think that the master of Farel, the first French Reformer, Lefèvre d'Étaples, was the originator. In the preface of his commentary of 1512 Lefèvre set forth the idea of the complete dependence, of the complete nothingness of secondary causes. Further the exposition of the Lord's Prayer, carried on in the Commentary on the Gospels of Lefèvre, differs from that of Luther, that of Calvin is similar to his. There is the same preoccupation, not for the faithful, but for God.

And M. Max Scheibe concludes: 'Calvin was in communication with the friends of Lefèvre, in particular with Roussel. Without doubt, the German reformers were the deciding leaders in his evangelistic thought. One may believe, however, that the tendency of Lefèvre influenced his religious sentiments and the form that his exegetical thoughts have taken.'

Doumergue concludes his remarks by saying that not only did Lefèvre "exercise une influence remarquables sur Calvin" but this influence came when the thought of Calvin was in a formative state.(1)

. Other Influences

The conditions which surrounded the rise of Protestantism in the Netherlands were such that it is hard to trace the influence of Lefèvre there. Lefèvre himself received no little impetus in his own spiritual life from his stay with the Brethren of the Common Life, and it was at Antwerp that his Bible was printed. What influence he may have had is not definitely known, except that his French Bible was well known in the Netherlands and the Duke of Alva and Philip II of Spain held its influence to be so evil that they had the Council of Trent include it in their Index of forbidden books.

In the above discussion, Lefèvre's influence on the reformers and reform movements outside of France in the various centers of the Reformation has been shown. One remark is needed to show his contribution to the movement at large. Lefèvre was the "Father of modern exegesis", (2) and in this field he influenced not only his immediate friends and followers, but also Luther, Calvin, Zwingli and Erasmus. Lefèvre deserves to be

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(1) Doumergue, op. cit., p. 551.

(2) Fife, Young Luther, p. 186

recognised as one of the foremost reformers before the Reformation, not only of France but also of the entire movement, and should be ranked in this regard with Huss, Wycliff, Savonarola and Erasmus.

B. Contribution in France

Within the Catholic Church

Within the realm of France, the contribution which Lefevre made to the program of reform was divided into two parts. On the one hand, his work had great effect in forwarding the cause of those reformers who broke away from the Roman Church, and, on the other, it influenced many within the Church in the direction of a more evangelical reform. Several of Lefevre's students remained within the Roman Church and continued to exert their influence for a reform of the abuses within it. One of these was Francois Vatable, who carried on the method which he had received from Lefevre in the study of the Scriptures. He became one of the most famous Hebrew scholars of his day and lectured, in the College of France, on the Psalms. Here he opposed his more liberal views to the Sorbonne's narrow bigotry.(1) Another student who remained in the Church was Josse Clichtove, Lefevre's particular friend. He was the first to break away from the doctrinal opinions held by his former teacher, and as an opponent of Luther, he wrote several treatises

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(1)Nouvelle Biographie Generale, Article, Vatable.

against Luther's teachings. But he continued to attempt the reform of those abuses in the Roman Church which made the Protestant Reformation movement possible. A third of Lefèvre's pupils was one still more closely related to Lefèvre in thought and action, Gerard Roussel. Roussel, like Lefèvre, was taken under the protection of Marguerite, and was made her almoner and later she procured for him the appointment as Bishop of Oleron. Roussel did not reject Lefèvre's teachings, nor did he fail to preach them. In 1533, during Lent, he preached in Paris before large congregations and thereby attracted the attention of the Sorbonne. Led by Bédac, they carried their charge of heresy to Francis I, but to no avail. Francis refused to listen to them, and Roussel was unmolested. The Sorbonne lost their leader, Bédac, in this encounter.(1) Roussel continued both to preach and to practice the ideas which he had learned from Lefèvre.(2) Many others might be mentioned who came under Lefèvre's influence, as Bude, Michel d'Arande, Clement Marot and Guillaume Cop, who with many others kept alive the ideas and ideals for which Lefèvre stood.

So prevalent were the Reformation teachings in Paris that Lefèvre's chief followers were hopeful of procuring Francis' approval to the reformation of the

(1) Jourdan, Movement towards Catholic Reform, p. 305.

(2) Baird, Rise of the Huguenots, vol. I, p. 97 ff.

Church along the line of the Augsburg Confession when the "Affair of the Placards" ended all such attempts.(1) Perhaps Luther's policy was the best for Germany, but the more the light is thrown on the beginning of the French Reformation, the more apparent it becomes that those methods could not succeed in the land of an absolute monarch. Had Lefèvre's policy been continued without the interjections of the revolutionaries, who knows what might have been the result in France? With the powerful influence of Marguerite on the side of those working for a reform, the chances were great that France might have become Protestant.

Not the least debt that the Catholics owe to Lefèvre is for his translation of the Scriptures, for

"the standard French version of Jacques Lefèvre was revised by the Louvain theologians and passed through more than forty editions down to the year 1700."(2)

To the Reform Movement

Lefèvre's influence on the Reformation proper in France was naturally more apparent, since the movement as a whole followed the lines which he had pointed out. It was in France that he made his greatest contribution to the Reformation work, for here his influence and example were most clearly felt. In France, the movement began with his teachings, centered in his friends and

(1) Jourdan, Movement etc., p. 307, note 6.

(2) Cambridge Modern History, Vol. I, p. 640.

was carried out under his guidance. The progress of these teachings was advanced by his students and disciples and found readiest hearing among the people with whom he had worked at Meaux and Nerac.

His five-fold contribution has been set forth in this thesis in the various chapters. First, his contribution through his secular work; secondly, his contribution through the publication of the writings of the mystics; thirdly, his contribution through his Biblical commentaries; fourthly, through his translation of the Scriptures; and fifthly, through his work with the Group of Meaux and at Nerac.

Through his Secular Work

Theodore Beza, in his biographies of the men who had aided the progress of the reformed religion in the kingdom of France, included, along with the recognised reformers, many who had never joined in the movement but who had helped in the spread of learning.(1) From the first, students of the progress of the two movements, the Renaissance and the Reformation, in France have agreed that the Renaissance was the forerunner of the Reformation, and Beza's early defense of his inclusion of Francis I of France in the list of men who had forwarded the reformed teachings has been their thought from that day to this.

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(1) Beza (Besze), *Vrais Portraits des Hommes Illustres*.

"Ne sois marri, O Roy très-puissant (attendu que ceci ne diminue en rien la dignité royale) de ce que tu es, et non plustost mis en ce livre, dédié seulement à ceux auxquels tu as esté tant contraire en ta vie: et toy, lecteur chrestien, ne te fasche point de voir ici cest adversaire de la pure doctrine. Certainment il m'a semble que je ne devois laisser en arriere ce Prince, ci qui a remises en honneur les langues Hebraïque, Greque, Latine, et les bonnes sciences, pour estre les portières du temple de la vraye Religio, et qui a chassé l'ignorance laquelle empeschoit la vérité de venir en avant."(1)

If these words could be truly written of the persecuting king solely because of his work in furthering education, how much more should credit go to Lefèvre, for his work prepared the way for some such move on the part of the king. Humanly speaking, if Lefèvre had not done his work in the University, the progress of the Renaissance would have been greatly delayed. And, correspondingly, the Reformation also would have been greatly hindered.

For this reason, Lefèvre's contribution to the Reformation through his secular work can be summarised as having given, first, a preparation for it through his

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(1) Beza, Vrais Pourtraits etc., p. 133.

"Be not grieved, O very powerful king (seeing that this does not diminish in any respect the royal dignity) with that which you are, or rather that you have been put into this book, dedicated solely to those to whom you have been so opposed in your life: and you, Christian reader, do not shudder at the sight of this adversary. Certainly it seemed to me that I should not leave out this Prince, who has held in honor the languages, Hebrew, Greek and Latin, and the good sciences, which were the doors of the temple of the true Religion, who has expelled ignorance and brought in truth. Finally, though this prince may have great imperfections they may be almost counted virtues, if we compare them with the evils arisen after his death."

work in forwarding the Renaissance; and secondly, an introduction to it in method through his work in the teaching and publication of Aristotle's philosophy. When he taught the necessity of a return to the original sources for the real meaning of the doctrines of Aristotle, this method, when applied to the Scriptures, held in it the germ of the reformed teachings. In these two ways, Lefèvre advanced the cause of the Reformation through his teaching and his secular publications.

Through the Publication of the Writings
of the Mystics

Lefèvre's contribution through the publication of the writings of the mystics was to give to the Reformation in France first, a definition of religion as something which went beyond the mere observance of the ordinances and ritual of the Catholic Church; secondly, an ideal for Christian living, namely, union with God. His study and publication of these writings was admirably adapted to prepare both him and his readers for their later understanding of the Bible. In this study Lefèvre found satisfaction for the longings of his heart.

In the church of his day, the conception of religion was largely bound up with the idea of observance of ritual, penances and other church ordinances. The mystics went beyond this to the worship and contemplation of God. Through the study of their writings, Lefèvre

came to a new conception of religion, namely, that religion is finding God. These writings also held up before him and his readers, a new and higher ideal for the Christian life. With the mystics, sin was a very real offense in God's eyes and one not to be considered lightly. They advanced a high ethical ideal for Christian living, as opposed to the lives of the cardinals, bishops and priests. Further the mystics considered the Christian life a joyous, desirable way of living as opposed to the gloomy, ascetic life of the monasteries and convents. They set before their readers, as the highest aim in life, the possibility of a life completely absorbed in God.

Through his Biblical Commentaries

The basic differences between the reformers and the Mother Church were on the questions of the method of justification, the basis of authority, and the sacerdotal office of the church. In their consideration of the first question, the reformers turned for their answer to the writings of Paul and said with the Apostle, "The just shall live by faith". They rejected emphatically the assertion that the Roman Church was the final authority in matters of faith and practice, and asserted that any man, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, had the final authority in the Bible. Against the claim of the Catholic Church that it alone held the office of

mediator, the reformation party affirmed that Christ alone was the Mediator between God and man and that no one needed a priest to approach God through Christ.

Though Lefèvre did not go to the revolutionary extremes to which some of the other reformers went, yet he early expressed his stand on the question of justification to be that of the reformers.

"By works, without faith, no one is ever justified. On the other hand, by faith without works, some are justified."

Thus he stated, five years before Luther, the basic doctrinal position of the Reformation. He never withdrew from this position but continued to affirm and to teach it for the rest of his life.

For the authority of the Church Council and of the Pope, Lefèvre substituted the authority of the Bible as final in matters of faith and practice. He even went so far as to assert that the acts and decrees of the Church must be tested by the Word of God and that the Scriptures were to be used to judge the various ecclesiastical ordinances. On the third point, as on the other two, Lefèvre agreed with the reformers. He stated that every man was his own priest.

To sum up, Lefèvre's contributions through his Biblical commentaries were two: first, he gave to the Reformation the doctrinal teaching that became the fundamental position in its later development - the doctrines

of justification by faith alone and of the right of the individual to approach God without the mediation of priest or Church; secondly, he gave the Reformation a new basis of authority in religion.

Through his Translation

The Reformation was built on the Bible in the hands of the common people. Luther translated it for their use at the cost of many important months of his life. Calvin urged Olivetanus to translate it for the common people. Wycliff and the later English reformers spent a great deal of time and effort to put the Scriptures into the hands of the people. Without this ready access to the Bible for the common people, the Reformation would probably have failed. Lefèvre understood this and translated the Bible into French to be given into the hands of every one.

If this had been Lefèvre's only connection with the Reformation, it would have been enough to earn for him a conspicuous place in the list of those who aided the progress of the reform movement. For Lefèvre's translation, as has been shown, formed the basis for many years of all the later French translations. With this translation and the purpose behind it, Lefèvre gave to the Reformation a method of propagation and the equipment to put this method into effect. The method was to make the Word of God accessible to all, rich and poor particularly the poor.

The equipment was this Word translated into clear, simple French, that the common people might be able to read and understand.

The influence of this translation is inestimable and will forever keep Lefèvre's name high among those who aided the spread of the reformed teachings throughout France. This was, without doubt, his greatest contribution to the rise and spread of the Reformation in France and among French speaking people.

Through his Work at Meaux

The first three divisions of his contribution were theoretical, as, in a sense, was also his translation of the Bible. At Meaux and at Nerac, as has been shown, Lefèvre took the opportunity to put his reforming ideas into effect. Here his work reached two distinct groups, the laboring class and, through Michel d'Arande, the nobility. It is impossible to calculate fully the extent to which the work at Meaux and at Nerac prepared the common people for the receptions of the reformed doctrines. Hauser and Remond maintained that Meaux and Nerac were the centers from which the "heresy" spread throughout France. The work at Nerac was more by means of his influence upon Marguerite and Gerard than by his own actual endeavors.

The effect of these teachings among the nobles was greater than is usually recognised. Aside from Louis de

Berquin, Lefèvre numbered many nobles at Paris and at Court as friends who were sympathetic with his ideals and program. Marguerite and her cousin Renée, duchess of Ferrara, were the most influential of these, but there were Bude, the two Du Bellays, Guillaume Petit, the king's confessor, Guillaume Cop, the son of the king's physician and many of the lesser nobles. It is of course understood that at Nerac these ideas found good soil in the court of Marguerite, and these bore fruit not only in the lives of Marguerite's daughter and grandson, but also in the Huguenot movement.

Besides this actual winning of adherents to his cause, Lefèvre gave the Reformation a successful illustration of his method at work. His method is well described by the expression "peaceful penetration" of ideas. He saw the danger of allying these doctrines with any governing power and preferred peaceful methods. At both Meaux and Nerac Lefèvre demonstrated that his method could and did accomplish results.

His Contribution as Shown in the History of French Protestantism

The later history of French Protestantism centers around the Huguenot party, which was, doctrinally, a direct descendant of Lefèvre's teaching. In the progress of the movement, the leaders built on the doctrinal basis

which Lefèvre had laid down. The Huguenots used three methods in their efforts to further the cause of their religion. The first method used was that of intrigue and politics. The nobles who had joined the Huguenot party attempted to oppose the wiles of Catherine de Medici by intrigues of their own. This method resulted in the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's. The second method employed was that of war. The party took to arms and joined in the Civil War which was ended when the Huguenot leader, Henry of Navarre, the grandson of Marguerite, thought Paris "worth a Mass" and ascended the throne of France as Henry IV. He promptly issued the famous Edict of Nantes. The lasting success of this procedure was shown when Henry's grandson, Louis XIV, revoked the Edict of Nantes and banished the Huguenots from France. Both of these methods failed them. The third means used to advance their doctrines was that which had been illustrated by Lefèvre, and later urged on the Huguenots by Theodore Beza, namely, the peaceful spread of the reformed teachings. So successful was this method that it is estimated that when the Huguenot party took to arms, nearly half the population of France either had accepted or was favorable to their religious teachings. Politics and war brought the Huguenot party to defeat and banishment, no man can tell what would have been the result if they had followed in the footsteps of Lefèvre and refrained from entering the realm

of politics. Certain it is that when they followed him they gained adherents consistently.

In conclusion, Lefevre's contribution to the French Reformation was five-fold: first, he made a preparation for the Reformation through his secular teaching and publications; secondly, he gave to the movement a definition of religion and an ideal of Christian living through his publication of the writings of the mystics; thirdly, he substituted the authority of the Bible for the authority of the Church and stated the basic doctrines of the reform movement through his Biblical commentaries; fourthly, he supplied the Reformation with a method and the equipment for expansion through his translation of the Scriptures; and finally, he gave a successful illustration of this method at work in his work at Meaux. Truly Lefevre deserves the title "The Father of the French Reformation."

C. Character of Lefevre's Religion

It seems unnecessary after all the above discussion to ask the question Was Lefevre a Protestant? This question has been answered in three ways; first, by saying that he was in reality a Protestant; secondly, that he was a true Catholic to the end of his days; thirdly, that he was neither the one nor the other, but was a mystic. In order to answer this question it will help to consider

the opinions of his contemporaries who knew him best, and then note from his own statements what he believed.

Opinions of his Contemporaries

With the exception of the papal legate Aleandro, the contemporaries of Lefevre considered him an "evangelical" or a heretic, according to the point of view. The circumstance which lends itself to the belief that he was a true Catholic was that he never made an open break with the Church. Aleandro realized this and, considering his case, wrote this very interesting opinion concerning him:

"In the main his errors are of no great moment, although at their first publication their novelty gave them an appearance of importance: at that time it was an unheard of thing that one should alter the smallest syllable or even amend a text corrupted by copyists in the ancient versions used by the Church. Nowadays quite another business occupies us than that of translation, and a new version, into which no false doctrine is introduced, is not now accounted any great affair - - If only Lefevre were to make a little recantation of some passages, even as St. Augustine did, everything could easily be put right - - But Lefevre is so far from us that it would suit best to prevail on him, through the intervention of some worthy prince or nobleman, to betake himself to Italy, because as long as he is beside this Gerard nothing will succeed."(1)

But even the peace-making (in this case) Aleandro was not very certain as to Lefevre's opinions nor accurate in his information.(2)

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(1) This letter is given in a French translation in Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. II, p. 386 ff. Translated into English in Jourdan, Movement etc., p. 301.

(2) Aleandro made several mistakes in this letter.

The Sorbonne was the most outspoken of all concerned. Led by Beda, they located many heretical propositions in his books. Lefèvre had been condemned by them three times, in 1521, 1523 and 1525, and it was only because of the king's and Marguerite's protection that he had not been burned. Whole books had been written against him, not only by Béda but by others who were "defending the faith".(1) His ideas concerning the translation and use of the Bible were counted as heretical and not to be tolerated in the "very Christian realm" of France. Finally the Index of 1560 included his French Bible in their list "librorum prohibitorum", and the Spanish Inquisition in 1617 expurgated more than forty lines from his "Psalterium Quincuplex".(2)

The reformers were divided in their opinions concerning him. De la Tour asserts that Luther turned against him to the extent of carefully removing from his second edition of the Psalter all recognition of Lefèvre's work from which Luther had profited so much.(3) At the time of which de la Tour writes Lefèvre had not yet come into conflict with the forces which forced a definition of terms and parties. Luther considered that Lefèvre did not give sufficient credit to the grace of God, but did

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(1) John Fisher, et al.

(2) There is a copy of the edition expurgated by the Inquisition in the Union Theological Library.

(3) De la Tour, Jacques Lefèvre, Correspondant, vol. 253, p.262.

not reject him on any other grounds. Because of Lefèvre's refusal to join the revolutionary reformers, Toussain was outspoken in his denunciation of his cowardice, but not of his opinions. Erasmus considered Lefèvre as of the same mind as himself, but therein he erred, for Lefèvre was much more deeply moved in this matter than was the more brilliant but shallower humanist. The consensus of opinion of Lefèvre's own day was that, in point of view if not in action, Lefèvre was a Protestant.

Lefèvre's own Opinion

To quote all the references which can be found in Lefèvre's writings which agree with Protestant teaching would be too great a task for this paper. However, there is a statement of faith in twenty one theses, written by Jean Hess, concerning which Lefèvre wrote:

"mirum est quam consono spiritu de verbo Dei, de summo Christi sacerdotio, de matrimonio omnia dicantur."(1)

These twenty one theses had been approved by Zwingli(2) and by Luther.(3) Since Lefèvre approved them also, they can be used to find out what Lefèvre's mind was on this question. Only a few of them will be quoted.

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(1)Herminjard, Correspondance etc., vol. I, p. 226.

"It is wonderful how they all are proclaimed in an accordant spirit, concerning the Word of God, concerning the supreme priesthood of Christ, concerning marriage."

(2)Ibid., p. 226, note 48.

(3)Ibid., p. 228, note *.

"De Verbo Dei.

Qui unice solum per verbum Dei conscientiae hominum pavidae nutriuntur pascuntur, consolantur, animantur, eriguntur, vivificantur, unice etiam et solum Dei verbum predicari ebuccinarique, ac per illud omnis homo admoneri et doceri debet."(1)

Other propositions of this group are similar and extoll the Word of God in its cleansing power,(2) the uniqueness of its mission,(3) and the evil effects of resisting it.(4)

"De Summo Christi sacerdotio.

Christus a Deo Patre per sermonem jurisjurandi sacerdos, secundum ordinem Melchisedech, in aeternum constitutus, una pro peccatis oblata victima, domui Dei praefectus, perpetuo sedet, ad dexteram Dei, ac manet sacerdos in aeternum consummatus, unicus et solus, perpetuumque habet sacerdotium.(5)

Idcirco Missa et illius peracti sacrificium esse non potest (alioqui oportuisset Christum saepius passum fuisse a condito mundo, itemque occisum et mactatum), sed illius duntaxat semel peracti sacrificii ac testamenti per sacerdotem et hostiam facti commemoratio."(6)

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(1)Herminjard, op. cit., vol. I, p. 229, thesis 2.

"Concerning the Word of God.

Through the Word of God alone and only through it, are the fearful consciences of men nourished, fed, encouraged, quickened, cheered, revived, also the Word and it alone ought to be proclaimed and preached and thus be urged upon and taught to all men."

(2)Ibid., thesis 5.

(3)Ibid., thesis 5.

(4)Ibid., thesis 6.

(5)Ibid., p. 229-30, thesis 1. "Concerning the supreme Priesthood of Christ.

Christ, a priest by an oath from God the Father, according to the order of Melchisedeck, founded in eternity, the one victim offered for sin, given authority over the kingdom of God, is seated on the right hand of God forever and remains a priest perfected for eternity and Christ and Christ alone holds a perpetual priesthood."

(6)Ibid., p. 330, thesis 7. "Therefore the Mass cannot be the accomplishing of that sacrifice(otherwise it would have behooved Christ to have been crucified often by the world, sacrificed and killed) but it is the commemoration of that sacrifice, accomplished only once by the priest and victim."

It has been shown that Lefèvre insisted on the main doctrines of the Reformation.

The convincing proof that Lefèvre considered himself a Protestant comes from the circumstances of his death.

"Jacques Fabri était du nombre de ceux qui, dans la première persécution contre les évangéliques, chercha son salut dans la fuite, et se sauva à Nerac auprès de la reine de Navarre. La reine l'envoya chercher un jour, et lui fit dire qu'elle voulait dîner avec lui et avec quelques autres savants qu'elle avait fait inviter, dans la conversation desquels elle se plaisait extrêmement. Pendant le dîner Fabri parut extrêmement triste jusqu'à verser des larmes de temps en temps. La reine lui demanda pourquoi il était ainsi triste, et lui fit des reproches de ce que l'ayant envoyé chercher pour la divertir, lui-même paraissait enseveli dans une si profonde tristesse - Hélas! répondit le bon veillard, Madame, comment pourrais-je être gai et inspirer de la joie aux autres, moi qui suis le plus grand pécheur que la terre porte? - Et quel péché avez-vous commis, maître Jacques, lui répondit la reine, vous qui avez de votre jeunesse même une vie si sainte? - Je suis, dit-il, âgé de cent et un ans, je n'ai jamais touché aucune femme, et je ne me souviens pas d'avoir rien fait qui me puisse faire craindre la mort, qu'une seule chose. La reine le pressera de lui déclarer ce que c'était. Lui, fondant en larmes et la voix entrecoupée de sanglots, s'écria enfin: Comment pourrais-je subsister devant le tribunal de Dieu, moi qui ai enseigné aux autres la pureté de l'Évangile? Mille et Mille gens ont souffert patiemment la mort et mille tourments pour la doctrine que je leur ai enseignée. Et moi, mauvais pasteur, après être parvenu à un si grand âge, ne devant rien moins aimer que la vie, et même devant désirer la mort, je me suis lâchement dérobé au martyre et j'ai trahi la cause de mon Dieu. Sur quoi la reine prit la parole, et comme elle était très-éloquente, très-savante, et qu'elle avait de grands sentiments de piété, elle lui fit voir par plusieurs raisons et par un grand nombre d'exemples, qu'il ne fallait pas désespérer de la miséricorde de Dieu, parceque cela même dont il s'accusait, était arrivé à diverses saintes personnes que Dieu pourtant

"avait reçues en sa gloire. Tous ceux qui étaient à table, ajoutèrent quelque chose pour appuyer ce que la reine avait dit.

Il écouta tout fort attentivement, et demeurant consolé et persuadé, il reprit la parole et dit: Puisqu'ainsi est, il n'y a donc plus qu'à partir de ce monde après avoir fait mon testament, et cela sans délai, car je sens bien que Dieu m'appelle. Puis regardant attentivement la reine: Madame, lui dit-il, je vous fais mon héritière. Je lègue tous mes livres à maître Gerard Roussel, votre predicateur, et je laisse eux pauvres mes habits et tout ce qui me peut rester de bien. Sur quoi la reine en souriant lui dit: Maître Jacques, si vous donnez tous vos biens aux pauvres, que me doit-il donc revenir à moi que vous venez de nommer pour votre héritière universelle? - L'emploi de distribuer l'héritage aux pauvres, dit le veillard. Ah! je l'accepte de bon coeur, répondit la reine, et je jure que cette succession m'est plus agréable, que si le roi de France, mon frère, me faisait son héritière universelle. Sur-le-champ il se répandit une joie sur la visage de ce bonhomme: il se leva et dit à la reine: Madame, j'ai besoin d'un peu de repos; adieu, rejouissez-vous et que Dieu vous conserve. Ensuite il alla se jeter sur un lit qui était tout près de là. On crut qu'il s'était endormi, mais quand on s'approcha de lui, l'on trouva qu'il était mort au Seigneur, sans avoir eu aucune marque de maladie; car quand on le voulut éveiller, on fut bien étonné de voir qu'il avait rendu l'esprit. C'est ainsi que la reine raconta la mort de saint homme. Elle trouva cette mort si extraordinaire, qu'elle voulut que ce bienheureux défunt fût couvert d'un marbre qu'elle avait fait préparer pour elle, et elle le fit enterrer d'une manière fort honorable."(1)

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(1)Salchi, Les Dernières Heures, pp. 210-213.

"Jacques Faber was of the number of those who in the first persecution against the evangelicals, sought his safety in flight and took refuge at Nerac near the Queen of Navarre. The queen sent to seek him one day and said to him that she wished to dine with him and with several other scholars whom she had invited, in whose conversation she delighted greatly. During the dinner Faber seemed very sad, even shedding tears from time to time. The queen asked why he was so sad and reproached him for having brought him there to amuse her and he was engulfed in sorrow - Helas, replied the old man, Madame how could I be gay and inspire joy in others, I who am the greatest sinner that the world bears? And what sin have you committed, Master Jacques? responded

Graf, then, was correct when he wrote:

"the queen to him* you who have*from your youth led such a saintly life. - I am, he said, one hundred and one years old and I have never touched a woman, and I cannot remember having done a single act that is able to make me fear death except one. - The queen urged him to declare what this was. He dissolving into tears and with his voice choked with sobs, finally cried: How will I be able to stand before the tribunal of God, I who have taught to others the purity of the Gospel? Thousands and thousands of people have patiently suffered death and a thousand tortures for the doctrine which I taught them. And I, base shepherd, after having reached so great an age and having nothing that I should love less than life, and should even desire death, have cowardly escaped from martyrdom and I have betrayed the cause of my God.

Upon that the queen began to speak and as she was very eloquent, very wise and very religious, she convinced him by many reasons and by a great number of examples, that he did not need to despair of the mercy of God, because this same thing of which he accused himself had happened to many saintly people whom God had however received into His glory. All those who were present at the table added some thing to support what the queen had said.

He listened to all very attentively and resting comforted and persuaded, again began to speak: Seeing that it is so, there is then nothing more but to leave this world after making my will and that without delay for I feel truly that God is calling me. Then looking attentively at the queen: Madame, he said, I make you my heir. I bequeath all my books to Master Gerard Roussel, your preacher, and I leave to the poor my clothes and all the goods which may remain to me. Upon which the queen smiling said to him: Master Jacques, if you give all your possessions to the poor, what then are you going to give me, as my portion, seeing that you have just named me your sole heir? - The task of distributing the heritage to the poor, said the old man.

Ah! I accept heartily, responded the queen, and I swear that this inheritance is more pleasant to me than if the king of France my brother made me his sole heir. Immediately joy diffused the face of the good man, he arose and said to the queen, Madame, I need a little rest; adieu, joy be with you and may God preserve you. Following this, he threw himself on a bed that was quite near. They thought that he was asleep, but when they approached him they found that he was dead in the Lord, without having had a sign of sickness; for when they wanted to waken him, they were indeed astonished to find his spirit had left him.

This is as the queen recounted the death of this saintly man. She found this death so extraordinary that she wished this blessed dead body covered by a marble which she had prepared for herself, and she interred him in a very worthy manner."

"Il nous semble qu'il ne peut pas rester de doute sur cette question - - Mais, dira-t-on, il n'est jamais séparé de fait de l'église catholique, il ne s'est pas déclaré ouvertement protestant. Non, mais il ne se tint jamais comme Erasme dans un lâche milieu entre les tendances opposées, il ne craignit jamais d'exprimer hautement et franchement sa manière de voir, et il aima mieux s'exposer à la persécution que de transiger avec des opinions qu'il reconnaissait comme erronées. S'il ne se déclara pas membre de l'église protestante en France, c'est qu'il n'y avait pas encore d'église protestante en France à cette époque, et il n'était pas l'homme désigné par la Providence pour la fonder."(1)

Conclusion

The development of the Reformation in France was of the same pattern as that of Germany and Switzerland. Lefèvre's "middle road" was abandoned, because the reformers, like their historians, thought it untenable. Lefèvre's name with his method was forgotten in the evil days of the religious wars in France. The history of French Protestantism has been so largely a political history that most of the men whose minds conceived it and whose work started it, have been forgotten. The reformers

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(1) Graf, Essai sur la vie et les écrits de Jacques Lefèvre, p. 120.

"It seems to us that there can remain no doubt on this question, But they say - he never broke from the Catholic Church, he never openly declared himself Protestant. No, but he never lived like Erasmus in a cowardly mid-position between opposing tendencies, he never feared to express aloud and with frankness his opinions and he preferred to expose himself to persecution than to compromise with the opinions which he recognised as erroneous. If he did not declare himself a member of the Protestant Church in France it is because there was not yet any Protestant Church in France at this period and he was not the man chosen by Providence to found it."

forgot their debt to Lefèvre in their resentment because he did not come out openly on their side. The Catholics were willing to forget the man who had done so much to further the reform movement. Luther, Erasmus, and Calvin have been so conspicuous that historians have been unable to see behind them to Lefèvre. But behind them all, behind the entire movement, both in its thought and religious development, there was a quiet, gentle, peace-loving, yet earnest, sincere and devout man, Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples. He more than any other deserves to be called the first and greatest French reformer. Truly "Le Père de la Réforme française".

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