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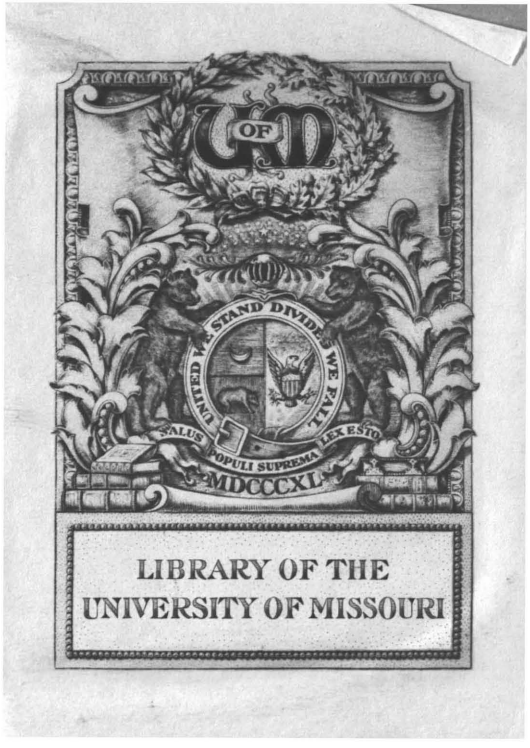
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THE EVOLUTION

OF THE FRENCH NOVEL,

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by

JACOB WARSHAW, A. B., A. M.

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE

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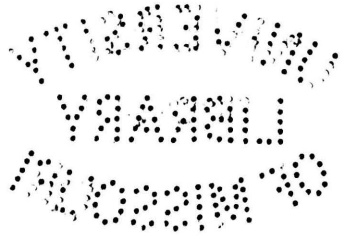

prior to the Astrée.

Title-page B.
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"All development is carried on slowly; the day after is the continuation of the day before; every new phenomenon is the outcome of a more ancient one, and bears a family resemblance to it."

Max Nordau.

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PREFACE.

It will be observed that I have made no special effort in the course of my work to arrive at a very precise, fixed definition of the novel. This should, perhaps, occasion no surprise, since I am dealing with a period in which many critics deny the novel any existence at all. The average historian of English literature sees no English novel before Richardson's Pamela (1740): the average French writer begins the career of the French novel with the Astrée (1610)[1] or the Princesse de Clèves (1678). It does not require much reflection, however, to realize that these dates are purely conventional. There were novels sufficiently like Richardson's to be classed as such before Pamela, and sufficiently like d'Urfé's to be classed as such before the Astrée. This fact is beginning to receive a belated consideration, and I have no doubt that the northern boundaries of the novel will finally be moved back several centuries. M. Jusserand has already displaced the starting-point of the English novel in The Novel in the Time of Shakespeare, and M. Reynier has done the same thing for the French novel in his Le Roman sentimental avant l'Astrée. A change of base of this kind has been both desirable and inevitable. It has been desirable because it has more satisfactorily classified a large

1. This is the accepted date: but cf. Crane, Héros, etc., p. 63, in which 1607 is given as the year in which the original edition of the first part was issued.

121658 59

body of writings hitherto poorly classified: and it has been inevitable because it has been more in accord with the truth. That it has not come sooner has been due chiefly to the belief that literary classes must by compulsion form a prolongation of identical classes having a previous existence. In other words, critics who have discarded the Biblical method of accounting for the origin of man still employ it occasionally in accounting for the origin of literary species. When that origin seems enveloped in clouds of obscurity, the fiat lux is delayed: the critic seeks safety in doubt. Prof. Stoddard has given expression to this feeling: "I do not undertake to show that the novel has grown out of any preceding form of literature with such preciseness that the traces of its growth can be shown. It is extremely doubtful if we can yet work out a perfect statement of the novel out of any other form of literature; it is doubtful if we can work out any chronological sequence even within the period--the one hundred and fifty years--of the novel's life in English literature to the present day. We cannot say that the novels of 1740 legitimately developed into the novels of 1780---."[1] If this cannot be done for the novel, it is difficult to see how it can be done, for instance, for the drama. Yet the history of the latter indicates that it has been done. The perplexity concerning the ultimate sources and the early development of the novel is in all probability merely a result of its modernity. The drama finds its Adam in the

1. Stoddard-Evol. of Eng. Nov. -pp. 7,8.

Greeks: the novel lacks that strong support. We can assert that the modern drama has developed out of the ancient drama,--that drama has grown out of drama,--because the latter existed as far back as we wish to go in artistic research. We do not say that the novel has developed out of the novel, because we have accepted as truth the common iteration that there were no novels before 1610 or 1740. Hence we occupy a position similar to that held in a consideration of the Greek drama prior to the earliest regular plays. What did the first Greek drama spring from? From nothing? By no means. Some dramatic form or other preceded it. In like manner, some form of novel preceded Pamela: and that precisely out of which the novel of 1780 grew was the novel of 1740 and of former years. This is certain, even if the novel of 1780 had borne practically no resemblance to that of 1740. For nothing is surer than that the novel of 1741 grew out of the novel of 1740 and previous years: that the novel of 1742 grew out of the novel of 1741 and previous years: and so on down to the novel of 1780 and beyond. Most novels take their shape and attitude from novels popular in their own day. Individual writers create divergences: and the sum of these variations may, in a generation, change the face of the novel in a marked degree. But there need not, on this account, be any doubt as to the genuine derivation or the legitimate descent of the novel.

Followed out logically, the line of reasoning here presented leads naturally to the conclusion that the novel has existed in some guise always. Its most primitive form

must have been the narrative anecdote, apologue, short-story. After the advent of the professional minstrel or jongleur, it must have become differentiated by its length from the shorter styles. It did not exist as a definite type of literature until that apparently unimportant principle of length had set it apart from the rest of fictinn in technical requirements and in choice of subject-matter. It is in view of these and similar considerations that I have begun my account of the French novel with the chansons de geste,--the first French narratives of which we have knowledge that can be classified as novels. Of course, the selection of the date represented by the chansons de geste is in a measure purely a matter of convenience. The starting-point of all investigations is a matter of convenience, and is not conditioned by any absolute necessity. The point of departure which I have chosen seems to me to offer the largest number of concrete advantages in a study of the novel written in the French language.

The fair-minded critic will not hesitate, I believe, to accept these premises. That the novel has not been the spontaneous creation of a master-mind should be admitted by all. It has progressed, or developed, or evolved, and is still undergoing that process, and will forever continue to do so. It has not, to be sure, evolved steadily out of the chansons de geste alone or out of any single literary form, but has at all times drawn some portion of its method and much of its inspiration from the other literary classes,--the drama, the lyric, the chronicle, the essay, the portrait,--flourishing round about it.

My failure to attempt a rigid definition of the novel has not, nevertheless, caused me to abandon the attempt at offering some sort of definition. What is the novel? We know that it is today something fairly definite, and we immediately recognize the novel as such in our ordinary reading. Is there any criterion by which it may be thus recognized during its entire history? Can it be so defined in our own time as to merit the importance of a separate category? Can it be so defined for an epoch earlier than 1610 or 1740?

Prof. Horne has found little agreement among critics as to which was the first novel and what the component parts of the novel must be. "This difference of expression evidently indicates that each of these critics has established for himself a slightly differing definition of the novel, so that one is willing to include under the name what another regards as lacking some essential element."[1] Since most of the discussion concerning the novel has taken place within the last fifty years, it has strongly inclined toward a general definition which should harmonize with the special definition given to the novel of the latter part of the nineteenth century. Consequently, the majority of English and French critics have had a decidedly "realistic" leaning, that is to say, a tendency to regard the novel as a picture of every-day life of rather a democratic or popular nature. Seventeenth-century judges in general, like Huet, held ideas quite the reverse of this.

The chief cause of dissension may be attributed to narrowness of interpretation. A second cause is to be

found in the use of terms consecrated by age. In England, the old word romance has had the effect of segregating the early novels from the late novels and in limiting the accepted date for the beginning of the species, though most of the romances cannot be distinguished in any appreciable manner from approved novels written since 1740. This condition may appear absent in France because of the high antiquity of roman as applied to stories. Yet even there the use of such traditional terms as chansons de geste, vies de saints, romans bretons has been responsible for a kind of artificial, literary blindness. Narrowness of interpretation has been a necessary concomitant. Scholars have explicitly scouted the notion of the existence of novels in France before the Astrée or, as an extreme early limit, before Rabelais. Notwithstanding, the problem is simple and the search for a rational date at which to start the novel is not involved in that intricate maze of difficulties before which several critics have blenched. To endow the novel with a moderately respectable antiquity is not only possible, but even unavoidable. An enormous number of works is extant which cannot be termed drama nor history nor poetry nor scientific treatises nor essays. Some of them have been called chansons de geste, some, romans bretons, some, romans d'aventure, some, romans byzantins; but they have rarely,--it might almost be said, never,--been looked upon as romans in the way that Gil Blas, Manon Lescaut, Paul et Virginie have been so regarded. Their affiliations with the modern novel, however, are direct and close. As I shall try to show, they are the modern novels of the period in which they

were composed. Is it, then, possible or expedient to treat them all as one class? In my opinion, it is both possible and expedient. They are novels.

For the purpose, therefore, of including in my study all such books as appear to me to be novels, I shall define the novel as a fictitious narrative of considerable length, distinct from the drama in that the characters are not dramatically represented; distinct from genuine poetry in that felicitous imagery, a just cadence, and melody of expression are in it only a means, an accident, and not an end; distinct from history in that the aim is neither to record nor to discuss history solely and seriously as such; distinct from scientific works in that no pretension is held of desiring to increase knowledge for its own sake. Stated in its baldest form, the definition of the novel as a fictitious narrative of considerable length seems to me adequate not only for my particular object, but for any discussion of the type in question. I doubt if any other definition will stand the test of the wide range of appeal in even the most modern novels. I am persuaded that this conception of the nature of the novel, homely as it is and inclusive as it is, must underlie all treatment of the novel, whether of the present or of the past.

My use of the term "evolution" calls for some explanation without which I may appear to be laboring under the delusion that the strict methods and principles of the biological sciences can be carried over into literary investigation. I am anxious, also, to avoid the charge of

having employed the term ~~carelessly.~~ indiscriminately. If, indeed, it had seemed to me to possess advantages only equal to those of any other phraseology, I should, nevertheless, have felt justified in adhering to it, since it unquestionably constitutes a specific enrichment of our literary vocabulary and is no longer the exclusive property of science. But its positive superiority to other possible expressions has appeared to me so great as to render the use of it almost obligatory. No other word has had associated with it so intimately certain ideas peculiarly applicable to the history of the novel, yet constantly neglected. One of these ideas is the separation into species. My work has brought to me the conviction that the novel has evolved out of an amorphous condition into definite species or types. An extension of this thought is met in Prof. Stoddard's statement: "The tendency is, I believe, in the modern novel toward the differentiation into specific types of expression; into the development of a novel-form as a means for presenting an illustration of a principle,--a study of a religious, or personal, or ethical, or social condition in such a fashion that the presentation shall have a distinct character of its own."[1] Another of these ideas, applicable both to the content and to the technique of the novel, has been admirably set forth by John Fiske in his discussion of the evolution of society,--and before him, I believe, by Herbert Spencer: "The advance from indefinite homogeneity to definite heterogeneity in structure and function is a leading characteristic of social progress."[1] Still another of these ideas is the negation

1. John Fiske--Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy--p. 209, Vol. II.

of any solution of continuity between existing forms and those which immediately preceded them. Huxley outlined this principle in his article on ~~X~~ Evolution written for the Encyclopedia Britannica: "Both Mr. Darwin and Mr. Wallace lay great stress on the close relation which obtains between the existing fauna of any region and that of the immediately antecedent geological epoch in the same region; and rightly, for it is in truth inconceivable that there should be no genetic connection between the two. It is possible to put into words the proposition, that all the animals and plants of each geological epoch were annihilated, and that a new set of very similar forms was created for the next epoch, but it may be doubted if anyone who ever tried to form a distinct mental image of this process of spontaneous generation on the grandest scale, ever really succeeded in realizing it."[1] These and a few additional ~~considerations~~ aspects have led me to give to "evolution" the preference over "history, which is a neutral term and tells nothing; over "development", which sometimes means "evolution" and sometimes something else; over "progress", which often has a moral significance and usually gives the impression of an advance, of an increase in merit,--a distinction which I do not think it advisable to discuss in this study.

I desire to acknowledge my indebtedness for substantial criticism to Professors Walter Miller, Belden, and Murray, and to ~~XXXXXXXXX~~ express my thanks to the library officials at Harvard and the University of Missouri for the

1. Encyc. Brit., Werner ed., New York 1903, Vol. VIII, p. 751.

many courtesies shown me.

It may not be out of place to add that I have tried to give credit to those to whom it has been due. If any serious omissions in this respect or any serious misstatements of fact have been made, I shall be grateful for having my attention called to them.

PREFATORY NOTE.

My task has been the study of the evolution of the French novel down to the publication of the Astrée, in 1610.

I have used the term "evolution" in preference to any other because it commonly carries with it the connotation of a separation into species. My work has brought to me the conviction that the novel has grown out of an amorphous condition into definite species or types: that its technique has developed from inartistic lawlessness into distinct principles. If I needed any other justification for the employment of this term, I should say that literature has as much right to the word as science, and that it constitutes a specific enrichment of the literary vocabulary. I do not, of course, wish to give the impression that I am carrying over into a literary study the strict methods and principles of the biological sciences. My scientific attainments, I regret to say, are not such as to encourage me in the attempt, even if I thought it expedient. The only notion of "evolution" which I wish to convey is that possessed by the average man of the present time, and briefly stated above.

Perhaps I ought to apologize for the copious quotation in which I have indulged. My chief desire has been to make everything as clear as possible. Moreover, the absence from our library of a large number of the books to which I refer, may serve as a

sufficient excuse. In addition,--though I do not urge that as a reason here,--I believe that quotation of striking quality is of genuine value in literary research.

I scarcely need call attention to the fact that my treatment of the bourgeois novel and of the principles of technique is not as thorough as I should have liked to make it.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE FRENCH NOVEL.

Part I.

Position and Early Environment of the French Novel.

The development of the French novel after the appearance of the Astrée in 1610 is understood with sufficient accuracy. Koerting, among others, has followed it through the seventeenth century with admirable judgment.[1] The Princesse de Clèves and Gil Blas are generally considered as having fixed for a long time the standards of the modern novel. Its earlier progress is, of course, treated in the histories of medieval French literature: but only from the chronological standpoint and in scattered sections. So far as my knowledge goes, no individual study of the growth of the French novel as a literary type has occupied itself with the beginnings, the youth, the first impulses, without which the novel would not be what it is today. M. Wilmotte, indeed, has made a short investigation into its manner of unfolding in the middle of the twelfth century:[2] but the fact that he holds a brief for the Énéas takes away from the broader values which he might have offered. In any case, he is not concerned with the general development of the novel up to the moment when it became recognized as a fixed form. M. Levrault's booklet, bearing the title Le Roman (Évolution du Genre), need barely be mentioned, since it lays no claims to scholarship, has only a few pages devoted to the novel before the seventeenth century, and is in essence

2. Wilmotte, Év. du Rom., etc., p. 323 ff.
Cf. also André Le Breton, Le Roman au dix-septième siècle: Paul Morillot, Le Roman en France depuis 1610 jusqu'à nos jours: Max, freiherr von Waldberg, Der empfindsame Roman in Frankreich.

Brunetière has a chapter of notes on the evolution of the novel in his Manuel: Clouzet has, in his Roman français, a chapter on "L'Évolution du Roman", which is about as fruitful as M. Levrault's syllabus: Prof. Stoddard has an exceedingly suggestive chapter on the "Evolution of the Novel" in his Evolution of the English Novel.

nothing more than an outline for class-use.

The study presented in these pages has been undertaken in the desire to supply something of that which is still lacking,--a connected account of the progress of the French novel prior to the Astrée, an examination of the causes underlying important changes in matter and manner, an inquiry into the process of its evolution, and an intimation of its effect on story-writing outside of France. It cannot, of course, hope to be exhaustive in the treatment of any specific branch of the novel. Others, better qualified, have left that work to the future.

Out of the vast amount of labor spent on the earlier novel, by far the least has been devoted to the study of its development. The most acute minds in modern scholarship, such as Gaston Paris, Paul Meyer, Pio Rajna, Menéndez y Pelayo, have limited themselves mainly to questions of origins. The value of such investigation is certainly inestimable: and these scholars have succeeded in saving for us many a fact which might otherwise have been lost to us forever. Nevertheless, it is a pity that none of them has seen fit to turn from the unending delving into the beginnings of the various departments of the novel to a careful study of its progress. If, for example, Paul Meyer, with his accurate knowledge of medieval literature and his thorough method of research, had applied these capabilities to the general course and unfolding of the novel in the manner in which he applied them to the development of the Alexander-story, we should now have a much surer foundation on which to base further research. We should have a definite criterion for the selection of material: for the choice of

or of the Japanese Taketori Monogatari of the ninth century?[3] If we are dealing with the universal novel, we must allot an equitable space to the stories of all nations: but to emphasize them in the history of the European novel when they have probably contributed nothing to it and presumably drawn nothing from it is to sacrifice accuracy of outline to a capricious fondness for picturesque color.

that which is of the most practical, present value. There is no special reason why literary research dealing with the novel should not have a fixed, concrete purpose in addition to the abstract interest found in it by many. Granted that a mass of apparently unrelated facts had to be collected before any synthesis could be made, it still remains true that we have for a long time had a sufficiently large number of such facts, and that no serious effort to correlate them, to weigh their significance in the evolution of the novel has been entered upon. The attention has been concentrated on origins, not on processes.

Yet, the digging for origins has grave limitations. Much of it has developed into a craze for mere facts,[1] without relation to their bearing on the subject itself or on any allied subject. Not only that, but many of the facts treated by students of the novel are of relatively small importance in this particular field. Of what significance, for instance, in the history of the novel, is the existence of an unknown Egyptian story of thousands of years ago, or of an obscure Chinese romance of mediocre content?[2]

insert 3A

There are those, nevertheless, who believe in gathering information for its own sake, and, perhaps, in the conviction that some day, somewhere, somehow, it will be turned to use. Occasionally, this faith has been rewarded. More often, it has succeeded only in burying deeper an immaterial detail. Much better, saner, for the advancement of learning is, in my opinion, the view taken by M. Joseph Bédier, one of the most attractive representatives of modern erudition:

1. Cf. Raleigh, Eng. Nov., p. 134.
2. Warren, Hist. of the Novel, p. 343 ff.
3. Closet Ro[illegible]

To printer:
I mean "omit everything included between the brackets."

"Ce n'est pas que je me range à l'opinion néfaste selon laquelle tout objet de science mérite égale attention. C'est une tendance commune à beacoup d'érudits de s'enfermer dans leur sujet, sans se soucier autrement de son importance, grande ou menue. Volontiers, ils s'en~~XXX~~tiennent à la recherche pour la recherche, et professent que toute investigation, quel qu'en soit l'objet, vaut ce que vaut celui qui l'entreprend. Les résultats qu'ils obtiennent serviront-ils jamais à personne? Ils laissent à d'autres, sous prétexte de désintéressement scientifique, le soin d'en décider.] Or, comme une phrase n'a toute son importance que dans son contexte, un animal dans sa série, un homme dans son milieu historique, de même les faits littéraires ne méritent l'étude que selon qu'ils intéressent plus ou moins des groupes de faits similaires plus généraux, et une monographie n'est utile que si l'auteur a clairement perçu ces rapports." (1)

If, however, research for the sake of research is to be defended, the difficulty of accounting for the exclusive pursuit of the origins of the novel still subsists. The archaeologist, the ethnologist, the sociologist, the folklorist may well consider of consequence the tracing back of stories to their ultimate sources,--even though the discovery of the primeval starting-point is sure to be as undecipherable as the physical beginning of the world. But much of the time so spent by the student of the novel is, under present conditions, time wasted. It does not give us an insight into the nature of the novel, into its growth, or into its relation to other literary species. The ancient existence of the Book of Esther, of the Milesian Tales, of the ~~Satirae~~ Satiricon by Petronius, or even of Theagenes and Chariclea previously to its belated influence in the sixteenth century, is of no effect in the history of the modern novel.

(1) Bédier, Fabliaux, Introd. p. VII.

The distinction,--commonly ignored,--must here be made between fiction in general and the novel in particular. Fiction has probably existed at all periods and in all places. Sometimes it has taken the form of drama; sometimes, of the romance and the ballad; sometimes, of the lai; sometimes, of the lyric; sometimes, of the saga; sometimes, of the tale; sometimes of the longer narrative, in the shape of biography, chronicle, or imagined story. In so far as universal fiction has been incorporated in the novel, in so far, and only in so far, is it to be reckoned with in the history of the novel. But such connection by no means identifies the one with the other or renders them synonymous. Fiction is to be found within the novel, it is true: but it is also to be found outside of the novel. It may be the raw material which goes into the making of the novel itself: but it is not the novel in any truer sense than that the paper, ink, linen, out of which the book is fabricated, constitute the novel. Fiction is an abstraction: it is not a type of literature.

The novel, on the other hand, is a concrete form. It represents a class almost as definitely characterized as the drama or the epic. It has a technique,[1] to which novelists more or less closely adhere. Some attempt has even been made at prescribing its length. That it must be written in prose is a commonly accepted requirement. No restriction has been laid, however, on its subject-matter. The novel may deal with adventures or with "still life", with political, social, or historical events, with religious, moral, or esthetic phenomena. But it must, today, present these subjects in a certain manner and in a certain form. The evolution of the

1. Horne, Technique of the Novel.

novel into order and regularity out of lawlessness is a purely modern development. The time of its beginning as a concrete type is known with considerable exactitude, and the course of its evolution is vaguely understood.

Among all the important literary forms, the novel is perhaps the only one which had no representation in classical Greek or Roman literature. By this is not meant that works partaking of the character of the novel failed to appear: since, if the Odyssey had been composed in the twelfth century in France, it would undoubtedly have been classified as a romance in verse: and if the tales of Parthenius of Nicæa had been written in Italy in the fifteenth century, they would have been designated as novelle. In the classical age, however, the novel, far from having found itself, had not even gone in the "recherche de lui-même"[1], as the French novel of the seventeenth century was doing. The latter, indeed, was beginning to differentiate itself from other literary species, such as the epic, the tragedy, the comedy: but the classical stories in novel-form were considered as part and parcel of the drama, the epic, the chronicle, and had no separate existence. Even a name was lacking to give them individual standing.[2]

> "Denn bezeichnend genug ist es, dass wir diese Vorläufer einer ganz modernen Litteraturgattung mit keinem antiken Namen zu benennen im Stande sind, sondern in diesem einzigen Falle die übrigens rein antike Nomenclatur der grossen schriftstellerischen Gattungen durch den modernen Namen des "Romans" vermehren müssen."(2)

The later sophists, at a loss for a better ~~name~~ title, generally called their stories dramas: but dramas, only in the sense of narrations invented and probable. That some of these stories

1. Brunetière, Ét. Crit. IV, p. 31.
2. Rohde, Griech. Rom., p. 3.

from the point of view of substance and form, closely approximated the modern novel, is not to be gainsaid: and the attempt of Aribau to deny the possibility of them because of social conditions,[1] has no more weight than the ~~assignment~~ ascription by the "Orientalists" of the dissemination of universal folk-stories to large historical occasions favorable to the passage of such stories from the Orient to the Occident.[2]

> "La vida privada de los griegos y de los romanos se prestaba muy poco á este género de narraciones. Así es que entre los primeros sólo conocemos de oídas las fábulas llamadas milesias ó sibaríticas, cuentos al parecer lijeros y libidinosos; y de los últimos sólo nos han quedado dos obras: el Satyricon de Petronio, y la Metamórfosis, llamado vulgarmente el Asno de Oro, de Apuleyo---." (2).

If the Greeks and Romans had cast the fiction of their tragedies and comedies into a new mould, and given that mould a distinctive title, they would, in the novel, as in the drama, have arrived in those very early days at the point of novel-development which modern literatures, after laborious fumblings, have reached only today. Still, the fact remains that the novel had no local habitation or name in classical antiquity, and that the line of growth started elsewhere, at a much later period.

It is difficult for us to understand how ~~absolutely void of the~~ slight a direct knowledge of Greek literature the modern nations ~~were~~ had in the Middle Ages, and for a long time before that period.[3] Yet, no literary fact seems more positively attested. The frequent allusions to Greek mythology, to Greek history, and to Greek writers were all derived at second-hand, namely, through the Latin. Two of the most popular themes in the Middle

2. cf. Bédier, Fab., p. 237.
1. Aribau, Nov. ant., etc., p. VIII.
3 Cf Fenaère Femme bret · art on Budé. bb. 353-354

Ages were the life of Alexander and the story of Thebes. The sources of these are not to be sought, however, in the original Greek, but in the

> "mittelalterliche, lateinische Bearbeitung derselben." (1).

> "Alle fabelhaften Erzählungen, welche über Alexander den Grossen im Orient und Occident im Umlauf waren, gehen ~~XXXX~~ direct oder indirect auf eine Redaction des griechischen Werkes von dem sogen. Pseudo-Callisthenes zurück, das gegen das 3. Jahrh. in Alexandria verfasst eine Zusammenstellung der volkstümlichen und gelehrten Alexandersagen gab." (2).

It was likewise through the intermediary of Latin that works of Hellenic origin, written during the Christian era, became known to the Romance and Germanic countries, as in the case of Apollonius of Tyre and of Barlaam and Josaphat.[2] The very rare instances of compositions dealing directly, by personal contact, with Greek topics, either ancient or modern, receive a prominence which they could not have had if Greek had been at all a popular study. An example of this is the Florimont, (1188), by Aimon de Varenne.[3]

> "que le Lyonnais Aimon de Varenne écrivit en 1188, dans 'la langue des Français', laquelle était donc devenue la langue littéraire d'une grande partie au moins de la France; la matière en est une légende grecque que l'auteur avait recueillie en Grèce même." (4).

Until 1470, not even a translation of a Greek work had appeared in France. In that year, Vasco de Lucena, a Portuguese, translated the Cyropedia of Xenophon. This, Gaston Paris calls the first translation of a Greek author known in France.[4]

> "la première traduction d'un auteur grec qu'on ait connue en France; elle est indirecte, il est vrai, et faite sur une version latine." (5).

Of course, as was to be expected, this tradition concerning the isolation of Greece from the rest of Europe

1. Dernedde, Ep. Stof., p. 48: cf. p. 58.
~~2. " " " p. 58.~~
2. ~~3.~~ Meyer, Alex., p. 8.
~~3. 4.~~ G. Paris, Esq., p. 124.
4 ~~5.~~ G. Paris, Esq., pp. 255-6.

has been ridden too hard. M. Reinhold, in rejecting the possibility of a Byzantine influence on the romans d'aventure[1], because Greek was "'terra incognita' pour les trouveurs du moyen âge", has, perhaps, shown too great caution. All generalizations,--whatever the state of actual knowledge may be at any time,--should be subjected to the tests of the reason. Greek countries were not surrounded by a Chinese wall of exclusion. They were connected with the Romance territories by the bonds of commerce, politics, and religion. The Crusades made close contact of a sort inevitable. There is, therefore, no stretching of the imagination on the part of Massmann, when he conjectures that Gautier d'Arras, the author of Éracle, may have accompanied Aliénor to Antioch, and thus familiarized himself with the Byzantine sources of his novel[2].

> "Dort, in Antiochen, mochte Gautier namentlich die altüberlieferte Geschichte von der Kaiserinn Athanais in Erfahrung gebracht haben, mündlich oder was weniger wahrscheinlich, schriftlich, obschon die griechische Literatur von früh her an Romanen reich wurde---." (2).

An interchange of ideas and works could not help taking place. If, on the one hand, the Crusaders drew on the stores of Byzantine literature and folk-lore, the latter, on the other hand, evened the bargain by appropriating French romances of the Round Table and the Fall of Troy. Several of these poems became so popular

> "dass sie sich noch heutzutage im Munde des Volkes als Märchen ~~sich~~ erhalten haben." (3).

In general, nevertheless, the Greek influence on the beginnings of the novel may be regarded as infinitesimal. Huet, the first French historian of the novel, is often cited, it is true, as accrediting the origin of this literary form

1. Reinhold, Floire, p. 158.
2. Massm., Éracle, p. 453.
3. Rohde, Gr. Rom., pp. 533-4.

principally to the Syrians and Alexandrians, among whom he mentions Clearchus, Iamblichus, Heliodorus, Lucian, Achilles Tatius, Saint John of Damascus.[1] In his own words "l'invention en est due aux Orientaux."[2] As a statement of fact, this may be quite true. As a post hoc propter hoc argument, it is quite false. The evidence adduced to prove that the modern novel received its impulse from the Oriental novels in Greek is of negligible value. It is easily conceivable that the Greek novel could have flourished long before the French novel, and yet have remained so obscure as to exert no pressure on the early development of the latter, and certainly not on its original formation. This, in reality, is exactly what happened. By the time that the first influence of the Byzantine novels began to be felt, the French novel had got a good start: and when, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Greek novels, along with other Greek forms, were resurrected, the French novel was nearing the end of its adolescence. Professor Horne has very ably summed up the case.[3]

> "Greek romance, with all its noteworthy advances in technique, had disappeared with all things Grecian, and it was not until the close of the sixteenth century that its fragments were resuscitated from forgotten corners of dreamy monasteries and translated into modern tongues. Then, indeed, Heliodorus and Chariton and Longus had a lesson to teach, an influence to exert on fiction. But by that time the creation of the modern novel was almost complete: it had grown up from some other sources; and one may fairly question whether the republication of Greek romance did not retard rather than assist the new development." (3).

An investigation of the various searching tests applied to the origins of the early French novel makes permissible only one conclusion with regard to the Greek

1. Huet, O. d. Rom., p. 7-8. 2. Ib., p. 7.
3. Horne, Tech. of Nov., p. 61.

influence: namely, that it can be eliminated from among the causes which contributed to the rise of the French novel. Nearly the same thing may be said of the Latin romances. They were scarcer in number than the Greek stories, and had much less of the qualities which we seek in the novel. Like the Roman tragedies, they were imitative of Greek works: they were shaped by no master-hand: they were lacking in national spirit: and they received scant attention from the founders of the French type. One of them, imitated from a Greek novel of the decadence,--the Apollonius of Tyre,--furnished the subject-matter for a chanson de geste called Jourdain de Blaive, and another, the composition of Petronius, supplied the fabliaux with the tale of the widow who consoled herself by commerce with a soldier in the grave of her husband. Individual examples of this kind are encountered here and there: but there was no wholesale dependence on Latin models either for technique or for plot. Above all, when the few Latin stories were made use of, there was no consciousness on the part of the French writer that a new form of literature, worthy of imitation, lay before him. The Latin romance appealed to him not as a novel, but merely as a piece of fiction.

Unlike other literary forms, then, the French novel owed little to either Greece or Rome, in the way of patterns or of precepts. Is the origin of the French novel,--and by French novel is meant also the European novel,--to be sought in some other country?

It has seemed essential to the older critics and historians to look far afield for the sources of all types

of modern art. That a lack of confidence was thereby shown in the intellectual virility of the modern nations apparently counted as nothing against the faith in the all-embracing artistic perfection of the Greeks and the Romans and the imaginative power of the Oriental peoples. Until recently, the Oriental school of folk-lore, headed by Benfey, held sway in that province. It remained for M. Bédier to stun the Oriental dragon of universal tales. Warton, a staunch representative of the good old school, ascribed the origin of the novel to the Arabians. "From Spain, by means of a constant commercial intercourse through the ports of Toulon and Marseilles, they (i. e., the Arabian romances) soon passed into France and Italy."[1] How providential for Warton's theory the existence of these channels of communication must have appeared! Without them, it is to be supposed, the Arabian precursors of the novel would have died a still death in the country of their adoption. It goes without saying that Spanish writers have been partial to the Arabian theory,--if for no other reason than that it cast a reflected glory on the fatherland.

No doubt a minimum of influence was exerted on the French novel by Arabian fiction. Two or three stories of the thirteenth century, as M. Reinhold points out,[2] seem to have borrowed some motives from that source. Yet, as it takes more than one swallow to make a summer, so more than two or three sporadic infiltrations of Arabian stories are needed to prove the Arabian derivation of the French novel. Moreover, in this theory, as in many similar theories, the distinction between fiction and the novel, between a

1. Warton, Eng. Poet., I, p. 93.
2. Reinhold, Elaine, pp. [illegible]

the quarry from which the material was taken

literary form and ~~its content~~, has been lost sight of. The Arabian sources of many European stories may be freely admitted by the most indurated opponent of Warton, without implying the slightest retreat from the main position. Even such admission, however, is entirely unnecessary. First, M. Bédier, then M. Reinhold, have riddled the Oriental tradition, to the entire satisfaction of such difficult critics as the late M. Brunetière. Hard facts have been their weapons against the flights of fancy and the superficial plausibility of the Arabian protagonists.

> "Il y a 20 poèmes appartenant au cycle byzantin, 30 au cycle breton, 30 qu'on appelle romans d'aventure, il y a d'innombrables fabliaux, pas mal de lais et d'autres récits, une dizaine d'imitations de l'antiquité et seulement deux poèmes dans lesquels on trouve un emprunt aux 1001 Nuits.---Tandis que des centaines de noms classiques, empruntés à l'histoire, à la mythologie, à la littérature latine, des dizaines de noms celtiques (bretons, armoricains, etc.), des dizaines de noms grecs et byzantins se rencontrent à chaque pas, pas un nom des héros des 1001 Nuits, pas un nom arabe ne se retrouve dans la littérature du XIIe. siècle." (1)

One of these facts not generally known is that

~~Not only is this true, but even~~ down to 1704, when Galland made a popular French version of them, The Thousand and One Nights, ~~that~~ the main warehouse of Arabic lore, was practically unknown in any written form in Europe.[2] Finally, if the object of the Arabian partisans is to prove the spontaneous originality of the stories of that nation, they will first have to determine the status of Greco-Roman culture among the Arabs of the Middle Ages, and its effect on the indigenous fiction. It is possible that, owing to the vogue of Greek and Roman culture in medieval Arabia, much fiction credited to the Arabians may turn out to be European nuclei in

1. Reinhold, Floire, p. 144-5.
2. Menendez y P. Or. de la Nov., I, p. LVI.

Oriental wrappings.

Whatever the acquaintance with Arabian fiction may have been, however, the important point is that the French novel did not evolve out of any predominating Arabian literary form. Medieval French writers may or may not have been indebted to the Arabians for specific stories: they were not dependent on them for rules of workmanship, or for the proper attitude toward their subjects.

The same fallacy with regard to the origin of the novel obtains in the Scandinavian theory. Subject-matter and sources have been taken as criteria for the development of the novel, whereas, in reality, they mean nothing unless taken in conjunction with guiding methods of composition.

Percy was one of the most prominent believers in the northern origin of the old romances of chivalry, which, he concludes,

Insert figure 1.

> "may be derived in a lineal descent from the ancient and historical songs of the Gothic bards and scalds." Many of those songs are still preserved in the north, which exhibit all the seeds of chivalry, before it became a solemn institution. Even the common arbitrary fictions of romance were most of them familiar to the ancient scalds of the north, long before the time of the crusades. They believed in the the existence of giants and dwarfs, they had some notion of fairies, they were strongly possessed with the belief of spells and enchantment, and were fond of inventing combats with dragons and monsters." 1

Here again, it is incumbent on opponents of this doctrine to admit some truth in the contention. Norse and Gothic stories were known to some extent in the rest of Europe during the Middle Ages and a curious piece of testimony is to be met with in the Reinaert, by William

~~1. Quoted in Warton - Eng. Poet. I - p. 110 from Percy On Anc. Metr. Rom. I, pp. 3, 4.~~

1. Percy's Reliques, III, pp. 341-342.

Utenhove,--a Flemish imitation of the Romande Renart, dating from the thirteenth century.[1] In the Judgment-scene, Reinaert's only hope to escape execution lies in his ability to stay the sentence of the court. For this purpose, after a clever introduction, he lets drop, with apparent inadvertence, a mysterious remark to the effect that Isengrijn is possessed of great secret wealth, which he himself could discover for the King, if he were at liberty. This arouses the cupidity of both the King and the Queen: and they insist on receiving full information. The treasure, Reinaert relates, had been stolen by his own father: it had been the ancient, buried hoard of King Ermenrich. The latter is evidently the great Hermanric, ruler of the Ostrogoths, the Eormenric of the Beowulf, from whose evil wiles Hama fled.[2]

Detached evidence of this sort is worth only its face value, and proves nothing with regard to the beginnings of the novel. Like other fiction, it has been incorporated into the body of story-writing as a mere detail, ~~and nothing more. The actual facts seem to favor the reverse of Percy's theory. Instead of a borrowing of method from Scandinavian literature by French writers, there appears to have been a borrowing from the French by the northern composers of sagas. The present shape of the sagas dates from the thirteenth century.~~[3] ~~Now,~~ The earliest Icelandic stories, moreover, had nothing in particular in them to serve as pathfinders in the search for a new literary form. In common with most early fiction, they were episodic in style:

and we nowhere ever traces of any large dependence in the North on the materials of French fiction.

1. cf. Sudre - Renart - 88
2. Beowulf - ed. Holthausen - Heidelberg, 1908 - l. 1198-1201.
3. W. P. Ker - Ep. & Rom. - p. 246.

One improvement they might have introduced from the sagas, namely, the employment of prose in long narratives. If they had done so, much controversy concerning the character of the early French stories might have been avoided. That they did not do so is an evidence either of ignorance of the sagas or of slight esteem for them. When, finally, the chansons de geste and the romances were turned into prose, it was the public demand which caused the change, and not an imitation of foreign procedure. In sum, a comprehensive investigation into the relations of France and the Scandinavian countries would undoubtedly prove the influence of the latter on French fiction to have been of no moment. On the other hand, it is an accepted fact that the invasion of French romances in the thirteenth century helped to change the popular taste in Norway and Iceland, and profoundly altered the ideas of Northern writers as to the selection of material and methods.

and Mr. Ker is of the opinion that

> "many of the sagas are much improved by being taken to pieces and regarded, not as continuous histories, but as collections of short stories." 1

French writers, ~~then, besides knowing~~ knew little of written Scandinavian works, and had little to learn from them. ~~Before the sagas had assumed a definitive shape, the French novel had evolved into something concrete and popular, and had become largely instrumental for the technique of the Scandinavian stories themselves. The invasion of French romances in the thirteenth century helped to change the popular taste~~ in Norway and Iceland.[1]

> "Vor dem jahre 1262 hat der scandinavische norden unter König Hakon dem alten die sage von Erec [i. e., by Chrétien de Troyes] sich angeeignet."2

Similarly, Erec's Yvain and other French romances became northern sagas, and the Rimur recreated the manner of the Southern narratives.

It would appear, therefore, that not only Greek and Latin inspiration, but Arabian and Norse inspiration also, may be considered as of little note in the rise of the novel. No attempt is here made, it must be remembered, to deprive them of the credit due them because of their valuable contributions to the content of the novel. Nonetheless, some sources other than those discussed, must be sought for the beginnings of the novel.

An examination of the changes in meaning of the French word for the novel, roman, will prove instructive. Ordinarily, whenever a new type of art has been introduced into any country, the appelation has likewise been carried over from the land of its origin or of its efflorescence. Thus, "drama" and "epic" come from Greece along with the things themselves: the "novel"

1. Ker - Ep. & Rom.- p. 278.
2. Holland - Crestien - 33.

or "nouvelle" and the "sonnet" came from Italy: the "cantar de gesta" entered Spain from France. The following exposition of the course taken by the word roman, based on Voelker's illuminating article,[1] may throw a needed light on the probable origin of the French novel.

The derivation of "roman" is, of course, from the Latin adverb romanice, which in turn gave being to the noun romans, in Provençal, and romanz in Old French. Romans meant the lingua romana, a term applied to all the languages,--Provençal, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian,--which represented modern, spoken forms of Latin, or popular Latin, as opposed to the Latin of the learned.[2] By the end of the Middle Ages, romans ceased to be used for either of the languages of France, prouvençaŭ and français taking its place. In the fifteenth century, the language of northern France was almost exclusively spoken of as français. Pierre Durant, the author of the romance, Guillaume de Palerne, contrasts, in the sixteenth century ancient romant and modern French,[3] stigmatizing the former as unintelligible and even illegible for some readers.

> "Et ce considerant le langage qui estoit romant antique rimoyé en sorte non intelligible ne lisible à plusieurs favorisans à leur requeste come de chosetres convenable ay traduict et transféré le langage de cette histoire en langage moderne françois pour à chacun qui lire le voudra estre plus intelligible."

However, the word, romans was not dropped at any period from the language. It merely underwent a change of meaning. From designating the language of France, it began, as early as the twelfth century, to mean a work written in French:

1. Voelker - Wort Roman - Zeitsch. für Rom. Ph. X, pp. 485-525.
2. cf. Reimpredigt - ed. Suchier - Str. 127, 128. - p. 64. Halle - Max Niemeyer - 1879.
3. Voelker - Wort Rom. - 490.

and preferably, a work translated from the Latin. The earliest example of this use, cited by Voelker, is Samson de Nanteuil's compilation of the sayings of Solomon, written in the first half of the twelfth century.[1] (insert figure 1)

"Ki ben en volt estre enqueranz,
Entendet dunc a cest romanz
Que al loenge damne de
Et a s'enor at translaté
Samson de Nanteuil."[1]

Later, Benoît de Sainte-More emphasizes the connection between the romanz and a Latin original:

"Or vueil je les romanz commencier
Le Latin suivrai à la lettre,
Nule autre riens n'i voudrai mettre."[2]

The Latin prototype for the Roman de Troie was ~~slaves~~ Dares Phrygius' De Excidio Troiae. Throughout the thirteenth century, especially while romans was being more and more rarely used to designate the language, the word stood commonly for a translation from the Latin.

As was natural, the term romans kept adding to its connotation, and we find shortly a transference of meaning from "writing based on Latin" to "any writing in the vernacular." This more general interpretation went hand in hand with the narrower use, and tended to displace it, though as late as the first half of the fifteenth century, the Latin limitation still persisted. At this time, Jean Lefèvre introduced his translation of the Disticha Cȏtonis with the following explanation:

"Si scey je bien que puis ça et ançois
Que fusse nés, ils sont mis en françoys.

1. Voelker - Wort Roman - 493.
2. Voelker - Wort Rom. - 493.

Par maintes fois ay/veir le roumans
Qui dist 'Seigneurs ains que je vous commans.'
Ce qui est dit ne vueil je plus remordre." 1

Still, the broader application gained ground. Garnier de Pont Sainte-Maxence, in 1172, remarks of his life of Saint Thomas of Canterbury,

"Unc mes ne fu romanz mieldre fez ne trovet:
A Cantorbire fu et fet et amendés." 2

Histories, chronicles, biographies, chansons de geste, romances of chivalry, and other narrative works received the title of romans. Wace's Roman de Rou, Chrétien's Yvain, Guillaume d'Orange, the Roman de Renart, Joinville's Histoire de Saint Louis, Froissart's Chroniques, were all classed as romans. In the testimony of Thomas Tuscus in his chronicles written in the thirteenth century, the conscious use of romans for works of historical import is clearly shown:

"Et ex hoc factum est, ut gesta in vulgari
Gallico scripta romantia nominentur."3

The next differentiation in the meaning of romans had the result of limiting its use even more definitely. Toward the end of the twelfth century, coincidently with its other meanings, romans signified a story, a fictitious narrative. One of the requirements seems to have been that the roman should be composed for oral presentation or for reading, but not for singing. A general impression obtained that it should be of considerable length, and thereby avoid confusion with the dit, which, as Wolf intimates,[4] though usually of didactic tendency,

1. Voelker - Wort Roman. - 495
2. " " - 501
3. " " - 501
4. Ferd.Wolf - Über die Lais - p. 258.

was bound by no rules of content or form. In the vast majority of cases, the dit was the shorter type. Rarely, the word roman is to be found in the titles of short tales, which more properly were characterized as dits, fabliaux, or lais. The Romanz de un Chivaler e de sa dame e de un clerk[2] is an instance of such indeterminate classification. Since the foregoing limitation as to length developed during the most brilliant epoch of the romances of chivalry, and since these romances were written in verse, it was a logical step to expect of the roman that it should be a romance of chivalry composed in verse.

The courtly stories of Chrétien and his followers centered about the theme of love. Nothing, perhaps, marks so clearly the cleavage between the early chansons de geste and the romances of chivalry as this sentimental strain, which was due in large measure to the influence of Ovid on medieval French literature of both the north and the south. Nothing certainly left such a deep imprint on story-telling as this comparatively new and engrossing note. It therefore became one of the fixed tests of the roman, and as such, retained its authority down to the seventeenth century, when Huet said

> "Ce que l'on appelle proprement romans sont des fictions d'aventures amoureuses, écrites en prose."[2]

Originally, the love-stories, far from being of the invention of the author, had a historical foundation either in the chansons de geste or in classical literature: and French romance writers were extremely punctilious about acknowledging the pre-existing sources. In fact, they reckoned the power of a story

1. cf. Romania, I, 73 ff- by P. Meyer.
2. Huet - Orig. of R.- p. 2.

enhanced by its provenience from older lore.

> "L'empressement excessif de Jean de Meun à citer les noms des auteurs anciens toutes les fois que directement ou indirectement il leur fait le moindre emprunt contraste avec le soin qu'il prend de dissimuler les dettes bien plus importantes contractées envers des auteurs modernes."1

But in the thirteenth century, the *romans d'aventure*, which were almost entirely the creation of the writers' fancies, held sway in the domain of fiction and the *roman* came to be viewed as almost by necessity a work of pure fiction. So that, for a long time after the thirteenth century, the *roman* was popularly recognized as a fictitious love-story in verse, dealing with knights and ladies, and of some length.

This definition of the *roman* maintained itself practically unaltered until the prevalence of prose in narration caused the requirement of verse to disappear. To insist, however, on the absolute fixity of the definition in all respects would be to sacrifice truth to a blameworthy fondness for formal regularity. Unquestionably, the terms *conte*, *histoire*, and *chronique* had a specific application to the first stories in prose: and the common expression "or dist li contes", generally served as an introductory phrase for prose-romances. Yet, the designation "*romans*" also was applied to them during the period in which the verse-compositions almost monopolized that title, as is exemplified in *Li Romans du bon Tristan*, of the twelfth or thirteenth century. The growing influence of prose gradually changed the form of the *roman*: and when, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, verse-romances had abdicated in favor of prose-romances, the word *roman* obeyed the

1. Langlois - *R. de la Rose* - p. 173.

law of evolution, and, with the alteration in the thing for which it was a symbol, changed its meaning, as it had done so often before.

If this review of the transformations through which the word roman passed has served no other purpose, it has at least made evident the fact that, during the Middle Ages, the roman was no fixed type, but a constantly growing and changing one. Whether or not the roman has today reached the final stage of its development: and whether or not a 'fictitious love-story in verse, dealing with knights and ladies, and of some length,' would be refused a place among novels at the present moment however, are questions which must be left to others to decide. Certain it is that our own word novel has undergone a similar process of evolution similar to that outlined above: that the "novel" of our age stands for something quite different from the "novel" of Elizabethan England, when Euphues, Jack Wilton, and Rosalind represented the acme of novel-construction: that when Paynter in 1566 said:

> "In these histories (which by another term I call novelles) he describes the lives---- of great princes;"[1]

when, in 1578, Maitland spoke of the "first bulk of the novallis of Ronsard": when Dryden, in 1697, stigmatized inveighed against "the trifling novels, which Ariosto and others, have inserted in their poems"[2]; an interpretation of the novel quite at odds with the present-day interpretation was prevalent.

One can understand now why no preconceived, narrow, fixed definition of the novel has stood the test of time. Critics and historians have cudgeled their brains and fatigued their

1. Paynter, Palace of Pleasure, dedication, p. 5.
2. Dryden - ~~Essay on Aeneid.~~ dedication of the Aeneis — p. 130.

Of all the conditions to which it has been thought that the novel should adhere, only two have remained permanent. These have had reference to its length and its fictitious character. Through the one qualification the novel has always been distinguished from short narrative or lyrical compositions; through the other, from equally long narratives presenting history or science as history or science, with emphasis on the knowledge detailed, and not on any merely pleasurable end. Theories concerning its other elements have changed from age to age.

ingenuity in trying to encompass the novel in a straight-jacket. As well might they have they tried to put a coat on Proteus! Within certain limits, every historian has been right: but at the very moment when he thought he had the novel hard and fast, it changed in his grasp.#

insert p. 23A.

That the learned Huet had an inkling of the ~~truth~~ variability of the novel is seen in his definition, a part of which has already been quoted:

> "Autrefois, sous le nom de romans, on comprenait non-seulement ceux qui étaient écrits en prose, mais plus souvent encore ceux qui étaient écrits en vers. Le Giraldi et le Pigna son disciple, dans leurs traités de'Romanzi, donnent le Boyardo et l'Arioste pour modèles: mais aujourd'hui l'usage contraire a prévalu et ce que l'on appelle proprement romans, sont des fictions d'aventures amoureuses, écrites en prose avec art, pour le plaisir et l'instruction des lecteurs. Je dis des fictions, pour les distinguer des histoires véritables; j'ajoute d'aventures amoureuses, parce que l'amour doit être le principal sujet du roman."1

Yet, S~~s~~ome forty years later, the tremendous vogue of Gil Blas undermined the principal pillar of this house of cards.

A like result has attended our English definitions, at even a later period, when the state of the novel might have been considered more stable. Smollett believed the novel to ~~be~~ have a certain, concrete plan.2

> "a large diffused picture, comprehending the characters of life, disposed in different groups, and exhibited in various attitudes, for the purposes of an uniform plan and general occurrence, to which every individual figure is subservient. But this plan cannot be executed with propriety, probability, or success, without a principal personage to attract the attention, unite the incidents, unwind the clue of the labyrinth, and at last close the scene, by virtue of his own importance." 2

Yet And only the other day, Mr. Berwick Sayers, of the Croydon Public

1. Huet - Or. des Rom. - p. 2.
2. Smollett - Pref. to Ferdinand Count Fathom - p. 466-467

Libraries, was ~~saying~~ devising all this for the novel of the beginning of the twentieth century.

> "The thorough novel, built of incidents that ~~that~~ move in a curve to a dramatic climax and descend to a well-defined, satisfactory close, is almost as extinct as the dodo!"[1]

Obviously, it is necessary, for a knowledge of what the novel really has been, is, and may become, to employ a different method ~~than~~ from that hitherto sanctified by tradition and the names of learned men. It is necessary to put aside the bias for orotund but vague historical, political, social factors in the making of the novel: and to recognize that the novel went on as well under François I as under Louis VII: as well under ~~Henri IV as under the Valois~~ Philippe-Auguste as under Henri IV. No historical event, however great, ~~acted as~~ produced a catclysm ~~on~~ in the novel, reducing its fabric to indecipherable ashes. No alteration in social conditions worked an abrupt upheaval in the subject-matter of the novel. no solution of continuity occurred. Changes in form and content were introduced gradually, bit by bit: and often the only evidence of the growing of the novel is to be found in the comparison of the prevalent novels of two periods widely separated in time. In any one period, the form of the novel and its technique for all the various types, appear practically uniform. Only the subject-matter seems different. Thus, in the twelfth century, whether a chanson de geste or a roman de chevalerie was under treatment, the hero started out on a journey with no well-defined object in view: he performed stereotyped deeds of daring with no ulterior motive and either died or returned safely home, the same stereotyped warrior or courtly gentleman as when he set forth. Similarly, up to a late period in the seventeenth century, the pastoral, the picaresque, the sentimental, the adven-

1. W.C.Berwick Sayers - The Decline in the Reading of Fiction in The Library World for June, 1910 -pp. 453

The choice of a particular moment or epoch must, as I have already indicated, be based largely on convenience and reasonableness. The value of any investigation lies almost entirely in the arrangement and classification of the facts and in the interpretation of them. They exist: nothing can alter them. If, then, it shall appear that the period selected stands for a new conception in European story-telling; if it shall appear that the methods employed are the outgrowth of a practically spontaneous modern art, and not a continuation of classical narrative procedure; if it shall appear that the various manifestations of the novel are a logical and unbroken consequence of the start made in this period: it will not be contrary to the proper interpretation of the history and the evolution of the novel to locate there its definite beginnings as a literary type.

turous novels used identical devices and were guided by identical principles.

Nevertheless, even in any single period, mutations were occurring which divided the novel into classes of separate, distinct characters. Each popular form gave rise to one or more new forms. Broad as the gap may seem between the romances of chivalry of the Middle Ages and d'Urfé's Astrée, the one grew out of the other:- not directly, however, but as the culmination of a long line of intermediaries in which the sentimental theme was predominant. The same connection exists, too, between those very romances of chivalry and the heroic novel of the seventeenth century, of which Gomberville's Polexandre is an example. Nevertheless, to affirm that the romances of chivalry were the inspiring origin of the modern novel would be to fly in the face of the facts: for they, likewise, had antecedents and models. But it is possible to follow the course of the novel back to a definite period in modern history, to put a finger on a particular spot, and to say, "Here the modern novel began." #

#: insert p. 25-A.

The modern novel began there not only for France, but for the rest of Europe, also. In this, the critics are generally agreed today. Mr. Ker, in discussing the possibility of tracing a line of progress for medieval romance, gives it as his opinion that

> "This line of progress is nothing less than the earlier life of all the great modern forms of novel; a part of European history which deserves some study from those who have leisure for it."1

Mr. Fitzmaurice-Kelly, thoroughly qualified to speak for the Span-

1. Ker - Ep. & Rom. - p. --354.

ish, acknowledges the debt to French literature and the French novel in particular.[1]

omit

> "Spanish literature, like our own, takes its root in French and in Italian soil; in the anonymous epics, in the fableaux, as in Dante, Petrarch and the Cinque Cento poets."[2]

Portugal, the home of the earliest version of Amadís de Gaula, ranked by many as the first genuine modern novel,[3] became addicted to the French Romances of the Round Table of which the Amadís is manifestly an adaptation. The Portuguese fondness for this special cycle has been explained as the result of Celtic traditions in Portugal, and, in the fourteenth century, as a result of closer political intimacy with Britain through the marriage of Don Juan I to a princess of the house of Lancaster. Besides, French was, at the moment when the Portuguese began to write serious novels, the favorite language.[4]

> "Wie zur Zeit Ludwigs XIV. war das Französische im XIII. Jahrhundert an allen Höfen einheimisch. In Neapel, in Portugal, an den Küsten des Archipels und des Heiligen Landes sprach man es."[5]

For Germany, France has always been the carrier of innovations in the novel. In spite of the wide dissemination of the Amadís de Gaula in other languages, that novel reached Germany through the French, in the first half of the sixteenth century.[6] But, even in the earliest days, the German romances were dependent on French models: witness the Erec und Enite, and Yvain, by Hartmann von Aue; Otto von Frisingen's Eraclius; Heinrich von

1. Fitzm.-K.-Hist. Span. Lit.- p. VI, Preface.
2. cf. Bobertag - Romans - p. 39: cf. also Stoddard, Ev. of Eng. Nov. pp. 41-42
3. Scheibner - Französ. Sprach.- p. 24
4. cf. Bobertag - Romans - p. 333.

Turlin's Abenteuer Krone; Gottfried von Strassburg's Tristan; Wolfram von Eschenbach's Willehalm: and a host of others that might be mentioned. So that Bobertag, in his history of the German novel, rightly observes:

> "Dennoch werden wir, wie sich im Verlaufe unserer Untersuchung bald zeigen wird, dem gelehrten Huet darin Recht geben müssen, dasz die Franzosen um die Entstehung unserer Gattung die meisten Verdienste unter allen Völkern Europas haben." 1

The influence of the French romance on the art of story-telling in the Scandinavian countries has already been indicated. It is scarcely necessary to point out the discipleship of English romance-writers. Many of the French authors were Anglo-Normans: and most of the early story-writing in English consisted of adaptations of the French romances of chivalry. Layamon, who translated Wace's Brut; Chaucer, who supposedly wrote the Roman de la Rose in English and placed the writers of fabliaux under heavy contribution; Malory, in his collection of French romances, called the Morte D'Arthur; Caxton, whose first publications were his own translations of medieval French romances: all these, and many other masters of primitive English novels, prove the leadership of France. To be sure, our English writers have not always explicitly named their models.[2]

> "Des poëtes français que Chaucer a mis à contribution, il n'a nommé que celui auquel il doit le moins, et qui avait le moins à lui prêter, Gransson, gentilhomme qu'il connut à la cour de Richard II:"2

but there was not much need of their doing so. Their sources stare one in the face.

1. Bobertag - Romans - 29
2. Sandrás - Chaucer - pp. 131-2

The absolute supremacy of French narrative art continued unbroken for at least two centuries. During that long interval, the French story, as an artistic form, owed little to outside influences such as those which, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, remodeled its technique and brought it into competition with original, energetic opponents. It thus had the opportunity of passing through a stage of internal development which, though always in danger of a sudden arrestment by reason of stoppage in variety and interest, helped to unfold its highest possibilities within a restricted area and under a circumscribed method. The acknowledged superiority of the French language: the use of it by distinguished and noble foreigners,- by Frederic Barbarossa, by Marco Polo, by Brunetto Latini and John Mandeville;- the open praise of it by others, such as Dante: served to confirm the French story-writers in their good qualities as well as in their defects, and to act as a barrier against the importation of new ideas. Even as late as the fourteenth century, this leadership was, to all intents and purposes, uncontested. The assumption that, by this time, French had deteriorated into a jargon, without fixed rules and unable to maintain itself among the languages of Europe, is, as Victor Le Clerc states, entirely gratuitous.[1]

> "Une langue à peu près formée, déjà voisine d'une maturité forte et féconde, pouvait seule se recommander par des ouvrages que s'appropriait toute l'Europe, être parlée et comprise à Rome et à Athènes aussi bien qu'à Paris et à Londres, écrite même sans trop de disparate, dans des compositions de longue haleine, par des étrangers de divers pays qui n'avaient jamais vu la France."1

1. Le Clerc - Hist. Lit. XIVs. I- p.434

That which most contributed to the power of the French novel between the twelfth and the fourteenth centuries was the general intellectual awakening and the fondness of the public for stories. As if spontaneously, half a dozen different narrative forms sprang into being: the fable, the lai, the dit, the fabliau, the miracle, the roman. In fact, it is doubtful if a period richer in the art of narration can be pointed out in the whole extent of French literature down to the nineteenth century: and it is because literary historians have, perhaps unconsciously, felt this to be the case, that the histories of medieval literature, such as those of Gaston Paris, have in the main been histories of medieval French story-telling. Of drama, there was practically nothing: and among the miracle-plays and the moralities, few have any artistic value excepting as processions or spectacles. The pure lyric, given up to personal moods and emotions, flourished only in the Provençal tongue: and the only lyric forms which had much currency in the early Middle Ages in the north of France were in the narrative style, as for instance, the chansons de toile. Hence, to a large extent, the special interest in the well-known kinds of narration just mentioned. The writer who wished to present a story was limited to them in his choice. Tragedy and comedy were still unexploited as mediums for story-telling: a detail which should be borne in mind by those who look on the people of the Middle Ages as overgrown children, because of their leaning for stories. The dearth of varied means for telling stories has given the fiction of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries an undue prominence. Besides, narration was then the prime function of the vernacu-

lar. The serious, the ecclesiastical, the pseudo-scientific works were composed in Latin.

But, in addition, the art of story-telling appears to have become conscious of its possibilities in the twelfth century. Or, it might be said in other words, writers became aware of the necessity of suitable division for the different types of narration. Until the twelfth century, the standard form had been that of the epic, or chanson de geste. As will be shown later, this had other sides than the warlike, with which it is usually associated. Though the many species which came into being after the epic often lacked distinctive features: though their names were occasionally used promiscuously and without clear differentiation: each type, nevertheless, stood for a characteristic form and content. The lai and the fabliau,- the dit and the roman were distinguished from each other by some marked trait. Such a classification of narrative was a new procedure in French literature: and it is to this ~~that Mr. Ker calls attention when he observes,~~ which has been called "a new, fresh, and prosperous beginning in literature"!

> "One of the largest and plainest facts of medieval history is the change of literature in the twelfth century, and the sudden and exuberant growth and progress of a number of new poetical forms----------. The rise of these new forms of story makes an unmistakeable difference between the age that preceded them and everything that comes after. They are a new, fresh, and prosperous beginning in literature, and they imply the failure of the older fashion of imagination, represented in the epic literature of France, not to speak of the various Teutonic forms of heroic verse and prose that are related to the epic of France only by a remote common ancestry, and a general likeness in the conditions of 'heroic' life".1

1. Ker - Ep. & Rom.-pp.322-323.

This intellectual awakening is justly termed by Mr. Ker a first "Renaissance"[1] as powerful in its effects as the later Renaissance to which the name has narrowly been applied. It grew up in France, drew its nourishment from French inspiration, and paved the way for its subsequent congener. With the latter, it had many points in common, notably in the popularization of classical mythology and the harking back to classical themes. Its points of variance were also many, and perhaps more significant than its resemblances. Without it, the progress of the novel would certainly have been delayed, and would probably have played a much less important part in European literature. No kind of writing leaned on this "Renaissance" of the twelfth century so abundantly as the novel, and none portrayed that movement so unconsciously and so faithfully.

The new influences which thus affected the novel so strongly were principally three: the growing number of women of literary tastes and social power, who consciously set out to dominate the literature of their time: the invasion into vernacular poetry of the love-lyrics of Provence and of Latin writers like Ovid: and the ever more marked partition of the reading public into two classes, the aristocratic and the democratic.

The most significant advances in novel-writing seem always to have been accompanied by an improvement in the education and the social condition of women. The exalted position occupied by the Marquise de Rambouillet, Mme. de Sévigné, Mme. de La Fayette, Mme. de Sablé, Mme. de Maintenon, and so many other ladies of national consequence is a most important factor in the development of the novel in the seventeenth century: a period which has wrongly been con-

1. Ker - Ep. & Rom. - p. 32-3

sidered as chiefly a dramatic age. At the end of the sixteenth century, when the sentimental novel received a new impetus, Marguerite de Navarre, Diane de Poitiers, Catherine de Médicis, the Duchesse de Retz, Mme. de Ligneroles, Mme. de Brissac, Anne de Graville,- to mention but a few,- were as prominent in the social, literary, and even the political, life as the most prominent men who were their contemporaries. So, too, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the advent of women into literary and social prominence was a notable characteristic all over France. Not only society women were wielding an influence on literature never before known in France, but women of the church also acquired a reputation for learning and were deferred to. Héloïse, the beloved of Abelard, Mathilde d'Anjou, Adélaïde, the niece of the archdeacon of Poitiers, Sainte Hildegarde may be given as examples of religious women noted for their erudition and their literary ability. Of society-women, the number is extremely large, and includes Ermengarde, duchesse de Bretagne, Mathilde, the queen of Henry I of England, Constance Fitz-Gilbert, Marie de Champagne, Aliénor d'Aquitaine, the Comtesse de Die, Beatrix de Provence, Marie de Ventadour, Clara D'Anduze, Alix de Champagne. From the moment that these ladies of high degree began, by command,—as in the case of Marie de Champagne, who suggested certain work to Chrétien de Troie,—by their own example as writers, or by that silent, but irresistible influence of women held in high respect, to take part in literary production, it was inevitable that a new note should appear in the novel, of which they were so fond. The days when, in a story of four thousand lines, only one was dedicated to woman, had passed, never to return.[1]

1. Wilmotte, Ev. du Rom., p. 369.

> "Si l'on prend la peine de parcourir toute la littérature antérieure à 1150, avec l'unique pensée d'y retrouver des détails descriptifs sur l'être humain, on reste confondu de leur extrême rareté et de la pauvreté d'inspiration qu'ils dénotent.--- Sur quatre mille vers que compte la Chanson de Roland, il n'en est pas un seul consacré à depeindre les charmes de la fiancée du neveu de Charlemagne. C'est 'Alde la bele' (3723), c'est 'une bele dame' (3708)----. Le Couronnement de Louis, qu'on date de 1130 environ, n'est ni plus riche en détails descriptifs ni plus varié, et les chansons de toile, qui remontent au meme temps, sont plus réservées encore----." 1

If the woman of the higher classes effected a change in the tone of the novel by their active influence, it cannot be doubted that the rest of the feminine reading-public had quite as decisive a voice. At the same moment that the noble damsel was reading, as the most recent modern literature, the stories of Alexander or King Arthur,

> "d'abord parce que ces vastes épopées étaient les seuls poèmes qu'on possédât, et en second lieu parce qu'elles paraissaient être les chefs d'oeuvre de l'art, et cela avec d'autant plus de vraisemblance qu'elles étaient dès lors adoptées, admirées et imitées dans toute Europe",-2

~~at that very moment~~, it is probable that the young daughter of a bourgeoise family was conning a thrilling romance of chivalry, a lai by Marie de France, or even a salacious fabliau: and it is possible that at that moment also, some unlettered girl on the farm was listening to popular versions of these same stories by word of mouth, ~~and asking for more~~. This notion is strengthened by the early fulminations, often justified, of men of severe

~~1. Wilmotte - Év. du rom. - 1150 - p. 369.~~
2. Jourdain - Éd. des Femmes - p. 496.

just as today the style and the contents, as well as the advertisements of newspapers and magazines XXX have been radically modified by the economic power and the numerical magnitude of that same element which has won tardy recognition as an independent and equal member of the social body.

tastes against the destructive influence of novels on the minds of young girls.

> "On peut conclure de la protestation de Jean de Gerson et de celle de Louis Vivès que la vogue de nos vieux romanciers ne cessa point de tout le moyen âge et qu'elle persistait encore au XVIe siècle."1

It was undoubtedly the broadening of the reading-public by the inclusion of women as an important element to which to appeal that caused a change in the manner of writing novels, The principal motive of the novel shifted from the depiction of fighting, with other causes as merely accessory, to the presentation of love, with everything else as subordinate. In the oldest French literature, woman was obliged to do the love-making: she had to sigh for the man: she was pictured as the ardent pursuer, and man, as the acquiescent, even indifferent, object of attentions. No other portrayal could have been so profoundly indicative of her subordinate position, of her need of man. A similar characterization is to be found in the Spanish literature of the so-called Golden Age of Lope de Vega and Tirso de Molina, when women were represented as the aggressors in love,- an attitude totally at variance with modern notions, and harder for us to comprehend than almost any other fact.

> "Cette conception de l'amour est celle de toute notre ancienne littérature, et n'a été détrônée que par l'imitation de la poésie méridionale à la fin du XIIe siècle."2

The explanation offered by M. Jeanroy is not to be accepted too implicitly, however. Not the example of the Provençal poets brought about a change in the relations of men and women, whether in books or in real life: but the actual, positive change itself

1. Jourdain - Éd. des Fem. -p. 498.
2. Jeanroy - Lyriq. - p. 226

As M. Bourciez rightly observes, "Un livre, quelque lu qu'il soit, ne crée jamais ni des sentiments, ni des moeurs publiques: si le livre plaît à l'époque, c'est parce qu'il est l'expression de ses idées, embellies quelquefois, toujours agrandies."[1]

made easier the adoption of the Provençal style.# If the reverse had been true, the innovation would have died as quick a death as the pastoral phase at the beginning of the seventeenth century. The latter was entirely factitious, made up out of whole cloth, correspondent to no social reality, and, as such, doomed to disappear from the life of the period as rapidly as it disappeared from the literature. It was a fashion, and went the way of fashions. But the turn given to the novel in the twelfth century was founded upon a rock, and it endured. The subsequent history of the novel has been inextricably bound up with the course taken by the introduction of feminine dominance in the social conditions of France.

Had this social change been limited to the higher sphere of nobility, to the castles and the courts, it would have left but a momentary mark on the novel. It would have passed off as inevitably as préciosité and all movements of an exclusive tendency. It was, however, far from exclusive. ~~it embraced all grades of women.~~ The economic and domestic conditions were favorable to it. From the middle of the twelfth century, France enjoyed an epoch of affluence and peace which took men's minds from the stern absorption of war and allowed them to be moulded by the gentler forces of social intercourse.[2]

"Point de grandes guerres sur le sol français; point de graves malheurs nationaux. Ce fut une rare période de prospérité matérielle, de splendeur morale, grâce à laquelle le moyen âge a pu réaliser sa conception speciale (et incomplète) de la beauté. Cette paix, ce bonheur matériel engendre deux mondes: elle donne aux cours seigneuriales le goût de l'élégance, aux bourgeois le rire."[1]

1. Bourgeois. Manuel. pp. 82–83

2. Bédier - Fabliaux - p. 331.

Certainly the women of the middle classes were receiving an education, both academic and worldly, equal to that of the women of the nobility,--as witness a bourgeoise of the thirteenth century, dame Marie Payenne, who owned four works of piety, a treatise on astrology, and a roman.[3] Even the daughters of petty shop-keepers and workingmen, with their "petites écoles" or "écoles françaises" dating from the ~~XXX~~ thirteenth century, were not wholly neglected, and many of them even became teachers themselves.[4]

3. Rousselot, Éd. des Fem., pp. 78-80.

4. Ibid., pp. 84-89: Vallet de Viriville, Instr. Pub., pp. 202 and 212-213.

It is hardly necessary to point out precisely similar outcomes in Elizabethan England and in the France of Louis XIV, when, economic prosperity following on the heels of strenuous wars, an idealistic and a realistic literature, or, perhaps more correctly, an aristocratic and a democratic literature, sprang into being and flourished. Then it is that men remember that they have wives and daughters. The twelfth century in France witnessed such a revolution of ideas concerning the place of women: # The wife obtained a greater freedom of movement. Among the wealthier classes, she began to wield her charms outside of her own family: to attach to herself a lover; perhaps a poet. These habits were not the result of the Provençal lyric, but of the state of society which permitted them. Even outside of the circles of the elect, a similar process was taking place. While, possibly, political arrangements, such as the power of the overlords to restrain their barons who had formerly been so violent and unmanageable, and the institution of an efficient policing of the kingdom,[1] were establishing a home-life, with its concomitant social entertainments, and its assembling of lords and ladies, vassals and their wives and daughters,- while such an evolution was occurring among the upper classes, education was producing an equal transformation in the less elevated classes of society.[2] #

add p. 36A.

"Cependant, dès le XIIIe siècle, sinon dès le XIIe, il était facile d'apercevoir qu'un changement se préparait dans la manière dont les femmes avaient été jusque-là élevées, et qu'un mode d'éducation différente résulterait des institutions, des usages et des goûts nouveaux qui tendaient à prévaloir de jour en jour dans la société du moyen-âge."2

The education of the church gave way to a more secular instruction

1. cf. Langlois - Rose - p. 2.
2. Jourdain - Éd. des F.- p. 484-5.

Above all, it must be remembered in connection with our subject that Latin was dropped very early from the curriculum for girls, that French was the only language taught, that it was taught mainly through reading and not as a grammatical exercise,--since no French grammar was written in France before the sixteenth century,--and that the chief sources of reading were religious works and romances.

Families ~~which~~ that could afford to do so, engaged private teachers for their daughters or sent them to the convent-schools. ~~and among the poorer classes, benevolent women began to teach elementary education outside the walls of convents.~~ Women, also, as in the case of Héloïse, attended the classes of famous professors.

All this led to a study of the novel, which, under one form or another, constituted the modern classics. M. Jourdain, in detailing the curriculum for young ladies of the nobility and the wealthier bourgeoisie, states that, in addition to music, some notions of history, astrology, falconry, chess, and the rudiments of medicine, the principal objects of their studies were "la récitation des fabliaux et des romans---."[1] No more striking testimony of the consideration paid to the novel need be looked for.

How sensitive authors were to the new reading-public, ~~namely that of women,~~ and how sedulously they catered to it, may be judged by the emphasis given to the theme of love and to descriptions of dress in works not professedly sentimental, whether dealing with the romances of King Arthur's Knights, or with adaptations of classical stories. The writer of the Énéas, after summing up the destruction of Troy in some forty verses,

> "s'arrête avec complaisance sur les amours
> de Didon et d'Énée:"[2]

the six lines devoted to Lavinia's love for Aeneas and her rejection of the suit of Turnus in Virgil, are developed by the author of the Énéas in a space which it requires M. Peÿ to spread over more than twenty book-pages in his transcription:[3] and in the

1. Jourdain - Éd. des F. - p. 491-2: cf. Rousselot, Éd. des Fem., I, p. 49, 52.
2. Peÿ - Énéas - p. 10.
3. Peÿ - Énéas - cf. pp. 24 to 55.

French version, Aeneas reproaches himself to the extent of one hundred sixty lines for his neglect of Lavinie. The importance of love strikes Benoît de Sainte-More with the same force.

> "Wodurch Benoît vor allen Dingen zu fesseln sucht, das sind die Liebesgeschichten, welche viele hundert Verse füllen. Die Liebe wird in allen Arten und Phasen geschildert, sowol die ungestüme und sinnliche Liebe der Medea, als die reine und keusche Flamme der Polyxena, die unbeständige und flatterhafte Liebe der Briseida, und die Liebesqualen Achills und Diomedes, welche sich in langen monologen Luft machen."1

Of the rôle played by love in the romances of Chrétien de Troyes, nothing more need be done for the present than to call attention to the extensive and excellent treatment of that topic in La Femme et L'Amour au XIIe siècle, d'après les poèmes de Chrétien de Troyes, by Mlle Myrrha Boudine. But in the shorter tales, also, the theme of love receives ample treatment: notably in the lais of Marie de France, and in such fabliaux as le Prêtre et le Chevalier, in which Gilles, the niece of the chaplain, is dealt with in

> "les mêmes traits élégants, peu individuels, qui dessinent aussi les portraits, non plus des vilaines ou des bourgeoises, mais des hautes et puissantes femmes de barons, comme d'ailleurs dans les aristocratiques romans de Chrétien de Troyes--."2

To be sure, the general impression has prevailed that the apparently sudden appearance of the theme of love in the medieval literature of the north of France was caused by the increased intimacy of that part of the country with Provence. Almost as if by magic, the bonds of union have been tightened. Where, previously, an impassible chain of mountains seems to have kept the Provençal lyric at a distance,- notably during the flowering season of the chansons de geste,- now, through the workings

1. Deedde - Ep. Stof.- p. 12.
2. Bedier - Fabliaux - p. 308.

of some miracle, the mountains have dissolved, and a reciprocal penetration of literatures occurs. Bernard de Ventadour, the southern poet, takes up his residence at the court of Henri II, at that time duke of Normandy, whose wife ~~Éléonore~~ Aliénor d'Aquitaine, herself a product of the courts of the South, gave a hearty welcome to the troubadour.[1] The famous lion which guarded the Provençal Golfier de Tours may have served as the prototype of the faithful lion in Chrétien's Yvain.[2] On the other hand, Northern stories come to the knowledge of the Provençal poets. Guiraut de Borneil, Arnaut de Marsan, Raimbaut de Vaqueiras, Guiraut de Cabreira, refer in no uncertain manner to Northern romances, and in particular to those of Chrétien: in the Romande Jaufre and in the Roman de Flamenca, the allusions to the romances in the langue d'oïl are frequent.[3]

These are facts which cannot be controverted: and it would be a waste of time to try to minimize the effect of Provençal lyric poetry on the novel-writing of the North. Undoubtedly, specific political events had much to do with the dissemination of Provençal ideas. Undoubtedly, M. Paul Meyer is right in ~~observing that~~ noting that the influence of the Provençal lyric on the poetry of the north of France began immediately after the marriage of Aliénor to Louis VII.[4]

> "Le mariage de Louis VII avec Éléonore d'Aquitaine (1137) a une grande portée: les quinze ans pendant lesquels Éléonore fut reine de France sont probablement l'époque où la poésie lyrique du Midi commença à influer sensiblement sur celle du Nord."[4]

That Chrétien went to school with the Provençal lyric poets: that his six known lyrics are in the approved Provençal manner: that his romances, such as the Perceval contain full-blown lyrics:[5]

1. Fauriel - P.P. II - p. 30.
2. cf. Holland - Crestien - p. 162.
3. " " - pp. 31, 57-58, ff.
4. P. Meyer - Romania - V. XIX, p. 3.
5. cf. Perceval. ~~I. 183-194~~ [illegible] Baist

that Gautier d'Arras, in his Éracle, imitated the same masters:[1] that Benoît, in his descriptions of spring,[2] had in mind the joyous songs of the troubadours, after the chill winter had passed: and that there is a close connection between these facts and the development of the Court of Love and other sentimental devices in the Southern countries:-[3] all this may be accepted as gospel. Nevertheless, since practically in no instance has a revolution been brought to pass by one single, individual force, it may be assumed that the Provençal lyric could not, single-handed, have subverted the basic principle of the French novel and substituted an entirely new one. That same Ovid, who was the favorite and the model of the Southern poets, was studied also in the North. That same deference to women was beginning to manifest itself beyond the boundaries of Provence, largely as the result of a distinct change in social conditions: and it is probable that Northern French literature would of its own accord have turned in the direction of the worship of woman, simply because that was in the air. In spite of the usual paucity of sentiment in the chansons de geste, the theme of love had already appeared in some of them. Fauriel, a partisan of the Provençaux, if ever there was one, admits this, though grudgingly:[4]

> "Tel est, autant qu'on peut le résumer en quelques mots, le système d'amour et de galanterie que les troubadours et leurs imitateurs ont tourné et retourné en tous sens, dans leurs compositions lyriques. C'est exactement le même qui se retrouve, bien qu'épisodiquement et sans y occuper beaucoup de place, dans quelques romans du cycle Karlovingien." 4

1. Wilmotte - Év. du Rom.- p. 357-8
2. Demedde - Ep. Stof. - p. 12.
3. cf. Neilson - Court of Love - pp. 24 ff.
4. Fauriel - P.P.II - p. 271.

However little faith we may have in the value of literary works as sociological documents, we must admit that the novel has always reflected something of the life about it. What M. Babeau says of comedy may be applied to the novel of the medieval or any other period: "Les comédies ne sauraient être regardées comme des documents historiques d'une véracité certaine; mais elles reproduisent avec vraisemblance les moeurs contemporaines, tout en exagérant le côté par où elles prêtent au ridicule."[2]

2. Babeau, Vie rur., p. 162.

in Fauriel's statement of rather a gallant type

The important admission ~~here~~ is that love was actually treated in such chansons de geste as the Aiol, # ~~A difference between this love and that of the troubadours, Fauriel feels constrained to point out:~~

> "Mais, dans la plupart de ces mêmes romans, il n'y a aucune apparence de cet amour systématique, exalté et délicat, principe suprême de tout honneur, de toute vertu." 1

Though the chief business of life in the lais of Marie de France is love, its outward signs are not those of the Provençal lyric. The supremacy of the woman and the abjectness of the man, as pictured by the Provençal writers and by Chrétien, as, for example, in the Roman de la Charrette, find no imitator in Marie.

> "Il n'y a rien de tout cela dans Marie. Les rapports du héros et de l'héroine, qu'ils soient adultères---ou qu'ils ne le soient pas,--sont toujours d'une nature simple et affectueuse sans qu'aucun des amants cherche à s'emparer de la suprématie."2

Even the lubricious fabliaux, with their obsession by the sexual problem, are evidence that the commerce of men and women was an absorbing topic, and that love was treated in various manners besides the Provençal manner.#

Within a limited area, however, the troubadour conception of love became fashionable: and the novels written for this section of society, consciously followed the Provençal style. These works required at first a reading-circle versed in the sentimental technicalities and trained to appreciate the conventionalities of a sophisticated and studied art of writing. The advantage of popular traditions known of everybody, high and low: the incentive of national pride in the national heroes of the chansons de geste: the use of a style as simple as it was uni-

~~1. Fauriel P.P.II. - p. 271-2.~~

add: over if its so told in the epics was together serious.

add p. 41A.

versally comprehensible: these factors, the new novels set aside in introducing foreign subject-matter, the appreciation of which it must have taken some time to inculcate, and in employing terms and devices to which the general public had not been educated. Moreover, the reading-public was limited: and such of the stories in these romances as might be of more common interest because of their freshness, were given to the multitude in the form of lais and fabliaux. Thus, the lais of Marie de France retold in a popular style many of the Celtic plots: and the fabliaux treated some of the same episodes in an even more popular fashion. That which particularly enchanted the higher classes,- the allusions to characters of classical antiquity, the keen discussions of the code of love, the presentation of the marvellous,- meant little to the small shop-keepers and the workingmen. Finely-drawn psychological portrayal, nice shades of meaning, and the skill of a slow peripetia were lost on them. What they wanted was something to the point; something not too far above them. As listeners, especially with their prerogatives of confirmed scepticism concerning that which could not be materially placed before them, they were inclined to reject what, as readers whose minds could gradually be prepared for the improbable, they might have accepted. Hence though the fabliaux

> "inclinent parfois soit au dit moral,--soit à la légende sentimentale et chevaleresque,--ils se passent toujours dans les limites du vraisemblable et excluent tout surnaturel."1

The trained public for whom the new romances were written already existed: and there can be no reasonable doubt ~~but~~ that it was largely recruited from the Provençal territories.

1. Bédier - Fab. - p. 12.

In all probability, the marriage of Aliénor or Éléonore to Louis VII was mainly responsible for the favor with which an abrupt transition from the old way of thinking was regarded. To Aliénor and her group, the rude customs, the hackneyed traditions of the North of France must have seemed antiquated. Provence had progressed: its civilization had become finer, more complex. The mind and the heart,- above all the latter,- had won the victory over mere brawn. Man had been relegated to his natural, subordinate position, and woman had come to the front to dictate what the important relations of human beings should be. These rulings, André le Chapelain had codified in his De Arte honeste Amanti: and in the last chapter, had published the celebrated judgments of Aliénor, Maria de Champagne, Ermengart de Narbonne, and others, on which was erected the theory of the Courts of Love. (1)

> "célèbres jugements, soi-disant prononcés par Marie de Champagne, par sa mère Aliénor, par Ermengart de Narbonne, par la Comtesse de Flandres, par la reine de France et par d'autres grandes dames, et sur lesquels on a échafaudé la fameuse théorie des cours d'Amour."1

The consciousness of a superior education and of a more polished social intercourse must have lent weight to the propaganda of these ladies. Furthermore, there existed among them a well-defined depreciation of the state of Northern France. (2)

> "--en Provenza se miraba el nombre francés con odio y con desprecio, y se consideraba á los nacidos al otro lado del Loira como bárbaros semisalvajes."2

The carriers of these ideas were, as might have been expected, the poets. In Provençal literature the poet has always served the lady in power, sometimes at a distance, sometimes,

1. Langlois - Rose - p. 24-25.
2. Navarrete - Bosquejo - p. XVII, note 1.

as in the case of Chrétien, close at hand, and in the guise of a favorite. A few rather curious facts appear to demonstrate that to Aliénor and her daughter, Marie de Champagne, belongs the immediate credit for turning the novel into a different channel: that they had decided to popularize the Provençal criticism of life: and that they had followed a consistent, premeditated plan in their efforts. The great change in the literature of the French court followed Aliénor's marriage to Louis VII, in 1137. Similarly, on her marriage to Henry II of England in 1152, a group of Anglo-Norman romancers, including Wace, Jordan Fantosme, Gautier Map, put into execution the same methods as those which characterized the work of Benoît de Sainte-More and Chrétien de Troie. Her daughters carried on a similar campaign, and her son, Richard the Lion-Hearted, displayed equal interest in the Provençal forms of writing.

So close is the correspondence in time between the vogue of the sentimental poetry in Provence and the rise of the courtly epic in the North of France that, taken together with the Provençal education and tastes of the chief patrons of this class of novels, the only possible conclusion ~~which~~ that can be drawn must concede the initiative and the impulse to the troubadours. About 1150, according to Fauriel,[1] Provençal love-poetry assumed sufficiently large proportions to stand in a separate class. Representatives such as Bernard de Ventadour, Guiraut de Calanso, Arnaud de Marveil, Raimbaut de Vaqueiras, captivated the courts and the nobles of the South. Almost immediately Northern writers, who, as has been indicated, were under the influence of Provençal rulers, adopted the general style of the troubadours.

1. Fauriel - P. P. II. - p. 2

Chrétien de Troyes and Auboin de Sezanne[1] were the first to introduce it beyond the Loire, and it was not long before their neighbors and contemporaries, among whom were Godefroi de Leigin, Gautier de Dargnet, Manesier, Raoul de Houderic, Guillaume clerc de Normandie, were following in their lead. Besides his formal lyrics, such as Amors tençon et bataille, De jolif cuer chanterai, Quan li douls estes decline, Chrétien scattered troubadour-lyrics throughout his novels, a good specimen of which is the passage in the Perceval beginning

"Ce fu au tans qu' s'arbre florissent---.[2]

The same custom obtained among his competitors. Some imitated the Provençal lyric sparingly: others, without stint. Among the latter, Gautier d'Arras. (3)

> "plus que Chrétien, reste soumis aux modes et aux façons de dire de la lyrique, et c'est chez elle qu'il est allé prendre, semble-t-il, les modèles de rhétorique courtoise que ses devanciers ne lui fournissaient point." 3

The conception of the divided heart, one-half of which the lover keeps, the other half going to the beloved;[4] the description of Courts of Beauty: the increasing employment of personification and allegory: and the languishing attitude of the ill-treated suitor: along with the use of such stock epithets as medisanz and losengiers: began to be the commonplaces of the poetry written for the nobles in the North of France. No doubt, also, the change of the respective roles in love was hastened by the Provençal doctrines. Everything tended toward the glorification

1. cf. Holland - Crestien - p. 270.
2. cf. Chrétien - Perceval ~~l. 183-194.~~ ed. Baist, pp. 69ff.
3. Wilmotte - Ev. ~~of Ner~~. - pp. 357-8
4. Gautier d'Arras - Eracle ~~3539-40.~~ ed. Massmann, pp. 349 ff

of woman. The "service d'amour", as typified in the Roman de la Charrette, became a regular institution and made an

> "époque dans l'histoire de la vieille poésie française, ainsi que l'a marqué, le premier, Gaston Paris dans son étude brillante sur notre roman."[1]

Yet, to look upon the Provençal poets as the sole instigators of this activity in the treatment of love as the mainspring of the novel, would be to commit a grave error. At least one other source, namely Ovid and the Latin erotic poets, contributed with almost equal force to the literary expression of what was at bottom a social evolution. If it were not for the characteristically troubadour phrases and the descriptions of spring to be met with in the romances of Chrétien and his school, one might be disposed to give most of the credit for the literary transformation to Ovid, beyond compare, the favorite Latin poet in medieval days. This feeling would be especially heightened by the knowledge that the cult for Ovid penetrated into the less elevated forms, such as the lais,- among which may be found the Lai de Narcisse and the Lai d'Orfée, taken from Ovid,- and the fabliaux,- an example of which is De Venus la Deesse d'Amor. Again, if Chrétien is known to have adapted Provençal lyrics, he is known likewise to have turned into French verse, while at the court of the Comte Thibaut, Ovid's De Arte Amandi about the year 1160.[2] Which of these two influences played the greater part in his theory of novel-writing, it would be difficult to determine. Perhaps even more important in its effects than Chrétien's practice, was the appearance of Andreas

1. Borodine - Chrét. - p. 188.
2. Langlois - Rose - p. 21.

Capellanus' De Arte honeste Amandi, about 1200, which contained, among other foreshadowings of the Carte du Tendre, a description of the Palace of Love and an exposition of the thirty regulae Amoris. Of this work, Mr. Neilson says:

> "The book of Andreas gives us the theory of that system the practice of which is concretely presented in the romances of Chrétien de Troyes--."1

To the unprejudiced mind, it must certainly seem that the claims of the familiar Latin poets to an equal rank, if not, indeed, to precedence in the propagation of the love-theme are well founded. Not only was Ovid, for example, zealously studied in the schools of Northern France in the original, and frequently translated, but the trouvères even found in him all the details of the "service d'amour" which the Provençal writers had to offer later. (2)

> "Man betrachtete den Ovid gewissermassen als eine Vorlage, als Stoffsammlung, die benutzt und ausgeplündert wurde, auch mag manches von ihm Gesagte mit bereits Vorhandenem zusammengeflossen sein."2

So certain is the recognition paid to Ovid by the writers of Northern France, that Herr Schrötter takes it for granted, while explaining and proving the Provençal acquaintance with the author of the Metamorphoses. (3)

> "--aus der nordfranzösischen Literatur vom Ende des 12. Jahrhunderts ab ist uns eine Reihe von Übersetzungen und Bearbeitungen Ovids überliefert, während wir für den Süden nicht einmal Kunde von solchen haben. Auch G. Paris, in seiner Arbeit über Chrétien Legomais lässt den Süden unberücksichtigt." 3

The "Gai saber", then, had a formidable rival in the North in the form of the "ars amatoria": and most of the features considered

1. Neilson - Court of L. - p. 176
2. Schrötter - Ovid - p. 19.
3. Schrötter - Ovid - p. 8-9.

indigenous in troubadour-poetry,- the love-making to married ladies, the modes of address, such as "domna", "femma", "amiga", (in Ovid, "domina", "femina", "amica"), the rhetoric of love, the flattery of court-favorites, the "occasional" tone,- already existed in Ovid, and, by the time the troubadour-influence began to make itself felt, were already a part of the poetical repertory in the North of France. There, through the schools, Ovid had come to occupy the position almost of a popular poet, whom not even Virgil could dethrone. He was better known and more carefully studied than in the South, where, it appears, the study of his works was, rather superficial.[1] Indeed, Paul Meyer has flatly denied the relationship between the troubadour lyric and ancient culture. (2)

> "Il n'y a aucun rapport entre cette culture antique et la poésie des troubadours. Celle-ci est le développement et le perfectionnement d'une poésie populaire qu'on peut faire remonter jusqu'à l'époque romaine, mais dont aucun échantillon ne s'est conservé. Ce qui justifie cette vue, c'est le caractère encore populaire de la forme dans laquelle sont conçues les plus anciennes poésies lyriques du midi de la France."2

Schrötter's book may have been conceived as a reply to statements of this nature. What concerns us is the evident antecedent pre-occupation of the poets of Northern France with Ovid's theories. This went back as far as the ninth century.

Still, even if it could be proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that the Provençal lyric was the sole inspiring cause of the sentimental strain in French romance, that fact alone would not constitute it the creator of the modern novel. As an influence, it would have to share honors with the chronicles,

1. cf. Diez - Poesie d. Tr. - p.111.
2. P. Meyer - Rev. Critique, 1867, p. 174 — March 16, 1867.

the folk-stories, the nouvelles, and the many other forms of writing which enter into the make-up of the novel, without being the novel itself. It would remain only the lyric, whether within or without the novel-texture: it would serve simply as one of the devices or decorations of the novel. If it alone had established the changed motive of the novel, it would have this to its credit, to be sure, but nothing more.

Literary historians, however, have gone further. They have in no uncertain terms attributed the rise of the novel to Provençal literature. Possibly this was to have been expected when erroneous ideas in literature were built up on surmises rather than facts, in the earlier days, when the study of philology stood in the same fantastic relation to linguistic science as astrology stood to astronomy. Even Sainte-Beuve's apology for Boileau's crude notions of Old French literature has not been sufficient to exonerate the Legislator of Parnassus from the fault of mediocre thinking in this respect, to say the least. That such faulty notions were common, is only too true: and some of the best minds held them. Thus, Huet, while making fun of the derivation of roman from Reims, as proposed by the Italian, Pigna, because that city was the arch-bishopric of the famous Turpin, the chronicler of Charlemagne,[1] at the same time believes thoroughly in the Provençal poets as the immediate initiators of the novel in France. He has done more, perhaps, to perpetuate this conviction than any other man, and probably inspired the paradoxes of Fauriel, nearly two hundred years later.

> "Les troubadours, les chanterres, les conteurs et les jongleurs de Provence, et en-

1. Huet - Or. des R. - p. 50.

> fin ceux de ce pays qui exerçaient ce qu'on appelait la science gaie, commencèrent, dès le temps de Hugues Capet, à romaniser tout de bon, et à courir la France, débitant leurs romans et leurs fabliaux, composés en langage romain; car alors les Provençaux avaient plus d'usage des lettres et de la poésie que tout le reste des Français--. Le roman étant donc plus universellement entendu les conteurs de Provence s'en servirent pour écrire leurs contes, qui de là furent appelés romans."[1]

That Huet, who may be looked on as a conservative critic for his epoch, should have emitted this opinion ought to occasion no surprise. From the demonstrated lyrical superiority of the Provençaux to the ~~if~~ supposition of their superiority in the romance, is a ~~deduction~~ step easily made. In addition, the dates of literary works in the mother tongue had not been settled with any approach to scientific accuracy: and the Provençal romances which actually existed were naturally placed in the period of the greatest Provençal activity. But that Fauriel, writing in 1846, should have advanced no further, is a most striking commentary on the small amount of progress accomplished in the field of literary research down to his day. Furthermore, Fauriel insists time and again on his irrefragable demonstration of the leadership and precedence of the Provençal novel, and of the imitation of it by the rest of France. If he had been about to present something absolutely new, he could not have made a more imposing and weighty display of erudite methods. Yet, the kernel of his thesis had been stated some two hundred years before. In spite of his array of ~~100~~ one hundred Provençal novels: in spite of his ingenious efforts to prove that representative French novels were based on those of the South, as, for example,

1. Huet - Or. des R.- pp. 51 ff.

that a Provencal Tristan, Ferabras, or a Provençal cycle of Guillaume d'Orange preceded the Northern romances bearing those names:[1] in spite of his conviction that most of the allusions to romances in the Provençal lyrics must of necessity have reference to Provençal novels: in spite of his definite placing of the most popular Provençal novel in the first half of the twelfth century: and in spite of the acceptance of these ideas by many of the conscientious German critics, of whom Holland is one, it has been Fauriel's fate to have his large, enthusiastic labor stamped as a paradox by one of his own countrymen, and so considered generally.

It would, of course, be folly to reject in toto the theory of a very early development in Provence of the longer narrative forms, though few positive facts can be alleged in its support. From all that is known at present, it appears that Provence, like the rest of Europe, derived its romances and its romance-method from the North of France. Flamenca, which Mr. Ker considers the

> "perfection and completion of medieval romance in one kind and in one direction"2

was written a century after Chrétien de Troies by one of his imitators, and, like almost all the Provençal stories, followed the guidance of the Northern poets. Without these precusors, Flamenca,

> "a work in which the form of the novel is completely disengaged from the unnecessary accidents of romance, and reaches a kind of positive and modern clearness very much at variance in some respects with popular ideas of what is medieval,"3

1. Fauriel - P. P. II - pp. 405, 412, 434, ff.
2. Ker - Ep. & Rom. - p. 361
3. Ker - Ep. & Rom. - p. 359.

would in all likelihood have been impossible. The author evidently had no Provençal models before him worthy of imitation.

The preceding discussion has taken no cognizance of the most virile factor in the evolution of the novel, which, for a long time, limited in large measure to the short-story, ended by taking possession of the novel in its more important branches. Just what ~~the~~ this literature ~~of the people~~ was at any particular period may be hard to determine. At one time, the chansons de geste formed part of it: at another, the romans de chevalerie: at various seasons, lyrical poetry of a kind has been included in it. The degree of exclusiveness attaching to the so-called popular literature, it is likewise difficult to calculate with any precision. It would seem at first sight that the fabliaux and the Roman de Renart might be designated as of the people, by the people, for the people. Nevertheless, genuine literary artists with the training of the schools, such as Rustebeuf, have written some of the best of them. Similarly, it might be supposed that the literature of the people would remain with the people, and have no attraction for persons of high culture. Yet, the opposite appears to be true. The author of one of the "branches" of the Renart reminds his hearers that they have been listening indifferently to romances of chivalry, chansons de geste, and fabliaux:[1] and in one of the old manuscripts, the attention paid by the rich owner to the nobler stories is evidently no greater than that paid to the fabliaux,- and those by no means of the purest kind,[2]

1. Bédier - Fab. - p. 339-~~40~~ 340
2. Ibid. - pp. 339-340.

> "Vous pourrez y lire les courtoises aventures du Chevalier aux deux épées, --- l'histoire de la Male Dame, dont je ne saurais citer complètement le titre: mais le manuscrit le donne tout entier. Vous y rencontrerez ici la noble dame de Garadigan, plus loin la vieille Auberée.--- Voici le duel d'Olivier et de Fierabras, beau comme une page du Romancero; et voici l'équipée grotesque du Prestre qui abevete. --- L'élégant Lai de l'Ombre est tout voisin de l'obscène fabliau des Souhaits Saint-Martin.— Cela nous choque, mais ne choquait pas nos ancêtres."1

Perhaps, contrary to M. Bédier's belief, the interest of the higher classes of that day, and even of the better educated individuals today, in the licentious, racy, popular stories may not be so unnatural, after all. At any rate, there is every reason for supposing that the difference between the esthetic or moral appreciation of the nobles and that of the common classes in the twelfth century was not very marked. The temptation to draw an arbitrary line between that which appeals to the élite and that which appeals to the herd is always extremely strong. Yet, Mme. de Sévigné, one of the most delicate women of the seventeenth century, confessed her predilection for the blood-and-thunder of La Calprenède, and was not squeamish in her vocabulary, and a late justice of the Supreme Court of the United States is known to have been an omnivorous reader of cheap detective-stories.

So deeply rooted, however, is the tradition of a double reading public, corresponding to the aristocratic and the democratic elements of society, or to the feudal and the bourgeois classes,[2] that too long an investigation for the purposes of this essay would be required to prove anything definite, pro or con. That a two-fold public existed, cannot be doubted. It

1. cf. Brantôme's testimony concerning Henri II, Œuvres, IX, p. 490
1. ~~Bédier - Fab. - pp. 339-40~~
2. ~~Brunetière - Et. Crit. V.6 - p. 72~~ 4

has always been in evidence, and probably will be so to the end of the world. We have today one set of people to whom Keats, Wordsworth, George Meredith, Henry James, and others of rather nice expression, mean practically nothing: and another, to whom they are the quintessence of beauty and enjoyment. But where to draw the line in the twelfth century is a problem. It is certain that for a considerable portion of the nobility, the romances of chivalry must have been lacking in appeal. Those barons who had not been contaminated by the seductive feminine influences of the more luxurious court-circle may be thought of as still holding to the sturdy chansons de geste and the more realistic contes and fabliaux. On the other hand, the richer bourgeoisie probably affected the new romances from the moment of their appearance. The most reasonable assumption is that which divides the reading public into those who had a training in the finer aspects of literature, in the delicacies of language, style and sentiment, and those who recognized a spade only when it was called a spade. From this point of view, the better types of fabliaux may be considered as suited to the most cultured; and the less-affected romances, as suited to the great majority. That would explain the reciprocal borrowing among the widely-different species of writing: the transformation of romance-material into popular stories, and of fabliaux into romance-material. Even M. Bédier, who sees so sharp a distinction between the high and the low, feels constrained to observe that

> "une étrange promiscuité confond les publics et les genres, chevaliers et marchands,

romans de la Table Ronde et fabliaux."[1]

In general, nevertheless, the popular element was making unmistakeable inroads into what had been till then a noticeably one-sided literature. The tastes of the middle classes, which had formerly been represented by an ephemeral, inartistic production, preserved only in rude writing or in oral shape, were being perpetuated by hands as skilful as those that moulded the stories intended for the consumption of the noble and the educated orders. The condition of one reading-public, higher up, and of one public without a ~~predilection~~ taste for letters, lower down was being transformed into a condition in which two reading-publics moved together. At a definite period,- about the middle of the twelfth century,- the literary output suddenly doubled. What had lain dormant, became alive: what had seemed too trivial to be reduced to the precious parchment, became important. In the beautifully written, elegantly bound volumes, the mocking spirit of the masses elbowed the dreamy mannerisms of the nobles: the common favorites of the people,- Auberée, Charlot le Juif,- with both feet planted on terra firma, walked cheek by jowl with Guenièvre and Lancelot, who were lost in a fairyland of wonderful happenings. The times were changing in literature, as in the social life. A new power was making itself felt, perhaps for the first time, in literary art as in life. What occurred now in France was duplicated somewhat later in Germany. (2)

"Les deux poètes presque contemporains, le gentilhomme bavarois Nithart et le seigneur Ulric de Lichtenstein, montrent deux côtés

1. Bédier - Fab. - p. 344.
2. Bossert, Lit. all., pp. 347-348.

The proud cry of the equality of man, uttered with no less poignancy than that of Shylock by the vilains of Richard II, gives a different impression of social thinking done in the time of Wace from that ordinarily held:

"Pur kei nus laissum damagier?
Metum nus fors de lor dangier;
Nus sumes homes cum il sunt;
Tex membres avum cum il unt,
Et altresi grans cors avum,
Et altretant sofrir poum; 1
Ne nus faut fors cuer sulement."

1. Wace, Rou, v. 6025 ff

suivant p. 56A

> opposés du XIIIe siècle, l'un la bourgeoisie qui gagne, l'autre la chevalerie qui disparaît."1

Apparently, similar conditions in both countries produced similar results. Two social strata were becoming differentiated.

> The question early asked by Wace,
>
> "Quand Adam bêchait, quand Ève filait, où était le gentilhomme"2

was receiving its answer long before the Roman de la Rose had its inception.

Does this mean that French society was just then undergoing a separation unknown in previous ages, or that French literature was only now beginning to have a double current? By no means. Society had always had its superiors and its inferiors, its rich and its poor, its privileged classes and its oppressed: literature had always had its lofty and its humble representatives. The latter, however, had been chiefly anonymous and oral: its vast contributions to the written literature had been absorbed, transformed, and stamped with another name. But, in the twelfth century, the submerged tenth of society was asserting its rights, both social and literary. It was writing its name on its productions. The distance between the fabliau and the noble romance of chivalry was becoming as short as that between the merchant or the farmer and the baron. (1)

> "--audessous de la société aristocratique, on voit grandir une autre, jeune, pleine de vitalité, favorisée dans sa croissance par les rois, dont elle sera le plus puissant soutien

~~1. Bossert - Litt. All. - p. 347-8~~

1. cf. Langlois - Rose - p. 97-8

> contre la féodalité laïque ou cléricale. Dans quelques années elle aura sa place aux États généraux. Le parti nouveau, dont il est aisé de suivre le développement depuis ses luttes pour l'affranchissement des communes, enrichi par le commerce et l'industrie, enhardi par la faveur du pouvoir central, fort surtout de sa culture intellectuelle, devient bientôt agressif, non seulement dans les conseils des rois, mais aussi dans sa littérature."1

The formation of the communes produced a new class of writers, a new literary vocabulary, and above all, a new spirit, a new criticism of life. Good-natured, at first, wanting only to compose humorous stories without any special satiric sting, these writers gradually emancipated themselves from the weight of those above them, analyzed problems of the day, and expressed their own personal opinions. By the fourteenth century, the aggressive spirit of the masses had become bitter in its denunciations: and the literature of the masses reproduced the general frame of mind.(1)

> "Ce même esprit envahit les autres nations; les hardiesses des imitations italiennes de nos romans de chevalerie, les facéties allemandes de Tyll Eulenspiegle, les Visions de Piers Ploughman--qui, des hauteurs du comté de Worcester, voit sans illusion et juge sans pitié le monde des prélats et des gentilhommes, tous ces écrits s'addressent au peuple et mettent à sa portée des vérités nouvelles; mais nulle part ces organes de la pensée de la foule n'ont été plus libres qu'en France."2

The surest index of the coming of age of the masses in the arts is to be found in the progress of education. We are in the habit of considering our own epoch as a marvelous improvement

~~1. Langlois - Rose - pp. 97-8.~~
1. G. Le Clerc - Hist. Litt. XIV S. I - pp. 258-9-259

In Paris alone, from the twelfth to the beginning of the fifteenth century, sixty-seven colleges were established, and this large number must presuppose the existence of a relatively great body of elementary schools.[2]

2. Vallet de Viriville, Instr. Pub., p. 166. These schools, it must be remarked, were not all flourishing at the same time: "Le nombre des collèges coexistants ne dépassa jamais une quarantaine---;" and the enrolment was often low. But even so, the situation was remarkable.

on anything that had gone before in all that pertains to popular instruction: yet, if we bear in mind what the educational conditions had been in France down to the end of the twelfth century, and what it then became, we shall have to admit that the educational activity entered into in France forms one of the most astounding features of the Middle Ages. The list of the Universities alone is sufficient to make us open our eyes. The establishment of them, begun with the University of Paris (between 1150 and 1170), went on with increasing rapidity, until, by the middle of the fifteenth century, scarcely an important center was without its school of higher instruction. Among them may be mentioned Montpellier (12th century): Toulouse (1233): Avignon (1303): Angers and Orleans (first half of the thirteenth century): Cahors (1332): Grenoble (1339): Perpignan (1379): Orange (1365): Louvain (1426): Poitiers (1431): Caen (1437): Bordeaux (1441): Valence (1452): Nantes (1463): Bourges (1465). The important privileges granted the students and their teachers by the kings and the popes, and the many scholarships conceded to poor students attest a complete alteration in the consideration in which the bourgeoisie was held. Some colleges were even expressly founded for the sons of workmen: the college du cardinal le Moine (1302), Navarre (1305), Bayeux (1308), Presles (1314), Narbonne (1317), and a host of others.[1] Not even the Church tried to stem the tide setting in toward the education of the masses. In spite of the general abandonment of the monasteries as the centers of instruction in the belles lettres: in spite of the desertion of classes by

1. cf. Langlois - Rose - p. 99.

monks who journeyed to Paris to complete their education:[1] the ecclesiastical authorities vied with the temporal authorities in providing further educational opportunities.

> "Soweit man von Gründung der Universitäten sprechen kann, ist dieselbe das Verdienst der Päpste und der Landesherren, des Clerus und der Laien. Dass aber den Päpsten der Hauptantheil zukomme, wird jeder zugestehen, welcher meiner nur auf Documenten ruhenden Darstellung gefolgt ist und die Geschichte mit unbefangenen Blicke prüft. Nicht bloss wurde die Mehrzahl der Hochschulen durch päpstliche Stiftbriefe ins Leben gerufen, sondern nahezu alle, gleichviel ob diese der geistlichen oder der weltlichen Macht ihr Dasein verdankten--erhielten von den Päpsten mannigfache Privilegien--und Magister und Scholaren wurden von ihnen jedesmal in Schutz genommen und unterstützt, so oft sie die Curie um Hilfe anriefen."[2]

So little inclined, indeed, was the Church to interfere with the progress of the Universities, that some Popes supported the students against the Chancellor, who was in almost every case a high church-officer.[3] The ulterior motive of the Papacy, in thus taking the universities under its protection, may have been the selfish one of governing these influential groups of eager intellects from the central office in Rome: and M. Luchaire may be perfectly correct in remarking that

> "La fondation des universités françaises est un épisode de l'évolution qui tendait, depuis le commencement du Moyen Age, à établir la monarchie pontificale au-dessus des pouvoirs locaux:"[4]

but the fact remains that the Popes encouraged the growth of the universities, helped them, and granted them a growing autonomy.

1. cf. Jourdain - Ed. des F.- pp. 484-5.
2. Denifle - Univ. - pp. 792-3.
3. idem pp. 795-6.
4. Luchaire - Histoire de France - p.342.— VIII

The natural consequence of this education of the masses was an increase of interest in literature as an art, a popularization of classical themes, such as Troy, Alexander, Thebes, Oedipus, the Metamorphoses of Ovid, and a broadening of the public for whom the story-tellers were writing. The line which divided writers was gradually becoming effaced. Authors from among the ranks of the people began to feel their own worth and the worth of their social class. As the bourgeoisie had grown strong politically and powerful in an economic sense, thereby daring to look the nobility in the face, so it had worked up to the level of the guardians of learning, namely, the clerks. Bourgeois trouvères, who had been in the habit of lauding their superiors and exhibiting scorn for their own kind, find it no longer essential for the acceptation of their stories to continue doing so. Even in the chansons de geste, formerly so strongly imbued with contempt for the lowly, the humbler classes come to the front. They cease being represented as drunkards, misers, gluttons. Some of them, like Rigaut in Garin, succeed in obtaining knighthood, because of their indomitable courage and resourcefulness.

> "La chanson de Daurel et Béton glorifie un simple jongleur, et, dans celle d'Amis et et d'Amiles, deux serfs font preuve envers leur maître d'un dévouement admirable."1

In the fabliaux and the contes, we find the bourgeois and the vilains existing for their own sake, and playing all the rôles in these comedies: and in such novels of adventure as Aucassin et Nicolette the country bumpkin answers the scion of nobility

1. Luchaire - Hist. de France - V.III, p. 411.

in much the same terms that a "citizen" in the keenest moments of the French Revolution might have employed toward an insolent marquis. Such a change of attitude is due not merely to the added reading-capacity of the working classes or to their stronger ability in enforcing respect and flattery from writers: it is due quite as much to the more untrammeled freedom of the theme and expression permitted to the trouvère.

Up to the period when the common people entered the field of literature as an important creative agency, the production of artistic works had been one-sided. Churchmen monopolized the profession. What they had composed had been addressed to a restricted audience, made up either of the learned, like themselves, or of the powerful, on whom they depended for favors. Sometimes, as M. Joseph Bédier has conjectured in his remarkable and novel theory of the origin of the Légendes Épiques, from which the chansons de geste derived their substance, the monks of certain monasteries, in order to perpetuate the fame of their shrines, or to attract pilgrims journeying to distant sanctuaries, so as to make a profit out of them by supplying them with food, lodging, or treasured saintly relics, condescended to write in a rather popular style about the heroes connected with their order or with the neighboring estates. It may therefore be said of these monks, that they contributed to the popular literature in this manner. Yet, it will be noted that in the vast majority of the chansons de geste, the spirit is entirely feudal, aristocratic, and that it is far from representing the genius of the masses. So, too,

> "comme l'histoire, comme l'apologue, la littérature didactique est sortie du monde des clercs pour pénétrer dans la société laïque."[1]

M. Sudre credits the cloisters and the schools with the responsibility for one of the strong currents visible in the Roman de Renart.[2] M. Constans assigns the perpetuation of the Oedipus-story to two different channels, — popular tradition and artistic or literary tradition.

> "la tradition populaire et la tradition artistique ou littéraire."[3]

And so on, almost indefinitely. One of the most important facts that must be accepted implicitly by the student of the Middle Ages is the initial dominance of the churchmen in all that pertains to letters. Equally as a matter of course, must one accept the existence of a large body of oral traditions, instinct with the feelings of the people, largely preserved by the people, and to a certain extent created by the people. At a particular moment, the interpenetration of these two sources became especially active. The chansons de geste, the romans de chevalerie, the romans d'aventure admitted popular stories, popular superstitions, and other popular elements, such as burlesque: and the fabliaux, the contes, the Roman de Renart underwent a noticeable, literary, scholastic influence, as may be seen both in much of the subject-matter treated and in the improved literary technique. How did this come about? If, for example, the apologues

> "étaient transcrits avec une scrupuleuse fidélité par de consciencieux copistes et se retrouvaient côte à côte dans une série indéfinie de compilations, ils étaient

1. Paris - Litt.fr. - p. 143.
2. Sudre - Renart - p. 340
3. Constans - Oed. - p. 93.

> répétés, appris, commentés, délayés à satiété dans les écoles et bientôt, franchissant le seuil des monastères, ils tombaient dans le domaine commun--,"[1]

how did they succeed in conforming to the popular spirit, in transforming their tone in such manner as to be undistinguishable from the genuine, original emanations of the people? Conversely, how did the popular traditions so come to clothe themselves with scholastic vestments as to seem "to the manor born?" Is it probable that the clercs, in their seclusion, were so imbued with the popular feeling as to be able to appeal to the masses in their own homely style? Is it probable that the uncultured popular story-tellers could at will adapt themselves to the requirements of a public trained in a special kind of literary esthetics? Evidently, some connecting link must be sought.

In approaching a question of this kind, which is vital in a study of the novel, there is great danger of trying to prove too much. Viewed from one standpoint, it may be made to appear that the literature of the people came into being at one definite date: that it was a sudden creation. Yet, a moment's reflection convinces us that such literature, partly in written form, but chiefly in oral exposition, has existed in all ages and among all nations. On the other hand, evidence may be advanced for the proposition that, at a particular moment, an elevated class of writing came into being.

"En effet, jusqu'à la fin du XIIe siècle, tous les genres poétiques cultivés dans la

1. Sudre - Renart - p. 139.

According to M. Jeanroy the various classes of poetry cultivated in the North of France before the end of the twelfth century were composed for society as a whole, and appealed both to the people in the market-place and to the nobles in their castles, no distinguishable difference of taste separating them. It was the formation of a courtly society, inspired by Provençal leaders, which first made the breach in the uniform texture of the public.[1]

1. Jeanroy, Lyrique, Intr. pp. XVII—XVIII

> France du nord s'adressèrent à la société toute entière, sans aucune distinction de caste: jusque-là, vies de saints, narrations épiques et plaisantes, si elles étaient applaudies sur les champs de foire et les places publiques par les bourgeois et les vilains, étaient egalement goûtées dans les salles des châteaux, où elles trouvaient un auditoire n'ayant pas une culture d'esprit sensiblement plus délicate que le reste du public. Ce n'est que lors de la formation de cette société courtoise dont nous parlions plus haut que le public français se scinda en deux parties, entre lesquelles se creusa un fossé qui depuis devait toujours aller en s'élargissant".1

Examined closely, the actual conditions may seem to have been the reverse of what they appear on the surface. It is undoubtedly true that the same stories were recited in the castles and on the public squares, and that all classes of society without distinction applauded them. But that does not define them as a part of popular literature, any more than the presence of the poor and rich at grand opera makes the latter form of artistic expression a real possession of the people. What were those lives of saints and epic narrations, if not types entirely foreign to the tastes and aspirations of the multitude? What is there in the Chanson de Roland or the Vie de Saint Honorat which identifies them with the people? If anywhere in the whole range of French literature there has appeared any species removed from the crowd, speaking in a manner foreign to the crowd, and absolutely unrepresentative of it, that species has been the chansons de geste. Later, indeed, some space is given to the people in them, but it is only after the epics have run their course and are on the point of extinction. Even their subsequent popularity, when they were spread broadcast through the bibliothèque

1. Jeanroy - Lyrig. - Intr. XVII-XVIII.

This can be only one half of the explanation for the social and literary partition which, as M. Jeanroy suggests, became more and more marked as time went on. The other half is to be sought in the independent pulling-force exerted by the common people itself through a growing sense of intellectual and political importance, and in what M. Faral calls the "différenciation de l'art de jonglerie".[1] The epics of the halls, originally written for and about a limited branch of society, developed into the epics of the public squares: and we must recollect that XXX it is largely in this form that we know the chansons de geste. At first distinctly exclusive in their appeal, they finally became the property of the people in the bibliothèque bleue and were made over on popular lines, with a popular style and material having contacts with the popular imagination. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries they were still predominantly aristocratic in tendency, as were all narratives with the exception of the fabliaux, the Roman de Renart, and a few more "realistic" tales, which were only beginning to appear. The romans de chevalerie, flourishing already by the middle of the twelfth century, constituted an opposition, not to popular literature, as is frequently asserted, but to the only long aristocratic form then in being, the chansons de geste. The schism that occurred was entirely aristocratic; it was localized in the chansons de geste; and its concrete exemplifications, the Breton romances, the Byzantine romances, the romans d'aventure, remained essentially aristocratic. It had nothing to do with the state of truly popular literature.

The latter, therefore, should not be regarded necessarily as the degenerate offshoot of a courtly species

of writing. It came into existence in written form as a class by itself.

1. Faral, Jongleurs, pp. 224–225. Cf. for similar differentiation among Dutch poets, Backer, Lang. Néer., p. 132.

bleue, failed to connect them closely with the bourgeoisie and the lower classes. The enjoyment of them was an acquired taste, as it was in Italy when the Reali di Francia passed through nearly a score of editions, the Orlando innamorato, through about fifty, and the Orlando Furioso, through more than a hundred. In style, in subject-matter, and in outlook, they were everything but popular. The direction taken by the romans de chevalerie ~~lay~~ was primarily, not so much away from popular writings, as from the previous, single form of aristocratic literature. The schism that took place occurred in the chansons de geste, of which the romances of chivalry and of adventures are variations. It had nothing to do with the state of popular literature.

It is essential, for the better understanding of this problem, to have some notion as to what popular literature has been. That it has always existed in some shape or other, whether among the Jews or the Egyptians, whether among the Chinese or the Tartars, whether among the Greeks or the Romans, the Franks or the Goths, the Norse or the Celts, cannot be doubted. That it dealt with a wide variety of topics,- with dynasties, religious cults, superstitions, domestic events,- cannot be doubted either. That its form and purpose may have been historical, didactic, or merely narrative, is as certain. What stands out the most clearly of all is that in its origin it must have been oral. The oral traditions flourished long before the written, and the latter must for a long time have been based on it. To assume with Darmesteter that

> "Entre la croyance ou la littérature dite populaire et la croyance ou la littérature dite savante,--il n'y a qu'une différence

de temps et non d'origine--."1

is perfectly correct, provided one does not, like Darmsteter, place the littérature savante before the other in point of time, if literature is under consideration in its broader aspects of the written and the oral. But, after the creation of written literary art, the process, in a certain measure, reversed itself, and popular literature depended largely on the scribes for innovations. These scribes, however, wrote for a limited public, in the interests of royal achievements or religious dogma, drew their emoluments from it, and treated the people as non-existent. The literature of the people still lived, much as before, anonymous, changing from mouth to mouth, perishable in form. Then, with apparent abruptness, it began to live on a level with the permanent literature of the powerful, the noble, the rich, and to borrow from it.

This seems to have been the course of popular literature in France. Until the end of the twelfth century, its life-tenure was precarious, and its form was unstable. At that period, it began to compete with other, permanent types. Such stories as the Roman de Renart, which owed little to learned sources and even less to clerical sources,(2) ~~as, for example, M. Sudre believes when he says,~~

> "En somme, dans tout cet ensemble de contes que nous venons d'étudier, il n'en est qu'un, celui de Renart et la Cornaille, sur lequel la littérature clericale du temps peut revendiquer des droits légitimes":-2

~~such stories~~ or as that of Oedipus, or ~~as that~~ of Judas;3 ~~these~~

1. Darmsteter - Romania - X, p. 292, note.
2. Sudre - Renart - p. 203.
3. cf. Constans - Oed.- pp. 93 & 104 ff.

¶ The specific agent of this transformation was the jongleurs, the literary monopolists in the North of France in the early Middle Ages. They served as the connecting link between the superior and the inferior kinds of literature. They committed the popular stories to writing. It is unreasonable to imagine that after they found substantial profit in selling their wares to the people they would neglect to preserve them in the same permanent manner as that in which they preserved their epics/ and their romances. The demand for the fabliaux and the Renart in the castles, where they seem to have become as great favorites as the romances, must have strengthened this desire for copying them down, and very evidently affected their literary style. The more artistic fabliaux, like Le Vair Palefroi, reveal this increased striving for elevated effect. In addition, the jongleurs and the trouvères, because of their close connections with the commonalty, were sure to have a predilection for the fiction composed for their own class. The social rank of writersdetermined in the majority of instances their style and their attitude toward their topics. With few exceptions, they were all of the same social standing: they were nearly all bourgeois: "Tout trouveur qui faisait métier de poésie était jongleur, et tout jongleur qui composait était trouveur. C'est pourquoi il est factice et purement théorique de vouloir distinguer entre les jongleurs et les trouveurs/ et d'en faire deux classes séparées par les aptitudes et les fonctions."[1]

1 [illegible] 4.79.

~~and other tales~~ previously lying dormant in the vast oral repertoire of the people, began, of a sudden, to receive attention as literary material and to be reduced to writing.

There are three ways of explaining this phenomenon. Either the writers went to the people, or they came from them: or else, they did both. The last assumption is the most reasonable. The farther one penetrates into the thirteenth century, the more numerous are the writers of unexalted social position seen to become. The conditions in the North of France were thus the opposite of those in Provence, where the nobility predominated in the lyric and narrative literature as long as a Provençal poetry flourished. Among the troubadours, kings, princes, and petty nobles exercised the profession of letters, almost to the exclusion of the plain people. This fact is largely responsible for the lack of variety in Provençal poetry, for its dilettante air, for its failure to grapple with social problems, either directly or through satire. The extant Provençal literature of the Middle Ages has always remained the partial picture of only one segment of society, and the aristocratic tradition maintained itself in the imitations in langue d'oïl, of which Conon de Béthune, Thibaut de Champagne, King of Navarre, and Charles d'Anjou, King of Sicily, were among the best-known authors. But, even in this exclusive class of writing, the bourgeois element penetrated in the puys of the North: and Adam de la Halle, Jean Bodel, Baude Fastoul, and others, represented the people. So, too, in the other forms of Northern literature, the representatives of the people occupied a prominent position.

Among the writers of epics, Jean Bodel at every turn recalls his debts to those who "doucement l'ont nourri".[1] Many of the clercs who wrote the courtly romances were of relatively humble origin, and the great master of them all, Chrétien de Troies, in spite of his aristocratic tendencies, was bound to the people by family-ties. Later, the most learned, most discursive, and most influential of story-tellers, Jean Clopinel de Meung, represented the people, from whom he sprang, with a thorough knowledge of all its moods and prejudices. The authors of fabliaux, Watriquet Brassenel de Couvin, Jacques de Baisieux, Jean de Condé, Rutebeuf, portrayed boldly the hostility of the people toward the church and the slight esteem in which it was pleased to have women represented in literature. There is every reason for assuming that, by the beginning of the thirteenth century, the list of more or less highly educated bourgeois, able and in a position to write for the public, was so long as to counterbalance the swarm of court-writers, both French and Anglo-Normans, who were ~~preserving the older~~ maintaining the more exclusive literary traditions. Inevitably, these popular authors addressed themselves with preference to the audience whose feelings they understood, to whom they were related, and from whom they could now expect the largesse formerly to be obtained only from the inhabitants of the castles. "L'école", as M. Sudre rightly observes, "a été l'intermédiaire entre le livre et la foule":[2] and from the schools, the stories were taken, not so eagerly to court or castle, as to the rich cities of Poitiers and Orléans, Amiens and Lyon, Rouen and Caen, with their busy market-

1. cf. Lucy-Fossaire - Hist. de F. - III, p. 413
2. Sudre - Renart - p. 139

Even the Vies de saints, remoulded at an early stage by the jongleurs, came down to the mob, shorn of their special significance as didactic allegories.

places and their noisy taverns. In addition, the subjects of daily life, the traditions of the people, the tales of the chimney-corner, were dressed up for the public by writers of some education, much skill, and hearts that beat with the heart of the people.

From the depiction of aristocratic combat and courtly sentimentality to the portrayal of the every day life of Every-man was a tremendous stride, and the novel did not compass it in a sudden bound. Before that gap could be spanned, it was necessary that two publics, marching side by side, favoring two different forms of fiction,- the long story and the short story,- should draw nearer and nearer together, and ultimately become as one. Great political and social changes had to take place in the interim. The progress of the bourgeois novel may be taken as a measure of those changes.

Part II.

The Evolution of Species in the French Novel.

Chapter 1.

The Chansons de Geste.

The history of the French novel begins with the development of the chansons de geste into a stable literary form, and continues practically unmodified by any rival species outside of France for about three hundred years,- from the twelfth to the fifteenth century. Its course may, then, for that space of time, be represented by some native stream, flowing evenly within the boundaries of its own land, and fed by tributaries arising in its native hills, until, as it enters foreign domain, the strange torrents rushing down upon it, cause it to change its course here and there, and lose its pristine color. But they are unable to destroy its identity, and must, themselves, accept its original current, brought from France, as the basis of their own future activity.

Literary historians have not sufficiently recognized the significance of such an untroubled extent of domestic growth. There is no parallel to it, in so far as the history of the novel is concerned, in any country. It is definitely known that, during this period of three centuries,- no important external forces affected its form. The Greek novels written in the Dark Ages, remained practically unknown, and, at any rate, as prose manifestations, failed to leave a mark on it. The Byzantine fictions, with which the Crusaders became acquainted, flourished only after the chansons de geste had become a fixed

type. In a similar manner, Spanish, German, Italian, English, and Scandinavian literature had nothing to offer to the French story-telling art. Whatever was taken from the ancients or from other sources was used simply as subject-matter: if employed in extended narrative form, it was cast in the mould of the chansons de geste. From the latter, both in general outlines and in particular details, the subsequent French novel was lineally derived. The difference between the novel of to-day and the chansons de geste is a difference in time only, and not in origins. In spite of the gradual changes introduced in the novel during the course of about eight hundred years, it still must acknowledge the chansons de geste as its ancestors. The simple principle involved is that every new link in the chain of development depended on the preceding link, and all, as stories in the vernacular, depended ultimately on the chansons de geste.

The trouvères who first applied the ten-syllabled verse to the depiction, in the vernacular, of the life of some national French hero, and made such narration popular, or the jongleurs who created a wide-spread taste for stories in this shape, started the modern novel. Whether the meter itself was taken from some devout narration like the Vie de Saint-Alexis, in which it is encountered very early, or is a reminiscence of Prudentius' Latin-verse in his song of Saint Eulalie,[1] is of no importance. Undoubtedly, the chanson de geste was no spontaneous creation: it was the result of what had gone before,- perhaps of the lives of the saints, perhaps of cantilènes or

1. cf. Gautier - Ép. fr. I - p. 305.

They were the first extended narratives of a fictitious character written in French: they set in motion the machinery for a new type of literature. The materials had always existed. They combined them into a distinctive product. Through their number,--which is an important factor,--and through the wide imitation which they inspired, they established a new class. Though it cannot be claimed for them that they were the earliest extended narratives of a fictitious character, it can with confidence be affirmed that they were the first of such stories to dissociate in a trenchant manner the imagined from the genuinely historical; to separate the long exposition of fancied facts from the long exposition of actual facts[3]; and to impose that conception of the narrative on all the European literatures. Therein may, perhaps, be found the chief difference between the chansons de geste and other epic efforts elsewhere. Not any one of these reasons, but the entire series gives the chansons de geste their position as the founders of the novel.

3. cf. Faral, Jongleurs, pp. 196-197.

epic songs composed in the period when the events described were occurring, perhaps of clerkly imitation of the Aeneid or other Latin poems. None of this matters much: for the Romantic school of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries took its point of departure from the chansons de geste: the Roman de la Rose, the romans d'aventures, the prose reworkings of all these various types followed the chansons de geste either directly, by close imitation, or indirectly, through one or more of the other types derived from them: and the burlesque epics of Rabelais, the sentimental, the pastoral, the heroic novels went back for their inspiration to the chansons de geste or to some of their legitimate offspring. On the one hand, no foreign type of novel ever displaced the native French form: and on the other hand, as has been indicated, the French type imposed itself on all the European literatures. According to Mr. Ker, "The chansons de geste stand in a real, positive, ancestral relation to all modern literature; there is something of them in all the poetry of Europe."[1] This is peculiarly true of the connection between the chansons de geste and the novel.

Emphasis must be laid on the fact that the French novel is not derived from a single work or from the works of a single author. Individual efforts might have been made and soon forgotten. The novel might have taken its origin in the Arthurian romances, if they themselves had not manifestly been an offshoot of a long type of fiction already firmly established in literature. Such a view may sound discouraging to those

1. Ker - Ep. & Rom. - p. 288

who see a definite, uncontaminated beginning for everything: but it should appear reasonable to the student of literary evolution. Rarely, if ever, has a literary species been accepted as such until it has exhibited plain, unequivocal characteristics evidenced in a large number of works. The species exists only when it is clearly distinguished from other species. A single example does not constitute it: for that may be an accident. The Iliad, by itself, did not found the classical epic: the Song of Roland did not found the French chanson de geste. Many works had to be composed before it was recognized that a new way of telling a story had started into life. By the time that this happened in the chanson de geste, it already possessed distinctive requirements as to length, style, subject-matter, and minor accessories.

Consequently, in a study of the development of the novel, the question of the exact sources of the chansons de geste becomes much less imperative than would seem to be the case at first blush. If it can be made clear that they were the starting-point of the novel, their origins can have but slight bearing on their further unfolding. This assumption cannot, of course, apply to the types which grew out of the chansons de geste: for, if an evolution was in process, it is essential to prove that the later forms developed out of the epics or its variations, and not out of anything else.

Perhaps the most confusing way of writing the history of the novel is that which appears so simple and so natural. It is desired to trace the development of the sentimental novel?

Then, what so logical as to search for all the evidences of sentimentality as far back as one can go? Is it desired to show the course of the picaresque novel? Then, what so rational as to present everything that can be taken as a symptom of roguery in the most distant past? What so natural as to lead back the latter type, for example, to the Corbacho of Alfonso Martínez de Toledo, to Calila y Dimna, to the Disciplina Clericalis? Yet, the Lazarillo de Tormes, the model for the subsequent rogue-stories, is in all probability a clear reaction against the existing literature, composed of the tiresome Amadís-romances and the sentimental novels, and has little connection with the Corbacho; just as in the seventeenth century in France, Charles Sorel's Francion was a protest against the extravagance of the heroic novel; just as, in the twelfth century, the romances of chivalry were an antidote to the chansons de geste. The form of writing adopted in all these instances was either that in vogue among the books ridiculed, criticised, or regarded with disfavor, or a direct opposition to them, such as, brevity as opposed to prolixity, simple narration as opposed to complicated intrigue, popular scenes as opposed to the stilted society of nobles.

That, nevertheless, the one grew out of the other, and not out of something which may have resembled it a hundred years ago, is certain in the vast majority of cases. Nowadays, it may be possible to say that a recent novel in which the pastoral element is predominant had its origin in the preexisting pastoral novels: it is perfectly correct to derive Sidney's Arcadia and D'Urfé's Astrée from Montemayor's Diana Enamorada:

but, for a long time in the early history of the novel, such a differentiation into classes was unknown. Moving backward in the history of the romance of chivalry, we come to a place where there are no chivalric ancestors. Moving backward in the history of the allegorical romances, we come to a point where the allegorical signs fail. Is there no connecting link between this point and a more remote antiquity? Is it necessary to leap a chasm and unite the pastoral with Virgil's Eclogues, or the allegorical romance with the Psychomachia of Prudentius? If so, how did the eclogues come to assume the shape of the Diana: how did the Psychomachia accomplish its transmigration into the Pilgrim's Progress? A resurrection of the form, or the content of Prudentius' allegory or Virgil's Eclogues would have met with a cold reception by Montemayor's and Bunyan's audiences. Literature which has a wide appeal grows out of existing literature. That extremely small class which is a conscious imitation of very old models generally has a narrow reading public and lives a short life. The associations of the masses are in the present, and not in the artificial intellectual environment of the scholar, and it is the masses which make literature live. That poetry which has been modeled on ancient, recondite patterns is kept alive chiefly in the schools: but the poetry which has grown out of actual, present conditions meets with popular favor. Few modern poets have realized this distinction: these few have reached the popular ear, and may even be transmitted to posterity. The novelists, less obsessed by antiquated doctrines, have

kept abreast of the people.

The chansons de geste need not, then, be traced back to the classical epics, in spite of their similarity in many respects. The ten or twelve syllabled line of the former, with its essentials of a syllabic, rhythmic metre in assonanced or rhymed verse has nothing in common with the quantitative hexameter of the latter. The technique of the chansons de geste is as different from that of the Iliad, the Odyssey, and the Aeneid as is that of Beowulf; and the resemblances to the Homeric epic in stereotyped epithets,—

"l'emperere à la barbe chenie",
"Charlon à la barbe florie",-

the long discourses before action, the naïve descriptions,- which M.Gautier calls "striking", are found everywhere in the Scandinavian sagas, and the early narrative poems of most nations. Whatever share the classical literatures had in the beginnings of the chanson de geste, must have been limited to reminiscences and fugitive details. To deny some influence would be unreasonable, since the French eipc-writers, whoever they were, had a certain amount of education,- which was probably of a clerical nature,- and must have had a fair knowledge of Latin works, at least. But there does not appear to have been a premeditated imitation of the ancients. Both the spirit and the style of the chansons de geste are indicative of a different world from that in which the Greeks and the Romans lived and moved and had their being. The people for whom they were written had but few affiliations with genuine Latin culture.

The result of this cleavage in civilization is capital for the history of the novel. Instead of the refined, highly finished literary product which might have been expected if the Roman tradition had been continuous; instead of the most delicate shades of satire or the sophisticated treatment of the love-theme; we have to deal with a savage context and a crude mode of expression; with a new start in literature long outgrown by the Romans, and a sad anachronism for the dwellers in the monasteries for whom the grandeur that was Rome had never been dimmed. The novel had to begin at the universal beginning of literature; at the glorification of war and of national heroes. Nothing else so decisively marks the fundamental separation between the old literatures and the new.

Gaston Paris has summed up the character of the chansons de geste in a pithy statement:

> "L'Épopée française du moyen âge, c'est l'esprit germanique dans une forme romane."[1]

The development of this thesis has been the task of Pio Rajna, who, after examining the course of the Germanic epic from the most remote ages, and after proving the manifold contamination of the Charlemagne tradition with that of Charles Martel, the dependence of the Carolingian epic on the Merovingian, ~~recapitulates his conclusions~~ concludes in favor of the unbroken descent of the chansons de geste from the Teutonic epics. (2)

> "Ristabilita la continuità in tutta la vita dell'epopea francese, le origini germaniche risultavano si può dir demostrate. Non ci si poteva peraltro contentare di una dimos-

1. G. Paris - Revue Critique, juin 1868: - quoted by Gautier - Ep. Fr. I, p. 37.

2. P. Rajna. Dell'Ep. fr. p. 541.

> trazione sommaria, e parve doveroso che si esaminassero ponderatamente le altre soluzioni di cui il problema era suscettibile. Tutte risultarono da scartare; e lo studio intorno alla principale di esse riuscì anzi ad una conferma positiva della soluzione già ritenuta esser la buona. E conferme se ne aggiunser poi molte, parte fornite da un esame dell'epopea francese in sè stessa, parte da raffronti colla germanica. A questo modo il compito era adempiuto, spiegato il fenomeno; ma la trattazione sarebbe nonpertanto rimasta monca, senza la determinazione di alcune modalità del fenomeno stesso: se non si fosse considerato il passaggio dalle strutture meno complesse alle piu complesse, escludendo insieme recisamente l'artifiziosa teorica delle cantilene, grande annebbiatrice del vero--."[1]

The cantilene which Rajna mentions for the first time only in the very last part of his book,[1] and regards more or less as an erudite fiction, form the immediate predecessors and the inevitable sources of the chansons de geste, in the mind of Léon Gautier and Gaston Paris. These short peoms, of a popular nature, sung by the people or recited to them, were collected and grouped for the chansons de geste concerning individual heroes. They were the national songs, lyrical in form, epic in content[2], without which the genuine epics could not have been. Nyrop has taken a middle position, supporting Rajna's emphasis of the Merovingian epic, but also agreeing with Gautier and Gaston Paris to the effect that short songs or even short epics in French must have preceded the chansons de geste. Accordingly, they must have served as intermediaries between the popular recollection of Germanic stories and their actual composition

~~1. P. Rajna - Dell'Ep.fr. - p. 541.~~
1. P. Rajna - Nelle Ep. fr. - p. 469.
2. cf. Voretzsch - Altf. Lit.- p. 131.

in the French idiom. Various other scholars have presented other theories: some denying that oral tradition has had anything to do with the creation of the chansons de geste, and insisting that the original stimulus has come from written sources, notably, from the chronicles; others seeing in the chansons de geste a union of folk-stories with the carmina regum, and making them contemporary with the events themselves. That it did not take long to transform the real into fiction, Spaniards into Saracens, European expeditions into Oriental journeys, Ampère has shown in his discussion of Eginhard's biography of Charlemagne.[1]

> "Nous rencontrons ici un example remarquable de la rapidité avec laquelle se construit la légende: le moine de Saint-Gall écrit soixante-dix ans après la mort de Charlemagne; --il écrit d'après un comte Gervold, qui avait assisté aux dernières guerres de Charlemagne, et d'après la biographie de ce comte Gervold. La transmission orale en est donc à son premier degré. Eh bien! elle a déjà perdu tout caractère de vérité: l'histoire a déjà passé completement à la saga, à la légende. Dès le siècle suivant, un moine italien, le moine du mont Soracte, racontera sérieusement les voyages de Charlemagne à Jerusalem et à Constantinople---."1

Theories and facts of this sort have not deterred M. Joseph Bédier from asserting resolutely the long space intervening between the actions themselves and the portrayal of them in the chansons de geste. Granted, he observes, that many of the customs and much of the spirit in the chansons de geste seem archaic, and entirely foreign to what is known of the state of

1. Ampère - Hist. litt. av. 12e S. III - p. 161.

civilization in the twelfth century: does it, then, follow necessarily that these customs must have been representative of the tenth century, and that the trouvère unconsciously pictured his own epoch therein? Is this view reliable as a means for determining the age of any chanson de geste? Not in the least, M. Bédier decides. It is only

> "la preuve que l'auteur premier du roman avait le goût de l'atroce, mais non pas qu'il vivait au Xe siècle."1

For example,

> "Begue le Lorrain, ayant tué un ennemi en combat judiciaire, lui arrache les entrailles, les emporte et, s'avançant vers la salle des otages, les jette à la face de Guillaume de Montclin: 'Tiens, vassal, prends le coeur de ton ami; tu pourras le saler et le rôtir."2

Certainly, such brutality was not characteristic of the twelfth century, any more than was the light-mindedness or the trickery of women, as presented in the guise of a universal fact by the writers of fabliaux. Moreover, M. Ferdinand Lot has proved that the romance of Garin le Lorrain is not founded on historical occurrences, that it is not old, and that these scenes were the creation of a poet of the twelfth century.

> "Est-il rien de plus atroce", inquires M. Bédier, "que le sujet de Rodogune? Corneille était pourtant un paisible bourgeois de Rouen et qui vivait dans un temps policé."3

Even the gentle Racine occasionally has gory visions, as in the Athalie and the Phèdre.

1. Bédier - Lég. Ép. II, pp. 335-6.
2. Bedier - Leg. Ep. II, pp. 335-6
3. " " " " " "

M. Bédier's theory of the origin and development of the chansons de geste is the latest new conjecture, and is supported by a formidable mass of evidence and the dialectic of an unusually keen mind. Though he is not so much concerned with the first steps in the fabrication of the epics, as with their formation after they have become a fixed type, he does not hesitate to dissent from the judgment of Gautier, Gaston Paris, and the French critics in general.

> "--je crois avoir montré que toutes ces hypothèses étaient vaines: ces illustres chants primitifs, composés, nous disait-on, dès l'époque carolingienne, du vivant de ces personnages ou dès une époque voisine de leur mort, sous l'impression immediate des événements, par des contemporains enthousiastes, je crois avoir montré qu'ils résquent de n'avoir jamais existé. Je crois avoir montré que, dans le riche lignage des Narbonnais, un seul personnage n'est pas un pur héro de roman, et c'est Guillaume, Comte de Toulouse, le saint de Gellone. Je crois avoir montré que les auteurs des chansons de geste ont appris des moines de Gellone et n'ont pu apprendre que de ces moines les quelques faits authentiques qu'ils rapportent de leur Guillaume, et qui forment le seul support historique de leur fictions innombrables."1

Just what the supposition's contemporary epic songs might have been, what relation they might have had to previous literature, how they might have come into existence, M. Bédier is not especially interested in. But, if they did exist, their far-off issue, the chansons de geste, which multiplied so rapidly in the one humdred years between 1150 and 1250, grew in a par-

1. Bédier - Lég. Ép. I - pp. 404-5.

ticular fashion, and this fashion is what has engaged M. Bédier's attention. His method of explaining it has the supreme advantage of accounting for many details hitherto not disposed of, such as the anonymity of most of the chansons de de geste, their formation into cycles, their centering about certain well-defined localities, the mixture of the popular and the clerical in them. The cycle of Guillaume d'Orange, for instance, contains twenty-four chansons de geste.

> "A voir ces heros, associés par des rapports bien plus constants que les personnages de la Comédie humaine, passer d'une chanson à l'autre, disparaître pour reparaître toujours fidèles à leur rôle, on dirait d'abord qu'un poète héraldiste a dressé d'avance leur arbre généalogique et imposé aux autres conteurs le système une fois arrêté de leurs relations."1

There appears, ~~then~~, to have existed some conscious agency through the efforts of which a series of the chansons came to form a definite unit. But, more than this, some concrete necessity has associated these cycles with particular localities. The language of M. Bédier concerning this point is positive, but doubtless none the less true:

> "Donc, sauf Aspremont et sauf Jehan de Lanson, il n'y a pas, que je sache, une chanson de geste ni un épisode de chanson de geste qui soit localisé en Italie, si ce n'est sur une route de pèlerinage."2

Here we arrive at the heart of M. Bedier's exposition. All the chansons de geste are located along the well-worn routes of pilgrimage of the tenth century, and most of them along the roads to Rome, Jerusalem, and the shrine of St. Jaques de Compostette. Thus, the chanson of Girard de Roussillon came in-

1. Bédier - Lég. Ép. I, p. 7.
2. " " " II, p. 28.

to being because of the pilgrimages to Sainte Marie-Madeleine at Vézelay: the cycle of Guillaume d'Orange, through the pilgrimages to St.-Jaques. Now, on all these roads, there were monasteries, associated more or less closely with the principal personages of the chansons de geste. Along the way to Compostella was situated the sanctuary of Gellone or Saint-Guihem. The monks, who were in charge of the tomb of Guillaume d'Orange, determined to make of it the tomb of a saint. Had it not been for this chance decision on the part of the monks of Gellone, Guillaume d'Orange would have disappeared into oblivion along with so many other good men. The aim of the good priests was eminently practical. They wished to exploit passing pilgrims. (1)

> "Il semble donc vraisemblable - et c'est la sûle façon, à mon sens, d'expliquer tous les faits ici considérés - que dès le début du XIIe siècle au plus tard, moines et jongleurs collaboraient à l'exploitation des pèlerins qui, suivant la via Tolosana, passaient par Gellone. Il s'agissait pour les moines de les attirer et de les retenir, et c'est pourquoi la Vita sancti Wilhelmi, tout comme le Guide des pèlerins, a accueilli les fables des jongleurs, leur a fait un sort, les a accreditées".1

In order to entertain the guests, chansons such as the Prise d'Orange and the charroi de Nîmes, composed by the monks, were recited to the public by the jongleurs.

This theory, of course, allows the clercs to play the most important part in the popularization of the chansons de geste: and M. Bedier is careful to cite in their favor any such evidence as might be construed differently. When Paul Meyer

1. Bédier - Lég. Ép. - pp. 135-6.

had remarked that Girard de Roussillon offered a curious example of the influence of popular literature on the composition of the lives of saints, M. Bedier argued:

> "On peut dire inversement, et aussi bien, que Girard de Roussillon nous fournit un curieux exemple de l'influence des vies de saints sur la littérature vulgaire. Légende épique, légende hagiographique sont ici et furent de tout temps une seule et même légende."1

It is hard to choose among the various representations of the origin of the chansons de geste: but, fortunately, no choice is necessary in a study of the history of the novel. Whichever theory may be right,- if it shall be possible to prove any one right beyond the shadow of a doubt,- the fact remains that, by the beginning of the twelfth century, the chansons de geste, with the exception of the lives of saints, such as the Vie de Saint Alexis, the Vie de Saint Grégoire, the Vie de Saint Brendan, constituted the sole long narrative form of writing. Not only that, but it constituted the sole popular type of sustained narrative; for the lives of the saints, by their very nature, were lacking in general interest. Furthermore, the chanson de geste evolved very rapidly out of its first form, and in its later period, included much that was extremely modern and ~~at odds with~~ counter to the primitive conception of the epic. Then, indeed, it was no longer the genuine epic, but a mixed, transition-form, which proclaimed the approaching formation of a new species of story-telling.

1. Bédier - Lég. Ép. II - p. 83.

2. Faral, Jongleurs, p. 45.

The oldest extant chanson de geste, the Roland, was written about 1080, and had been sung at the battle of Hastings, in 1066. It is in connection with the Chanson de Roland that Gaston Paris makes a statement, the whole import of which he does not appear to have forseen:

> "Cette légende (of Roland) nous est arrivée sous trois formes principales: le chap. XIX du roman latin qui prétend être l'oeuvre de Turpin, composé vers la fin du premier tiers de XIIe siècle comme suite à un ouvrage plus ancien, fait a la gloire de saint Jacques de Compostelle, dont on prétendait que Charlemagne avait été le premier pèlerin--."[1]

It is quite possible that from this passage or from some similar passing observation of his master, M. Bedier may have drawn the inspiration for his theory. The most prolific period of the chansons de geste extended from the beginning of the twelfth century to the end of the thirteenth century. Few, however, were composed before 1150, and concerning those which appeared after 1300, Fauriel is of the opinion that they are chiefly paraphrases or modifications of the earlier epics,[2] with little new material. In like manner, the prose versions of the chansons de geste, which began to swarm in the first part of the fifteenth century, and to become the property of the masses, were but transliterations of the verse-epics of two or three centuries back. As indicated above, most of the original chansons were composed in ten or twelve-syllabled lines, which, in the earlier ones, were bound together in assonanced strophes, and in the later ones, in rhymed couplets. With the

1. G.Paris - Litt. fr. - p. 56.
2. Fauriel - P. P. II - pp. 233-4.

exception of Alberic de Besançon's Alexandre,- not, indeed, a French chanson de geste in subject-matter,- the fragment entitled La Mort du roi Gormond, and Lion de Bourges,- which is better considered a romance of chivalry,- none of the chansons de geste was composed in octosyllabic verse. That metre characterized the Round-Table romances, the romans d'aventures, and the shorter forms, such as the lais, the fabliaux, and the contes.

Down to the appearance of M. Bédier's Légendes Épiques, the impression has prevailed that the chansons de geste were addressed to the select circle of the nobler classes. Because of this feeling, students of the chansons de geste have found it indispensable to assume that the only atmosphere in which they could live must be impregnated with an intense national sentiment, with an extreme monarchical spirit, with rudeness of taste, and an absorbing love of combat. Nevertheless, they flourished most vigorously in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, a period of education, of increasing power for the common people, of extension of commerce, of a relative refinement of sentiment among the more elevated social classes.

> "Pouvait-on comprendre, dans une société ainsi faite, les anciens poèmes héroïques, où tout respirait le sentiment de la communauté, l'attachement au sol natal ou a la patrie conquise, où l'on ne prenait enfin les armes que pour un but sérieux?"[1]

Apparently, the chansons de geste were perfectly comprehensible, in spite of the seeming contradiction in social viewpoints. It is not difficult to realize why this should be so, nor to

1. Bossert - Litt. All. - p. 160.

reconcile M. Bédier's opinion with that of his predecessors. Both sides are agreed that the chansons were composed for the purpose of adding to the glory of individuals who belonged to the ruling classes. Only, M. Bédier considers the epics merely to have been written about these noblemen, whereas his opponents regard them as composed not simply about them but for them. In both cases, the tone would be the same. The fighting quality was still the standard of social measurement in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Any story that dealt with the barons and their vassals had to dwell on their military prowess. Even the romans de chevalerie, though especially interested in the depiction of love-scenes, devoted a large space to battles, duels, and combats with strange monsters. The difference between the two types of novel lay principally in the interpretation of the aims of war. For the heroes of the chansons de geste, war was a serious undertaking, a means of defense: for the heroes of the romans, it was a gentlemanly pursuit, a dilettante art. The one portrayal had as much truth in it as the other: and as much falseness. Neither presented a reliable picture of the occupations of the large majority , as the topics of popular literature themselves prove. But that limited scope appears to have characterized the epic in all countries, and particularly in France. It was a literary convention, fostered first by the tastes of the noble classes, whom the epic-writers eulogized, and then by the pleasure taken by the lower orders in listening to the thrilling accounts of war,- always a popular subject. The

degree to which these requirements were regarded as part and parcel of the epic, and not of other kinds of stories, is exhibited in the choice of subject-matter and method of narration employed in the romans de chevalerie, the romans d'aventure, and the allegroical romances. The common destinies of a nation related in the Chanson de Roland dwindled, in the later epics, to the fate of a district or of an individual family: but never to the chimerical, haphazard fortunes of a purposeless knight, or to the unfolding of a flimsy cause. However childish the writer himself may have been; however ludicrously he may have displayed his characteristics in the story, he started out with the distinct conviction that he had to present a serious theme; that he had to maintain in his narrative the appearance of "weight and solidity"; and that he had to compose his work in the longer, statelier versification of lines of ten or twelve syllables. By the twelfth century, the chansons de geste had become a fixed literary species. Before long, they came to possess a rather mechanical technique. Whether enunciated or not, the art of writing them was well-understood. Even the church was cognizant of the true nature of the epic, and refrained from criticising it as a class.(1)

"La censure ecclésiastique impitoyable pour la gaieté populaire et les chants profanes n'a qu'indulgence pour ces panégyriques des grands, comme pour ceux des saints (voyez un texte cité par Guessard, préf. de Huon de Bordeaux, p. VI)."1

1. Wilmotte - Év. du rom. - p. 326.

This was as true of the chansons addressed primarily to the pilgrims and the populace of the market-place, as of those written solely for the delectation of the overlords. No matter what the audience,- especially since, for a long time, it was nearly homogeneous in education and tastes, as the dominant class had not received,

> "sauf en ce qui concernait sa vocation propre, d'autre instruction que celle de la masse, pensait comme elle, sauf son orgueil de caste, et parlait comme elle,-"[1]

the chansons de geste early began to assume a conventionalized shape, to come forth as from a mould. Thus, most of them began with an appeal to the seigneurs or barons, though the audience might be composed of workingmen or farmers: they generally went through the same development, from the council of the King and his retainers, through a long war, the treachery of some despised individual, or the change of heart of some paynim princess, down to the final victory of the French hero: and they were all marked by a predominance of superhuman feats, a neglect of the commonest facts of observation and probability, and the frequent recurrence of gross or trivial utterances, so crude, as to seem artificial, imitative of the supposed simplicity of a younger, more unrefined civilization. Not only the framework of most of them became nearly identical, but the portrayal of persons, howsoever they might have differed in reality in spirit and social conditions, followed a stereotyped pattern. Knowing one hero, it may almost be said that one knows all.

"L'invention abondante et pauvre des trouv-

1. Paris - Esquisse - p. 19.

> ères fait songer à la basse littérature de nos jours, à cette masse de romans et de drames manufacturés en hâte pour la consommation bourgeoise et pour l'exportation. Depuis les formules du langage jusqu'au dessin général de l'action, toutes les pièces d'une fatigue et sans peur, bravache, impatient, il a toujours le poing levé, il écrase des nez, fracasse des cervelles, traine les femmes par les cheveux dès qu'on le contredit; tenons compte des moeurs, c'est le beau gentilhomme, héroïque, impertinent, fine lame, qui passe, la moustache en croc, le poing sur la hanche, à travers nos mélodrames; c'est le d'Artagnan du XIIIe siècle--." 1

chanson de geste sont jetées dans les mêmes moules.-- Un type banal de héros s'établit: sans

Such characterization, of course, smacks of the workshop. It is too scientific for a primitive age. It lacks the faith, the genuine emotions of the contemporary. It is another proof of the decadent state of the chansons de geste in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The horn of Roland sounds weak and faint in them.

Nevertheless, the chansons de geste by no means went out of existence at once simply because they became trite. Often, that which is trite lives the longest: perhaps because it offers the largest number of associations to the greatest number of persons. Somebody has said that there have been developed in fiction only thirty-six original situations: if that is the case, mere inventiveness has played only a small part in the vast extent of international literature. It has happened that books following on the heels of one another, and dealing with members of the same family, have enjoyed a tremendous popularity. Originality has counted for little in

Arnold Shaw says, Archer, and others who took their "good" where they found it stand amply justified.

- 1. G. Lanson - Hist. de la litt. fr. - 7e edition p. 36.

them. Amadis de Gaula and his unending progeny were the delight of Europe for generations: yet, they were all cut from the same cloth and worked in the same pattern. So, too, the chansons de geste retained their affections in the heart of the people not only to the end of the middle ages, but even down to our own day. They had become a popular habit: and literature obstinately went on reproducing the tradition of what no longer had any basis in actual facts. Les Quatre Fils Aymon, La très-plaisante histoire de Guérin de Montglave, Le Roman nommé Oger le Danois, and a host of others circulated among the people in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and were possibly the immediate inspiration of Rabelais. The same romances, printed on blue-gray paper, are still sold in the little towns of France, at the markets and the fairs. (1)

> "Si le style en a essuyé de fréquentes altérations depuis les premières années du XVIe siècle jusqu'à nos jours, le format et le papier n'en ont pas changé, non plus que les gravures, encore que les bois en aient été refaits. Le format est in-quarto, et le papier d'un gris opaque tirant sur le bleu. Quant aux gravures, la perspective et les ombres en sont la plupart du temps proscrites---."1

The degeneration of the chansons de geste was no sudden occurrence. As might be expected, it was an almost imperceptible change. Gradually, other types of novel displaced the epics, and the latter slipped from one social sphere to another, until today they rest among the class of readers

1. Nisard - Litt. pop. - p. 538.

least moved by the progress of ideas. Occcasionally, they underwent a recrudescence, if not in their native country, then in others. In Italy during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, they passed through a period of real splendor. Here, the old notion of the romance in verse was retained: and some of the masterpieces of modern Italian poetry, such as Bojardo's Orlando innamorato and Ariosto's Orlando furioso were the result. The entire cycle of the French chansons de geste was assiduously cultivated. Buovo d'Antona went through ten reprintings in less than a hundred years; and the Libro del Danese, the Innamoramento di Carlo Magno, and many others enjoyed a similar popularity. From the same French sources sprang the Spanish cantares de gesta.

The decline in the original composition of chansons de geste set in in France at about the middle of the fourteenth century. Chansons de geste, as a special literary form, were no longer invented: and those already in existence were practically no longer sung.[1] M. Brunetière assumes this to have been due to the growth of another species of writing which more nearly conformed to the actual needs of society.

> "La littérature des Fabliaux, populaire ou bourgeoise, était une réaction contre la littérature féodale des Chansons de geste."[2]

There is no doubt that the chansons, by the end of the thirteenth century, failed to harmonize with the state of mind of the vast majority of the people, or even with that of most of

1. cf. G. Paris - Litt. fr. - p. 40
2. Brunetière - Ét. Crit. VI - p. 74.

the nobles. Among the former, above all, a bitter spirit of aggressiveness was manifesting itself in the very epics recited to them in fragments on the public squares. Satire, the absence of which is one of the tests of the genuine epic, crept in and helped to destroy the dignity of the type.

In other ways, too, the chansons de geste were disintegrating. The primitive material which had established them as a distinctive literary form,- namely, the accounts of war and the feeling of nationality,- was fast disappearing, as out of fashion, and giving place to topics of contemporary interest. In a certain sense, epics as artificial as Chapelain's La Pucelle and Voltaire's Henriade were being composed on the border-line between the old and the new. (1)

> "Un phénomène assez curieux est l'essai, fait à plusieurs reprises, de donner au récit de faits contemporains la forme traditionnelle des chansons de geste; on peut l'étudier dans les poèmes sur Le Combat des Trente (1351), sur Bertrand du Guesclin dont l'auteur est Cuvelier, et dans la Geste des Bourgignons: ce dernier poème, d'une inspiration fortement hostile à la France, fut composé en Flandre vers 1411. C'est la toute dernière production de notre vieille poésie épique."1

By the beginning of the fifteenth century, of course, the world had altered greatly. The ancient monarchical tradition was but a vague recollection, and the feudal system as a vital organization could not be remembered by the oldest of men then living. The whole machinery of fighting had been cast into the lumber-pile: the jongleurs were no more: a professional

1. Paris - Esq. - p. 212.

class of writers entirely independent of the largess of the mighty had come into being. Literature had become complex: a thing of art: and as soon as this happened, the epic became an anachronism.

More significant than this, but at the same time testifying to the sustained power of the chansons de geste over the popular imagination, they began to be transformed into works of piety. The church has always been quick to make use of the most popular means for diffusing its doctrines, as, in the seventeenth century, the Spiridion and the Palombe, ou la Femme honorable, by Pierre Camus, bishop of Belley, demonstrate.

> "On soumit à une autre épreuve les ouvrages réputés dangereux: les aventures des paladins de Charlemagne furent transformées en récits pieux, en vrais libres de dévotion. L'ancien Giraft de Roussillon est devenu le héros d'une histoire édifiante, à l'usage des pèlerins. Les Agolants, les Marsile, l'empereur Charles lui-même, ont fourni des épisodes à la vie de saint Honorat. Roland, Renaud, jusqu'au géant Ferabras, ont fini à leur tour par être des livres des saints."[1]

During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, as M. Jourdain has shown,[2] the chansons de geste, among other works, had been the classics in the schools, just as Homer, Virgil, Corneille, and Racine are today, and the belief in them was strengthened by the knowledge of their popularity in foreign countries. Both boys and girls read them, and must have been influenced in their opinions and actions by them. This the church realized. M. Jourdain supposed that some of the chansons de geste may have been responsible for

1. Le Clerc - Hist.Litt.14s.-p.108 - V.I.
2. cf. Jourdain - Ed. des F. - p. 496

the unwholesome ideas about marriage harbored by a portion of medieval society: ①

"les idées qu'une fraction de la société du moyen âge s'était formées de l'amour hors du mariage, idées qui, sous des noms spécieux, cachaient de si graves erreurs de doctrine et autorisaient de si honteux scandales."1

But, at any rate, the epics were freer from this pernicious influence than the other types: the romances of chivalry, the fabliaux, the allegorical narratives.

The further degeneration in the chansons de geste found its final expression in the intrusion of the comic element. From the most dignified literary form, they were reduced to the ridiculous and the buffoon. In place of demanding respect from the audience, they were degraded into furnishing amusement. Whenever a similar process occurs in any branch of literature, the death-knell has been sounded. The burlesque, with its irreverence and its almost irresistible onslaught through laughter, has time and again been instrumental in burying a fashion or killing off a type. It has not, indeed, been the sole force in motion toward this end, nor the most powerful, but it has generally accompanied dissolution, and conducted a mock post-mortem trial over the remains. The Gargantua and the Pantagruel, the Don Quixote, the Précieuses ridicules have all been indicative of the impotence of a once strong species. As early as the thirteenth century, parodies of the chansons de geste hastened their demise. In the Roman de Renart, which had originally pictured animals with some observation of their real nature and a desire to present them as the lower order of creation, the brute-heroes began to take on the attitude of

1. Jourdain - Éd. des F.- p. 498.

feudal barons, just as, much later, La Fontaine's lion, bear, fox, donkey, and ape imitated the personages of the court of Louis XIV. ①

> "si bien qu'au terme de l'évolution, le 'Roman de Renard' aboutit à une parodie assez fastidieuse de l'épopée."[1]

Within the genuine chansons de geste themselves, the comic developed rapidly. This may have been due to the contamination with the popular methods of story-telling; to the style of the fabliaux, in particular. It may, likewise, have resulted from the desire of the jongleurs to meet the tastes of the bourgeois half-way: for what the multitude required above all in a story was that it should be funny. A jongleur, having begun on the history of a hero in regular chanson fashion, may have taken the opportunity of expanding an incident into the ridiculous, or of weaving a burlesque interlude between the serious events.[2] In Aymeri de Narbonne, the comic side of Ernaut de Girone is described, with evident relish, in language and criticism quite foriegn to the chansons de geste of early, pure construction. In Alischans, the facetious giant Rainoart relieves the gloom of the sinister battle by his humorous pranks, and is not an unworthy precursor of Gargantua. Baudin de Sebourc, in the epic of that name, bears little resemblance to his dignified forbears. The intention of the author to make of him a buffoon hero is evident in countless passages. Baudin disguises himself as a monk and goes to visit the curate. He clasps the

1. Paris - Esq. - pp. 132-3.
2. cf. Bédier - Fab.- in Pet. de Fuller, V.II, ch. II, pp. 57 ff.

hand of the poor priest with such force that the bones are crushed. When Bauduin shakes both fists in his face, the frightened cleric hastens to assure the hero that he has seen enough of the powers delegated to him by Rome ①

> "Et lorsque l'infortuné lui demande la preuve écrite des pouvoirs qu'il a recus de Rome, Baudrian lui fait la nique et lui montre ses deux poings avec des yeux terribles. 'J'ai vu, j'ai vu les bulles', s'écrie le prêtre, et il s'enfuit à grandes enjambées."1

The hero's virility, moreover, does not stop there. In the course of his gay meandering through the world, he has, like Washington Irving's Dutch Don Juan in the Knickerbocker's History of New York, taken many a heart in fee. Retribution overtakes him, at last, however. Thirty mothers of thirty of his little children, with their pledges hanging to their necks, pursue the versatile Baudrian across the fields, crying after him, as he flees in terror

"Vien veoir ton enfant."

The facts of real life more and more occupy the attention of the trouverès, the farther away they get from the periods in which the historical occurrences of the epics are supposed to have taken place. The old form is still employed: the old stories are still retold: but the writers have lost their conviction in their truth: by the end of the thirteenth century, they are telling the tales to a skeptical audience, no longer awed by the ceremonials of power, and, more than that, interested in other exhibitions of life than that of the castles. The audience has changed: the trouvères have become more democratic: the jongleurs in their role of pseudo historians, are de-

1. Gautier - Ep. Fr. II - p.441.

serting their lowly station before the seats of the mighty, and playing to a throng unswayed by the importance of ancestors. History is taking on another dress. Villehardouin, Joinville, and the many chroniclers of the thirteenth century are depriving the epic writers of their vocations by creating a new profession. As Gautier has observed,

> "nos vieux épiques ont cessé de chanter, dès que nos premiers chroniqueurs se sont mis à conter."[1]

The original instigators of the chansons de geste were also undergoing a change of heart. Their ideals had veered in another direction. The fortunes of war had given way to the certainties of peace. Their social habits had been obliged to conform to altered political and economic conditions. The charger fattened in the stall: the armor rusted on its pegs. The fighting-man had to exploit foreign lands for the satisfaction of his instincts. Those who stayed at home directed their thoughts to other objects than the parapets of beleaguered fortresses. The love of battle yielded to the battle of love. A new literature arose to answer these new needs. But the chansons de geste did not, on this account, go out of existence. It was disintegrating and becoming something far removed from its springtime essence: yet, as a type, it still flourished. Even at the moment when it was most fully permeated with strange ingredients, it remained the chanson de geste. The space of time required for the total

1. Gautier - Ép. F. III - p. 408.

extinction of a legitimate literary species may almost be reckoned in geological ages. When, finally, the acquired characteristics of the epic overwhelmed the innate in quantity, the epic disappeared. This did not happen in creative literature until about the sixteenth century, when, for example, Ronsard's Franciade proved that the day of the epic had passed, never to return excepting, perhaps, through a general cataclysm of civilization. Down to that epoch, the chansons de geste may be said to have existed along with its various progeny, and to have kept up a lifelong rivalry with them. From the death which ~~they~~ it had died toward the end of the fourteenth century, ~~they were~~ it was resurrected, to live a pale, monotonous existence for another hundred years or more, by the rise of prose.

> "A la fin du XVIe siècle, un petit nombre d'entre elles survivaient encore avec quelque vigueur, et nous savons leurs titres. C'étaient Fierabras, Galien restauré, Huon de Bordeaux, Maugis d'Aigremont, les Quatre fils Aimon, Valentin et Orson, Mabrian, Morgant le géant, et deux ou trois encore. Toutes nos autres fictions épiques étaient mortes, mortes à tout jamais."[1]

In the interim, the chansons de geste vacillated on the borderline between their ancient content and that of the romances of chivalry and adventure, for which the higher classes had begun to abandon them. It was inevitable that the authors should seek to obtain from the more popular works some favor for their decadent species. Although the epic concentrated its early efforts on native subjects and French territory, the vogue of the outlandish brought about a profound alteration. Stories dealing with the Orient, such as the Chev-

1. Gautier - Ép. Fr. IIe - p. 631.

alier au Cygne, Les Chetifs, competed with Chretien's Cligès, with the romans d'aventure, Guillaume de Dole, Floire et Blanchefleur, Blancandin, and other romances of Byzantine derivation. In spite of what might be regarded as the general influence of the Crusades on all forms of story-telling, there was a certain order in which the different types of romance experienced it. In that order, the chansons de geste came last. The Orient had become prolific literary ground before the epics made use of it. The reason for this is clear. The chansons formed a solid type, traditional in manner and subject, with a definite field in which to work. Those who wrote them must have hesitated to employ unusual material, just as, in the later evolution, the novelists shunned the treatment of sociological and philosophical problems. But that power which is stronger than the individual wish and more irresistible than the combined weight of world-old tradition, namely, public opinion, the public demand, forced the trouvères to yield step by step, and to transgress little by little almost every canon in the art of writing chansons de geste. The whole background of the action was renovated. Besides the Oriental localization, numerous references to classical antiquity appeared, as in the Mort Aymeri de Narbonne, the Chanson d'Antioche, Baudüin de Sebourc:[1] the old warriors in the Quatre Fils Aymon relate the story of Troy, as taken from Benoît de Sainte-More's romance: in Baudüin de Sebourc, there are details of a journey to the site of Troy:[2] and the Conqueste de Trebisonde,- one of the latest

1. cf. Demedde - Ep. Stof.- pp. 86 ff, 95 ff.
2. " Witte - Ben. - pp. 24 ff.

"Thomas, poète anglais, auteur de Horn et Rimenhild, doit être placé aux côtés d'Adenet et de Girart. Son poème, qui affecte la forme des chansons de geste, est par le fond tout voisin des romans bretons et des romans d'aventure."[1]

1. Faral, Jongleurs, p. 189.

of the epics,- serves as a connecting link between the prose chansons which had adopted Greek and Roman subject-matter, and the originators of this material, the romances in verse of the antique cycle, so closely related to the romans de chevalerie. Furthermore, the marvellous,- which had never been a characteristic of the epics, and is to be distinguished from the superhuman,- laid its grip on the chansons: and this new quality came from the Breton romances.

> "C'était au XIVe siècle, a-t-on dit, un lieu commun des chansons de geste que de conduire les héros en féerie: rien n'est plus regrettable, mais rien n'est plus vrai. Ces créatures remplacent décidément les Anges."1

The unity of plot of the primitive epics gave way to the episodic nature of the other classes of romance. Love, which, in the uncontaminated chansons de geste, had deserved only a word now and then, asserted itself under the influence of the sentimental novels and, certainly, too, of social conditions. The indifference of men and the ardor of women changed places. The ladies took some prominence to themselves, and Berte au grand pied and Florence de Rome introduced the first undisputed heroines of the novel, the centers about which the action revolved.

To follow out with close scrutiny the disintegration of the chansons de geste would require infinite pains and a high degree of specialization, out of question in this treatise. It is a piece of work which still remains to be done. When it shall have been accomplished, we shall have a clearer light

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1. Gautier - Ép. Fr. II - p.503.

on the process of evolution in literature than has so far been shed on it. Like the fabliaux or the tragi-comedy,-though much more important in themselves,-the chansons de geste came into being, flourished, and disappeared. On what courses was their existence dependent? Are we to assume that social and political changes made it impossible for the epic to remain true to itself? If so, how can we explain the success of Milton's Paradise Lost? Or, are we to assume that France never knew a repetition of conditions suitable for epic treatment? Yet, what was lacking in the Huguenot wars, in the career of Louis XIV, or in that of Napoleon to prevent narrations in epic style from appealing to the respective audiences? Was it becaues the men who attempted it, like Ronsard, Chapelain, and Voltaire, were not sufficiently sincere, nor men of genius enough? Was it because other species of romance had so strongly fastened the sentimental theme on the long narrations that French writers have never dared to go back to the pristine simplicity of the epic? Was it because the literary critics defined the epic as a form suitable only for primitive ages, essentially weighty, grave, naïve, and absolutely beyond the recall of a more sophisticated period? Was it because later writers have looked on it as on the more serious playthings of youth,-as unworthy of attention in maturity? Was it because, until very recently, the chansons de geste were almost forgotten? Was it because the epic requirements are incompatible with the employment of prose? These and many similar questions would have to be answered in tracing out the rise, death and

transmigration of the French epic.

The immediate cause of their decline appears to have been their passage into prose. Why this should have been so, may not be patent without some examination, since prose-epics have existed in other languages. The Norse sagas in prose have successfully retained that air of dignity and strength apparently so essential in the true epic. But, in France, the epic tradition was so intimately allied with the use of verse, that any alteration meant a loss of epic power. The vernacular prose constituted a lower order of nature. It had no weight. Anybody could use it. Its technique was so rudimentary as to be unworthy the attention of a real artist. Even the story-tellers of the people,-the composers of fabliaux,- disdained to affect it. When we consider that the vernacular was not regarded as suitable for any serious work, esthetic or scientific, we can begin to appreciate what must have been the feeling of the old-fashinned readers of the chansons de geste on the intrusion of French prose into the sacred precincts of the highest form of literary expression. The day of glory had passed. The parvenu must be tolerated: it was a necessary evil. Since it was impossible to maintain the chanson de geste on its ancient footing, it was of little consequence what foreign material contaminated its former purity. The jongleurs, who had been so active in keeping the epic alive, were fast disappearing. Wealth and education were enabling the better classes to dispense with him. The fondness for expensive books was changing the trade of the wandering minstrel.

A large reading-public,-how large, the tremendous demand on the first printers indicates,- had grown up under the spread of education, the changed habits enforced by a constantly growing business-life, and the increase in the number of women readers. The latter have always been the mainstay of the novel.

As long as it could, the chanson de geste resisted the encroachments of prose. We can understand how the jongleurs must have opposed the innovation which was to deprive them of their bread, and, even more certainly, of their social standing. The necessity of recitation by no means reigned securely in the more romantic types of narration.

> "Faut-il dater cette nouvelle forme d'écrits",- that is, the prose-romances,-"de la mise en prose, certainement ancienne, qui fut faite de la trilogie de Robert de Boron?"1

Boron's Joseph, Merlin, and Perceval had been written about 1215. In Assassin et Nicolette, an ingenious compromise had been effected between prose and verse. Before the middle of the thirteenth century, several other stories had donned a prose-dress: La Quête du saint graal, Lancelot, Tristan, Les Sept Sages, Alexandre. Works of history, in particular, were appearing in prose,-some of them translations from the Latin, like Le Livre des Rois, la Chronique de Turpin; others, original historical writings, such as the chronicles of Villehardouin and Joinville. But, of the chansons de geste, nothing in prose was as yet attempted. This is the more surprising, since the employment of prose in the chronicles would lead one to expect an immediate

1. G. Paris - Esq. - p. 117-118.

reaction on their nearest affinity, the chansons de geste. All other species of narrative,-including even the short-stories, as is evident in the prose Comtesse de Ponthieu and Le Roi Floire et la belle Jehanne,-passed through the transformation under discussion before the epics. Among these, the Galien le Restoré, of the end of the thirteenth century, seems to be the earliest chanson de geste in prose. After that came the deluge. All the old heroic stories were poured into the new mould, in order to prolong their existence for several hundred years. Girart de Roussillon, Fierabras, Ogier le Danois, the Quatre fils Aimon enjoyed a rebirth. According to Gaston Paris, the earlier prose versions were written

> "non pour le peuple, qui ne lit pas, mais pour de grands seigneurs--."[1]

Not many years later, however, printing placed them within the grasp of the relatively poorer classes: and they became one of the favorite branches of the bibliothèque bleue. As soon as the people at large became the chief support of the chansons de geste, the latter quickly lost their aristocratic quality and catered to their contemporary patrons.

> "Es muszte endlich auch sehr bald zum Bewusstsein kommen, dasz die oratio pedestris eine Herabstimmung, Verallgemeinerung und gröszere Dehnbarkeit der ganzen Darstellungsform mit sich brachte. Grade aber dieser Umstand kam dem Bedürfnisz einer Zeit entgegen, welche nicht nur an Ideen und Stoffgehalt einen überaus reichen und plötzlichen Zuwachs erhielt, sondern auch an Mannichfaltigkeit der Form Gefallen hatte. Jetzt konnte das Komische und

1. G. Paris - Esq. - p. 245.

> Groteske, das derb Volksthümliche, das Gelehrte, das Plattverständige, das Spitzfindige in einer Form angemessen behandelt werden, die der früheren Zeit gefehlt hätte." 1

The difference between the verse Girart de Rousillon and the prose Girart de Roussillon measures the degeneration of the chansons de geste and the changed conditions of the novel. So vast was this difference that the French chanson de geste, which had imposed itself on the Italian imagination, undertook to imitate an imitation of itself.

> "Les auteurs des romans incunables ont recours à deux suprêmes expédients: ils imitent les poèmes italiens et font pénétrer dans leur oeuvre la mythologie de la Renaissance."2

After Léon Gautier's extended proof[3] of the dependence of the prose versions on the verse-epics, it is hardly necessary to do more than emphasize his statement to the effect that the former were slavishly and mechanically traced over the latter: that two or more verses were thrown into a line of prose: and that the chief originality of the later writers consisted in the dilution of older, concentrated elements, and in the fantastic combination of incidents taken out of various stories.

If it had not been for the prose reworkings, as Gaston Paris points out,[4] the old French epic would have been effaced from the national conscience. Not only that, but they would probably have had no effect on other literatures. Deal-

1. Bobertag - Romans - pp. 45-6
2. Gautier - Épopées II - p.626.
3. cf Gautier - Ep. fr. II - p.544 ff.
4. Paris - Esq. - p. 246.

ing with purely local subjects, and in the majority of cases, with personages not enjoying an international fame, they would, like most national themes, have made no appeal to other peoples. Within the limits of France, the verse chansons de geste were soon forgotten. Boileau, who in the seventeenth century, mentions incidentally shows his absolute ignorance of them.[1] the old French poetry with depreciation. The allusions to the epic heroes in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries have to do usually with the portrayals in prose. Occasionally, omnivorous readers like Rabelais show their familiarity with the primitive chansons de geste. The author of Gargantua (II, 6) employs the phrase

"mourir de la mort Roland"

with some gusto, and in his description of the meeting of Epistemon's ghost with the inhabitants of the netherworld evokes Huon de Bordeaux, Ogier le Danois, and the protagonists in the Quatre fils Aymon. In the farce of Pathelin, also, the possibility of dying the death of Roland, -that is, of thirst, -is mentioned, and other expressions, such as

"Vous estes plus traistres que Ganes (=Ganelon)
Dangereux et mauvais trompeurs"[1a]

testify to the author's acquaintance with the original epics. At an earlier period, of course, the references were numerous in all literary types, and in all parts of France: and entire scenes were taken from the chansons. Lambert le Tort's Alexandre owes the episode of Emenidus and his recalcitrant warriors to the Chanson de Jérusalem.[2] The ending of Branch XXIII of

1. Boileau - Art Poétique - v. 113 ff.
1A. cf. Schaumburg - Pathelin - p. 86.
2. cf. Meyer - Alex. - p. 155.

the Roman de Renart is a reminiscence of the last pages of Guillaume d'Orange,[1] with its magic and all. The Provençal poets not infrequently bring the chansons de geste into play: and on the strength of that fact, Fauriel tried to prove the derivation of the epic form and much of its subject-matter from the Midi. However, his Fergabras is generally regarded as a Provençal imitation of the French epic: and his Giratz de Rossilho is said by Paul Meyer and more recent critics to have been composed, not in the country of the langue d'oc, but a little to the north of it. To the unprejudiced mind, it must seem reasonable to assume that Provence probably had its epic narrations at an early date, as it had later such romances as the Flamenca, so highly praised by Mr. Ker. But their total loss would lead us to conclude that they were not numerous: and the absence of Provençal influence in the genuine chansons de geste militates against their effect on the Northern stories, whatever the state of affairs may have been in the South.

Abroad, the chansons de geste had imitators, but, with the exception of the Italians, only in a sporadic manner. In Italy, the Carolingian epic found

> "une renaissance imprévue,"[2]

in the poems of Pulci, Boiardo, and Ariosto, and,

> "grâce aux rédactions en prose, c'est là aussi que jusqu'à nos jours elle est restée le plus populaire."[3]

The jongleurs had carried over to Italy their precious books,

1. Sudre - Renart - p. 84-N.1
2. Paris - Litt. fr. - p. 52.
3. ibid. - p. 52.

and helped to establish in the provinces round Venice a school of native jongleurs, who started the fondness for Charlemagne and his paladins. Germany had its heroic stories in the Nibelungenlied, it is true, and the French chanson de geste could not, like the romances of chivalry, compete with them. In Norway the chanson de Roland and other French epics were translated into prose. As for England,

> "au XIIIe et au XIVe siècle on mettra en anglais nombre de nos chansons de geste, de nos romans bretons ou de nos romans d'aventure, de nos fableaux de nos contes de Renard; et si Chaucer sera bien autre chose qu'un 'grand translateur', il n'est pas moins vrai qu'il a, lui aussi, beaucoup translaté du français."[1]

Chaucer, indeed, may have taken the story of the ~~Reeve's~~ Man of Law's Tale as well from the chanson de geste of Berte aus grans piés[2] ~~er~~ as from Gower's Confessio Amantis, for he was well versed in all forms of old French poetry. The Spanish cantares de gesta owed their origin to the French epics; and the Cid, the hero of them, who is earliest mentioned in the Latin Chronicle of Almeria, is joined, "significantly enough, with those two unexampled paragons of France, Oliver and Roland--."[3] As in Italy, the traveling French jongleurs set the fashion. In general, nevertheless, the chanson de geste contributed in foreign countries little toward the advancement of the novel. The romances of chivalry were undisputably the more effective.

1. G. Paris - Esq.- p. 136-7.
2. Sandras - Chaucer - p. 203 ff.
3. Fitzm.-Kelly - Sp. Lit. - p. 35.

the chansons de geste, along with the other French narrative types, were imitated there in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[1]

There, as in France, Prof. Stoddard's query, "If we extend our theory and say that the epic has developed out of its completed form into a new and larger form of expression, what is that expression?"[4] has relevancy. And the answer must be, "The novel,--but not immediately."

1. as on p. 109.

4. Stoddard, Ev. of Eng. Nov., p. 5.

As a species of novel, the chanson de geste has not survived. Profound alterations in social and literary habits rendered almost impossible its continued existence. Now and then, it might have been resurrected by a writer thoroughly imbued with its conventions: but it would, of necessity, have been an artificial creation. The change from recitation to reading, from the simple art of viva voce delivery to the complex possibilities of the printed page, sapped its strength. The literal noblesse oblige in the direction of sentimentality took its most solid foundation from under it. The vigorous growth of the Arthurian romances forced it to the wall. On every hand, it was doomed to extinction.

CHAPTER 2

The Romances

In the order of importance in the evolution of the French novel, the romances,- whether of antiquity or of chivalry,- deserve the first rank. They are the middle ground between the obsolescent chansons de geste and the bona fide modern novel. Their influence survived that of the epic. They constituted the strongest competitor of the latter. The social and literary needs which the chansons de geste failed to meet, they met. They pointed the way to the sentimental novel and made easier the path of the realistic novel. They introduced a richer subject-matter, more varied motives of action, and a more artistic technique.

Their own provenience is from the chansons de geste. They are a reaction against the only prominent form of extended narration in the period in which they began to appear. They were written to hold the attention of two classes of people,- men and women. They did not have to wait for their forthcoming until the total disappearance of the epic; but were an offshoot of it, after it had reached some maturity. Brought up in a different environment, they acquired characteristics foreign to the parent-stock. In some of them,- as in Troie and Thebes,- the variations from epic characteristics are not so strongly marked as in others,- Énéas, Cligès, Lancelot. In them all, however, there is an evident effort to cast loose from the thrall of crude, bellicose depiction. We have to regard the romances not as a type bound to the apron-strings of

the epic, but as a type in open rebellion against it. The division between epic and romance in the Middle Ages is analogous to that between classicism and romanticism in the nineteenth century. The authority of the one evoked the other, and drove it to the opposite extreme.

Among the causes which have obscured investigation in the rise of the new species of novel called "romance", the custom of employing shifting standards of classification has figured prominently. A brief discussion of this fact will aid in an understanding of what that species is and what it is not.

The title chansons de geste covers a large variety of subject-matter ranging from known historical figures, like Charlemagne and Roland and Ogier or Audegarius, to unknown, fictitious characters, like those of the

"riche lignage des Narbonnais",[1]

whose existence M. Bedier is inclined to deny; from actual facts to incidents that never happened. It traverses a vast extent of territory, from the chemin français in the direction of Compostella to Jerusalem, and even to Troy, as is seen in Baudri de Sebourc. It includes a bewildering maze of feeling,- from the serious to the comic, from the heroic to the semi-heroic, from the monarchical to the feudal, from the profane to the saintly,- as in the Moniage Guillaume,- from the aristocratic to the bourgeois, from the total lack of sentimentality to a fair share of it, from the naïve to the artificial.

1. cf. Bédier - Lég. Ép. I - pp. 404-5.

It has not stood even for one definite requirement in technique, since lines of different lengths have been used, strophes or laisses and couplets have been employed and rejected, assonance has had to share the field with rhyme. Nonetheless, works of such dissimilar nature rightly belong to the category of the chansons de geste. In spite of all their variations, the sentiment underlying them is the same: namely, the warlike. First and last, the heroes are warriors; and they are other things only incidentally. The Guillaume who, in the Prise d'Orange, disguises himself as a Saracen and sues for the hand of the beautiful Saracen princess, Orable, still remains, before all, the warrior, the fighter. The "weight and solidity" of which Mr. Ker speaks are palpable in the chansons de geste; other qualities are chiefly ornamental. Then, too, the authors, whatever they may have put into their narratives, were consciously attempting to write epics. The earlier trouvères had nothing else to imitate; and the later ones, by constructing their epic cycles, demonstrated their desire to follow in the steps of their predecessors and to compose genuine chansons de geste. Undoubtedly, the most recent chansons have little in common with the purest examples of the type, and, if a scientific classification according to essential qualities were made, many would have to be ruled out. Thus, the cycle of the chevalier au cygne is permeated with magic and witchcraft, with the marriage of mortals and fairies, with the transformation of human beings into swans, and their disenchantment. Obviously, such

chansons more nearly fulfil Mr. Ker's definition of Romance: for,

> "Romance means nothing, if it does not convey some notion of mystery and fantasy:"[1]

and Dr. Voretzsch, who follows the usual categories, is led to observe that the rapid transition from history to pure romance is seen to occur in the very poem under discussion.[2] Yet, it may be as well to allow them to remain in the class in which tradition has already given them a fixed abode.

The later narratives, however, have no generic name; or, at least, none that is generally agreed upon. Gaston Paris speaks of the "romans grecs et byzantins," of the "romans bretons." Brunetière calls them the "épopée antique", the "épopée romanesque". The Germans use the terms "antiker Epos", and "höfische Dichtung." In other words, an effort is made to classify them according to their subject-matter, though the national epic, whatever its content, has been labeled "chanson de geste". One might imagine that the romances bearing Greek and Latin titles were intrinsically different from the Byzantine novels, and that the latter were separated by a wall from the Breton stories. Yet, no such distinction existed. In verse-form, in general treatment, in basic sentiment, they were alike. To separate them into classes according to their ostensible topics is as useless, in so far as the history or the evolution of the novel is concerned, as to throw into one category the modern novels dealing with Abraham Lincoln, into another, those dealing with France, into another

1. Ker - Ep. & Rom. - p. 4.
2. Voretzsch - Altf. Lit. - p. 262-3.

It is the purpose of the writer which usually determines the form and substance of the story and the methods of composition: and, in the novel, it is the purpose which is chiefly responsible for the differentiation into classes.

those dealing with automobiles or aeroplanes. The subject-matter is of no importance; it may be fiction, but is not the novel. It is worth while, however, to divide the philosophical novel from the sentimental, the psychological from the novel of adventure, the historical from the pastoral novel. Each story is written for the purpose of arousing a fairly specific emotion. Sometimes, the novelist wishes to bring before his reader an epoch in the past; sometimes, to interest him in the evolution of character; sometimes, to show the effects of a strong passion; sometimes, to divert him by fanciful incidents. Since it seems necessary to the human mind to make generalizations, only such generalizations as may be useful should be made. The antique, the Breton, the Byzantine subdivisions can be dispensed with in the study of the evolution of the novel. If they all employ the same method and have the same fundamental principle, they may be treated as one class, irrespective of their content.

That they all had the same underlying sentiment becomes evident on reflection. Lambert le Tort's Alexandre, Béroul's Tristan, Chrétien's Cligès, what are they if not portrayals of the same thing from different angles? There is no difficulty in segregating them from the chansons de geste, for their tone is not that of gravity nor of war. Moreover, they do not deal with local heroes, as is the case with most of the chansons. The reader of any of the series of Guillaume d'Orange and of any of Chrétien's romances,- the Yvain, the Lancelot, the Perceval,- realizes at once that he is dealing with two

distinct types of story, with two separate classes. It is not difficult to comprehend the individual qualities of the stories not included in the chansons de geste. They sing of arms and of men, it is true; but the fighting is not solemn: it is an incident, not a creed. They relate unheard-of prowess; but it is spent, not on men, it is spent on monsters or on men partaking of the nature of monsters. They harp on the wonderful: on enchantment, on the black art. They dote on description, on the enumeration of colors, of cloths, of physical characteristics, whereas the chansons de geste limit themselves to narration of a simple, blunt, and often monotonous kind. More than this, they are interested in love. They have added an important figure to the story,- the heroine.

Three of these elements,- war, not for its own sake, but for the sake of anything else; fantastic descriptions; and the fondness for the love-theme,- single out the ancient cycle, the Breton romances, and the Byzantine stories from among the other types of novel. They meet in almost all particulars Prof. Saintsbury's definition of romance:

> "The absence of central plot, and the prolongation rather than the evolution of the story; the intermixture of the supernatural; the presence and indeed prominence of love-affairs; the juxtaposition of tragic and almost farcical incident; the variety of adventure arranged rather in the fashion of a panorama than otherwise: all these things are in the Odyssey; and they are all in varying degrees and measures, characteristic of romance."1

Of course, if a strict classification were to be insisted upon,

1. G. Saintsbury, in artic. Romance, Encyc. Brit., 11th ed., p. 500.

not a few of these romances would have to be placed in some other compartment; and several of the so-called chansons de de geste would have to be transferred to this category. Yet, in a sufficiently accurate sense, the elements mentioned above ~~partition~~ separate the romances of chivalry - as they may be called - from the older and truer epics. These romances of chivalry - romans de chevalerie, libros de caballerías - have a wider scope than that usually assigned to them. They include much more than the Breton tales.

A. The Classical Romances.

The stories dealing with classical antiquity are nearly as old as the chansons de geste and reached their zenith when the Breton romances were at their brightest. Albéric's Alexandre was written in the first half of the twelfth century, and the Énéas, the Roman de Troie, the Éracle were composed during the second half. It is unnecessary, then, to consider them as offshoots from the works of Chrétien and his school. Their method must be sought either in the Greek and Roman epics or in the chansons de geste. The former may be dismissed as of negligeable value. In the literary conditions existing during the early middle ages, direct imitation of the form of the ancients was exceedingly slight. The vernacular made no pretensions to a classic position. The form of its verse was such as to deter the poets from trying to pattern after Virgil and Homer, they were not acquainted with. Only in one case does there seem to have been a rivalry with the old masters, namely, in the Énéas. But what a difference there is between this

romance and the Aeneid! Neither in style nor in content is there much common ground for comparing them. The diffidence of the poets concerning French as an artistic language lasted until the sixteenth century, when the Pléiade conducted a campaign for its aggrandizement. At least two observers outside of France had seen much beauty in French prose. Brunetto Latini, in his book on rhetoric imitated from Cicero, introduced Iseut's portrait in Tristan as a model of description, and Dante praised the French language for having produced

"quidquid vulgare prosaicum,-"

and the

"pulcherrimas Arturi ambages."

His admiration went so far as to induce him to imitate this use of the excellent vernacular in his Convito and Vita Nuova.[1] The poetry, however, of Northern France, called forth no such ardent admiration. No attempt was made to put it in competition with the Latin masterpieces. The very naïveté of medieval French verse; its lack of variety; its homely expression; its general unconsciousness; indicate how far from the poetic mind was any desire to copy the complicated esthetic principles of the Roman Silver Age. At that time, also, as today, the average writer chose the form in vogue. If it happened to be the chanson de geste, he followed the method of that type: if it was the Breton romance, he shaped his subject accordingly. Albéric de Besançon had only one popular narrative model before him. Hence, he made out of his story of Alexandre an epic in

1. cf Paris - Esq. - pp. 117-118.

the French style.

> "La forme est celle des chansons de geste--. Albéric traite sa source fort librement; il transporte tout à fait le récit dans le milieu médiéval: ce qu'il veut faire sur Alexandre, c'est une vraie chanson de geste, et voilà en quoi son oeuvre est interessante." 1

Gaston Paris, indeed, classifies it as a chanson de geste, though of an adventitious kind. The same reasoning which is at the bottom of such a judgment ought to apply to all the romances based on classical antiquity.

With the exception, possibly, of the story of Alexander, none of the Greek or Roman heroes was made the center of a cycle, as had been true of the chansons de geste. In several of these narratives,- as in the Roman de Troie and the Roman de Thèbes,- it is hard to find a dominating individual about whom the action revolves. The use of classical subject-matter seems to have served no other purpose than that of obtaining a relief from the dead-level of national themes. Men who had become acquainted with the ancients, either in the monasteries or in the schools, retold the stories which had appealed to them. There was no ulterior motive in their labor. They were not so imbued with the love for antiquity as to want to place it on a pedestal and to subordinate everything to it. They had no special desire to deify it or its heroes because of a possible connection between Alexander and the reigning king of France or England, or between the house of Priam and that of Philippe-Auguste. They chose their topics merely because they thought they would interest their audiences. The

1. G. Paris - Esq. - pp. 81-82.

legend of Troy, which might, like Wace's Brut, in its relation to the Breton people, have been made the vehicle for a family-cycle extending from Francus to the medieval French nation, stopped short with the fall of that Phrygian city. The story was the thing. The romantic mixture of war, love, and the marvellous exerted the strongest appeal. The same narration was told over and over again, whether in Germany, in the adaptation by Herbart von Fritzlar, or in Italy, in Guido delle Colonne's version, which for a long time was regarded as the original: whether in the prose Le noble Roman de Troie or in the Recueil des Histoires romaines: whether in the pantomime entitled Entremest du siège de Troie (1389), or in Jacques Milet's mystery-play of the destruction of Troy (ℓ 1450). The legend of Alexandre passed through half a dozen different rewritings, including Lambert le Tort's romance in alexandrines,- to which French poetry owes its classic verse,- La Vengeance Alexandre, by Gui de Cambrai, and a treatment under the latter title by Jean le Nevelois: yet nobody took thought of turning it into an epic cycle. The influence of castle-pride and cloister-exploitation was wanting. What kept the stories alive was their consonance with the popular feeling and point of view. Incidentally they brought about a fragmentary Renaissance by obtaining a wider acceptance ~~by~~ of Greek and Roman subjects: but this result was merely incidental. Of the true meaning of antiquity, they knew practically nothing: and they cared less. They had no concern for the esthetic, but only for the moral, side of the past. The consequence was that

ancient ideas and conditions of life were made identical with medieval notions, and more or less unconsciously travestied. This was especially true in the treatment of the gods.[1] Like the majority of novels down to a very recent date, the ancient romances pictured the period in which they were written, and not the historical age about which they concerned themselves. No medieval Salammbô appeared. It is essential, therefore, to accord to them the same treatment as that accorded to the romances of the Round Table: to judge them by the same criterion and from the same standpoint. They constituted a variation from the traditional epic, and were an integral part in the second phase of the evolution of the French novel. As romantic as anything that contrasted with the chansons de geste, they need not blind us as to their real character simply because they bear Greek and Roman names.

Albéric's poem of Alexandre is known to us through the translation by the German clerk, Lamprecht. It was then made over into a Poitevin version in ten-syllabled lines.

> "La version décasyllabique est le trait d'union entre le poème d'Albéric et le long roman en alexandrins qui nomme comme ses auteurs Lambert le Tort et Alexandre de Paris."[2]

The employment of the octosyllable by Albéric and of the ten and twelve-syllabled lines by his successors is a valuable indication of the degree to which the technical form of the narrative vacillated between that of the chanson de geste and some

1. cf. Dernedde - Ep. Stof. - p. 4
2. P. Meyer - Alex. - p. 133.

other style not as yet fixed with precision. The first impulse of the poet who busied himself with a story differing in its principal features from the chanson de geste was to mark that distinction by a break in the traditional epic metre. The doubt in the mind of the author of the ten-syllabled poem,- whether he was the original adapter of Albéric's work or merely an arranger, as Paul Meyer assumes,- as to the most fitting mould for the story, is curiously illustrated in the change of verse visible in the manuscript. Albéric's narrative had become the basis for a French poem in decasyllables. It was then added to, at the point where an account is given of Alexander's victory over Nicolas, in the Alexandrine measure. The latter portion is identical with Lambert le Tort's version.[1] It is to be presumed that the decasyllables were composed by one man, and the Alexandrines added by another. Yet, this would not diminish the appearance of hesitation on the part of somebody concerning the most suitable medium for the story. It is an invaluable commentary on the literary processes of the Middle Ages. Those processes cannot be judged correctly by present-day usage. The whole literary stream was in a state of flux. Such a thing as literary proprietorship was unrecognized for a long time. Writers borrowed from one another, right and left, without the slightest attempt at acknowledgment. Much of the manufacture was of a purely mechanical sort. Hence, in many cases, it is well-nigh impossible to do justice to the initiator of new methods. If a poem had fair success,

1. cf. Dermedde - Ep. Stof. - p. 61

it was seized upon by another writer, added to, or shortened, continued, modified. This was especially true of works which enjoyed great popularity, and accounts for some of the lengthy romances. It explains the utterly heterogeneous nature of many stories: the presence of a genuine chanson de geste within a mass of fanciful imaginings, as in the Roman d'Alexandre. The various manuscripts of the same story differed from one another. In some, entire episodes found elsewhere have been omitted: in others, they have not only been included, but even enlarged and transposed. Four authors have been credited with shares in the composition of the Roman d'Alexandre: Lambert le Tort, Alexandre de Paris, Pierre de Saint Cloud, and a certain Eustache. Moreover, the first "branche" is not the earliest. The other poets worked around the third section, the oldest, which has been ascribed to Lambert le Tort. In this aspect, the Roman d'Alexandre has much in common with the Roman de Renart,-also the work of many hands,- one of whom, as it happens,was the same Pierre de Saint Cloud mentioned above as the author of a branch of the Alexandre.

The sources of the Roman d'Alexandre throw light on the attitude of the author toward his production and on the probable use to be made of the material before him. Nowadays, no writer of historical novels considers himself absolved from the obligation of studying intensively the epoch which he expects to portray. George Eliot, in gathering her notes for Romola, had to get outside of herself and project her personality into the lifetime of Savonarola and Machia-

velli. She was forced to study the sociology of Florence, with all that the term implies in the way of history, manners, customs, the genius of the Florentines, the philosophy of the average Florentine. No such necessity obtruded itself on the consciousness of the medieval writer. With a few meager treatises, he was ready for his task, which consisted largely of putting into verse extracts from his sources. The entire romance of Alexander, as we know it, is built up on three or four Latin books: the Epitome by Julius Valerius of the Pseudo-Callisthenes,- a collection of popular stories in Greek composed in Alexandria in the third century; the Itinerarium Alexandri, of the first half of the fourth century; the Letter to Aristotle; and the Historia de prœliis. Occasionally, other works of minor importance were put under contribution: but they merely furnished some incidental details. One of these, an apocryphal account written in the first half of the twelfth century, namely, the Alexandri magni iter ad Paradisum, provided an episode for the romance. Among the principal sources already given, Paul Meyer excludes the Historia de Praeliis, as having left no mark on the poem by Lambert le Tort. Indeed, it is his opinion, though contrary to the general view, that the Historia de Praeliis was not used by any of the poets who dealt with the history of Alexander in French, and that it was only toward the end of the thirteenth century that it was introduced into the literature, through a simple translation in prose.

Add to this, the episode of Emenidus, probably taken

1. cf. Meyer - Alex. - p. 39.

from the Chanson de Jérusalem, and that of the Fountain of Youth, possibly copied from the chanson de geste of Huon de Bordeaux, along with a few scattered references originally found in Latin works,- and the derivation of the Roman d'Alexandre is complete. The authors certainly had little first-hand information about the Greek period of Alexander. It was natural, in consquence, that they should fill the narration with the tastes of their contemporaries, and that the result should be a novel of the manners and customs of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in France, as, in reality, most of the romances are.

> "Le plus grand nombre des faits merveilleux racontés par les poètes du moyen âge s'y trouvent (i.e., in the Pseudo-Callisthenes) déjà au moins indiqués, et la part d'originalité qui revient à nos trouvères consiste beaucoup moins dans l'invention de nouveaux épisodes que dans la couleur donnée aux récits antiques, et dans le caractère nouveau que revêtent les personnages."1

Alexander became the model of liberality, the ideal giver of largess, and was lauded as such during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Arriving before Tarsus, he granted to a jongleur, who had shown himself clever in playing the flute and reciting lais, the lordship over Tarsus and the whole country. Later, with the disappearance of the jongleur and his recitations, and the growth of a reading public, largess, in the more primitive sense, became a thing of the past: and Alexander's character adapted itself to the changed social conditions. He returned to his original condition of simple

1. Meyer - Alex. - p. 2.

Add to note:

cf. similar lack of historical accuracy in Leonardo da Vinci's "Supper", in which Christ and the Apostles are seated at a table, and not reclining on couches.

conqueror, and entered into the select society of the neuf preux of the world. In the main, nevertheless, he acted and talked like a medieval baron. On one of his hunting-expeditions, Aristotle lectured him with feeling on the bad faith of the serfs. Like the other heroes of antiquity, he had adopted the language, ideas, weapons, dress of the paladins of the Middle Ages. As Roquefort has indicated, medieval French writers seemed unable to imagine that other laws, customs, governments than those under which they lived, had ever been in existence. The famous deeds of ancient heroes were motivated by the intuitions, judgments, prejudices of the Middle Ages. When councils were held, for example, by Alexander, he appeared before his barons in a French surcot. At the funeral of Julius Caesar, the cross, the holy water, and praying monks formed an integral part of the ceremonies.[1] The farther away the authors were from the period of warlike appeal, the more marvellous they made the adventures of Alexander. The wonders of his journey through India probably did not exist in Albéric's poem. Lambert le Tort and his followers seem to have paid a scrupulous attention to the strange episodes in the various sources used by them. The eye single to the bellicose widened its scope. The spirit of adventure, rampant during the Crusades, deeply affected the literature, just as it did in Spain, after the conquest of the New World, or in Elizabethan England, when Drake was sailing the Spanish

1. Roquefort - Poés. fr. - p. 274.

Main, and Raleigh was at the height of his power. The fringes of the world had irresistible attractions for the people of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. New ideas were coming in through the increase in travel. The taste for the marvellous gave rise to pseudo-scientific compilations of the character of Philippe de Thaon's Bestraire (1119). What did not exist, was invented. One has only to glance over the titles of books written about the time when the third Crusade was preparing,- that is, during the latter portion of the twelfth century,- when Richard, the Lion-Hearted, and Philip of France were contending with Saladin, to realize what a surprising outburst of interest in wonderful occurrences and foreign lands manifested itself. This current was exhibited in a modest, but undeniable fashion in the intrusion of the outlandish in the chansons de geste, though much more openly in the literary forms not tied down by the epic tradition. Alexandre, Troie, Énéas, Éracle, Tristan, Lancelot, Cligès, Thèbes, Parténopeus, Floire et Blanchefleur, Horn, the Histoire de la guerre d'Écosse, Florimont, Havelok, Aucassin et Nicolette, are a few of the works which prove that the basis of story-telling has been altered and enlarged. The so-called cycle antique is but one of the phases of this broadening of the horizon.

The material of the Alexander-legend was handled and retouched time and again and on each occasion, it underwent a transformation in harmony with the progress of the story-telling art and the interests of the public. When, in 1188, Amyon de Varennes related the fate of Alexander's grandfather in

Florimont, he wiped out the difference between the prevalent romances of chivalry and the classical narrations by casting his tale in the form of the octosyllabic rhymed couplet. In the Vœux du Paon, by Jacques de Longuyon (1312), in the Restor du Paon (/ 1388), by Jean Brisebarre, in the Parfait du Paon (1340),- related to the story of Alexander through the use of individual episodes of the main legend, though chiefly fictitious accounts,- the old inspiration was entirely lacking.

> "Il ne restait plus dans ces inventions la moindre trace de l'esprit antique ni même de l'inspiration encore héroïque et sérieuse des premiers poèmes français."1

As may have been expected, the popularity of the subject made it accessible to the masses in their favorite kind of narration. Henri d'Andeli turned one of the characters into the comic hero of the Lai d'Aristote. Another writer converted a different incident into the Fabliau du roi Alexandre et du segretain. Renart le Contrefait retells some Alexander-stories. The clercs also owed much to the romance. Vincent de Beauvais utilized it in the shape of an epitome in his Speculum historiale. Godefroi de Viterbo introduced it into his Pantheon (1185). With the development of historical study, the story of Alexander, still taken from the romance, supplied the chroniclers with a vast amount of material. The fifth book of La Bouquechardière, a lengthy compilation of historical subjects, written by Jean de Courci in the first quarter of the fifteenth century, is devoted to Alexander. The Histoire ancienne jusqu'à César, composed

1. G. Paris - Litt. fr. - p. 76.

before 1230, likewise deals with it. About 1445, Jean Wauquelin wrote his Histoire d'Alexandre. Occasionally, episodes from the Roman d'Alexandre were employed in rendering more attractive or more dignified works not inherently connected with the Macedonian hero. The Roman de Perceforest binds the history of England to that of Alexander, and imitates the branch of the Alexander-romance called the Fuerre de Gadres. Jean Sarrazin, in his letter on the first Crusade of Saint-Louis, makes an excursion into Alexander's trip to Paradise. In Jean le Nevelois' and Gui de Cambrai's Vengeance Alexandre, each poet added an entirely imaginary conclusion to the original story.

In a curious way, according to the individual views of the writer and the tastes of the public, history became fiction, and fiction in turn became history. The same topic proved suitable for various types of literature, and presented an early instance of the interaction of literary forms. As always, the substance counted for little in the evolution of the species. Whatever the romance or novel needed, it took from any sources at hand and moulded to its own purposes. Outside of France, an identical process went on. The German monk, Lamprecht, adapted the French romance to the uses of German fiction. Thomas, or, as he is more correctly called, Eustace of ~~Heut~~ Kent, borrowed two out of the four branches by Lambert le Tort for his Roman de toute chevalerie. The English romance, King Alisaunder, of the thirteenth century was largely inspired by Thomas.

"Doutless--from the French",

according to Ritson,[1] came the inspiration for Adam Davie's Lyf of Alisaunder, in the fourteenth century. It would be possible to draw up an extensive list of native and foreign handlings of the Alexander-theme, ~~drawn~~ derived in major part from the French romance.

Thus, the ancient story of Alexander passed through all the changes of French romance. Unlike the chanson de geste, it became international property. It was a subject of more than local appeal. No feelings of national prejudice or indifference opposed its adoption in Germany or England. Beginning as an imitation of the traditional epic, it evolved into a portrayal of the aims and manners of medieval chivalry. In its latest form, it owed more to fancy than to fact; more to the exuberant enumeration of wonders,- the water-women, the miraculous fountains, the flower-maidens,- than to the bald narration of war. The second half of the thirteenth century saw its appearance in prose. By the fifteenth century, along with all the other narrative-forms, it had become almost solely a subject for reading. It had passed from the hand of the jongleur into that of the copyist. In all the stages of its development, it kept even pace with the Breton and other romances, and was never looked upon as a different species requiring a different attitude, different methods, a different language, a different verse-structure, a different moral insight. To all intents and purposes, Alexander was a Christian knight of the Middle Ages: he dressed as such, fought as such, spoke as such, thought as such.

1. Ritson - Bib. Poet. - p. 23.

In like manner, the Roman de Thèbes is a medieval romance of customs and manners, mainly concerned with fighting, the marvellous, and the sentimental. The total indifference to Greek ideas is more clearly shown here than in some of the other classical romances, since, in the original, the doctrine of Fatality is paramount. For the medieval mind, Fate had no overwhelming significance. As in the seventeenth century, the Frenchman of the Middle Ages was inclined to the rational and was very much of a skeptic. The gloomy conviction of the efficacy of the fatal curse, which casts a sombre hue over the serious Greek works, could not be comprehended by poets of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. They had not been brought up in that faith, and naturally questioned it. Why did Oedipus kill his father? The Greek playwright knew the answer: the Fates had ordered it. But, to a medieval audience this would mean no more than the Miltonic theory of creation means to the average scientific man of today. There must have been some rational excuse for the devastating war about Thebes. The opponents were not two brothers accursed of the Fates, driven on by the Furies. They were not the forced ministers of paternal vengeance, involved in a fratricidal struggle against their wills. They were simply two princes, rivals for the same throne, and eager for heroic encounters and clever stratagems at the head of their loyal barons.[1] How did Oedipus happen to kill his father, Laius? Fate, the Greek poets affirm, brought about the occasion. Again, this

1. cf. Constans - Oed. - p. 304

meant nothing to the medieval writer. Some rational, probable cause must have been responsible for the event. Hence, in the Roman de Thèbes, Oedipus, returning by chance from Delphi, participates in the combat, as he was bound to do in his capacity of undaunted soldier, and kills Laius, knowing well that he is overcoming the king of Thebes, but ignorant that the latter is his father. Consequently, the tragic Grecian note was lowered to the commonplace, the reasonable.

The ancient cycle meant no more than the most modern stories and received no distinctive treatment. Many of the secondary characters were given names belonging to medieval knights of different nations. Some of them,- in particular Tydée and Étéocle,- made lavish use of proverbs and satire, a common feature in Chrétien de Troies and the fabliaux. These axiomatic sayings, entirely foreign to the Greek stories, appear to have been taken from popular French sources. They are homely, and bear the imprint of native manufacture, as

"De se maison peut crieme avoir,
Qui voit le seu voisin ardoire."
(v.) 6977-6978),

and a host of others make evident. Without doubt, it was this very application of modern notions to antiquity which gave the classical stories their vogue. It placed them within the comprehension of the masses, and perhaps served their purpose much better than if the phraseology of antiquity had been used, and genuine local color had been consistently laid on. Outside of the erudite circles, anachronisms were not anachronisms at all. They lent that touch of reality which transformed the

fictions into living truths. What if the distance between Thebes and Argos was so exaggerated as to require nine days for Polynice's journey? What if Thebes was represented as a seaport? What if a romantic fontaine des cipres,- that ever present fountain of medieval romance,- was situated between the city and another in front of the castle of Monflor? What if the stock vergier found in all the Breton romances holds a place of honor in the environment of Thebes? These details may not have been germane to the Greek epoch: but they had a more powerful effect on the medieval imagination than if the truth had been told. Besides, the romancers were ~~not~~ writing neither history nor theology. They were trying to present acceptable stories, and were obliged to appeal to known states of mind. Where adjurations in the name of Jove and the gods of Olympus would have fallen on sterile ears, the use of the name of God by the friends of Fidimus after they had brought Tydée to the point of death, was convincing to the medieval public.

"Puis, li ont dit: Vous estes jus,
Ja ert vengiés dans Fidimus."
--Signor, fait-il, por Diu nel dites,
Bien en devroie raler quites--."
(v. 2215 ff).

That Adrastus should lecture his barons (v. 4202) seemed entirely proper. That the esquire should always follow at the heels of his lord, was in the regular order of events:

"Partinopex que cortois fist:
Les cevax et les armes prist,
Trestot dona al escuier--."
(v.4289ff.)

Though it might be presumed that anybody would understand what goddesses are, the author wished to bring home to his audience,

in an unforgettable manner, the wonderful origin of Tydée's sword. Now, every medieval person knew that fairies were the only properly endowed beings through whose hands all works of enchantment had to pass. To have transferred their functions to other creatures would have aroused antagonism in the mind of the reader. Consequently, the author of Thèbes gives to the fairies what is their undisputed due:

"Galans li fevres le forja,
Et dans Vulcans les tresjeta;
III divesses ot au mauller,
Et trois fees aiè tresjeter." (v. 2189-92).

M. Constans sees in the writer of the French story a matter-of-fact person, to whom the marvellous of the Middle Ages makes but a faint appeal. To him, the marvellous element so common in medieval fiction seems conspicuous by its absence. Outside of Tydée's magic sword, Étéocle's coat of mail, the tigress,- which takes the place of the two tigresses in Statius,- with its wonderful carbuncle, and the frightful animals of the forest of Argos, there is little of it.

"Les pierres n'ont point ici de propriété merveilleuse, excepté l'escarboucle qui éclaire pendant la nuit l'entrée du port d'Argos."[1]

Nevertheless, if one remembers the fountains, the vergier, the fairies already mentioned, it becomes clear that few of the conventional devices of medieval romance were left untouched by the author.

The love theme,- that innovation of the romancers,- also received adequate treatment. Not only is there a heroine,

1. Constans - Oed. - pp. 312-313.

Jocaste, who marries Oedipus, her husband's slayer, but there are besides minor feminine characters, on whose courtship the author dwells with visible fondness. Such are the daughters of Adrastus, who have fallen in love with Polynices and Tydeus. In Jocaste, Van Hamel finds a parallel to one of Chrétien's heroines, namely, the widow in Yvain.

> "La ressemblance incontestable au point de vue sentimental, ne l'est cependant pas, au point de vue de l'action, puisque la reine de Thèbes ignore qu'elle épouse le meurtrier de son mari."1

The comparison with Chrétien shows that, in so far, at least, as the sentimental is concerned, it would be a useless distinction to place the Roman de Thèbes in a different class from Érec et Éneide, Lancelot, or Yvain. The language used in all is identical: the tone is the same. The pagan princess and the Christian lady are the product of one environment, the age of chivalry. It is also impossible to determine which of the two portrayals cited above preceded and influenced the other. At one time, Gaston Paris appears to have located the Roman de Thèbes after Chrétien's earlier romances: at another time, he places it before Chrétien. M. Constans and other critics incline toward the latter opinion. They fix the date of its composition near 1150, and base their judgment on the vocabulary, the preservation of the declension, and one or two more grammatical reasons. In that event, the ancient cycle may have initiated the conception of romance as depicted in the novels of chivalry. It may be suspected, however, that the desire

1.Borodine - Chrét. - p. 235.

on the part of historians to finish off one type before permitting the entrance of another may be responsible for the ascription of earlier dates to the classical romances. Énéas, Thèbes, Troie, Éracle, though nothing definite concerning the order of their appearance is known, are granted precedence over the works of Chrétien and Thomas. It is just as probable, however that they came later or contemporaneously. One of the ancient cycle, the Alexandre by Lambert le Tort , is almost unanimously attributed to the last third of the twelfth century, thereby following some of the Breton romances. There is no reason why that may not have been true of Thèbes or Troie: In reality, it is not essential to seek the origins of the one class in the other. They may, certainly, have developed out of each other: and the writer who first combined the romantic elements,- combat, the marvellous, and the sentimental,- in such way as to render them popular, may have started the movement of the pendulum. On the other hand, it is equally probable that Chrétien in his surroundings, and Benoît de Sainte-More in his surroundings, would have developed their romance independently of each other and of any preceding poets. The growth of romance was no abrupt phenomenon. The chansons de geste already contained the elements of it in a high degree. Moreover, it is not necessary to derive romance from the stories of antiquity, since their original sources were the least likely to put the medieval writers on its track. The marvellous and the sentimental as the medieval mind understood them, were an absolutely modern creation, resulting from contact with the Orient

and, perhaps, the Celts, from popular fancy, and from the altered condition of women.

Gaston Paris, in a work written just before his death, assigns to the author of Thèbes a very high station in the history of medieval narrative.

> "Si, à l'epoque précédente, Albéric--n'avait trouvé à sa portée que la forme des chansons de geste, l'auteur du roman de Thèbes en a adopté une autre, celle des petits vers accouplés, innovation qui du coup a changé tout le caractère et l'allure du récit.--Du moins dans la poésie narrative profane, l'auteur du roman de Thèbes est le premier qui emploie cette forme, et par là déjà il prend une véritable importance dans l'histoire littéraire. Cette importance s'accroît encore si nous considérons qu'en même temps il a créé le type du roman "antique", qu'ont reproduit ses successeurs."1

His earlier opinion had relegated Thèbes to an appreciably later date than either the Énéas or the Troie: and as no uncontroverted order of appearance can be set for these various works, it is evident that the favor granted to one or the other in respect to priority must be the result of personal bias. None of the romance-writers created a new poetic vehicle. The octosyllable already existed in couplet form in such religious compositions as the Vie de Saint Brendan and that of Saint Grégoire, as well as in the fabliaux: and, from the knowledge which we have of the methods of the poets of that epoch, we may conjecture that all employed instruments previously in existence. This does not imply discredit, for greater men in more independent ages,- Lope de Vega, Shakespeare, Molière,- followed a similar procedure. The antique cycle does not represent a rupture with earlier traditions. It is a continuation of them, with certain

1. G. Paris — Esq. — pp. 106-7.

inevitable accretions, such as the extension of the marvellous and the sentimental, due to a concrete broadening of topics of contemporary interest.

As much uncertainty exists concerning the authorship of the Roman de Thèbes as concerning the date of its composition. On several occasions, Benoît de Sainte-More has been mentioned as the author: yet, in the judgment of M. Constans,

> "un examen rapide des traits caractéristiques que présentent le Roman de Troie et la Chronique nous convaincra bien vite que la langue de Benoît est sensiblement différente de celle de notre anonyme."[1]

That he was a clerc, may be taken for granted from his statement in the prolog:

> "Conter vous voel d'antive estore,
> Que li clerc tiennent en memore,"

and from other analogous passages. His frequent comparisons with the Bible support this conclusion. The golden eagle over Adrastus' tent reminds him of the riches of David and Solomon: a Jew named Salatiel is Étéocle's companion in battle: and several of the Thebans bear names borrowed from the Scriptures, such as Daniel and Éléazar. Moreover, the contamination of the Oedipus-legend with that of Judas, and possibly of Grégoire, bespeaks a clerical inclination, though the elements of the whole myth appear to have become a part of international folk-lore and to have been found by such investigators as Comparetti and d'Ancona in the mouth of the people in various parts of Europe. The accompanying evidences of religious training decide in favor of a clerical authorship. This is the more

1. Constans - Oed. - 296.

acceptable, since most of the artistic literature of the twelfth century was produced by persons at one time or another connected with the church. The Roman de Thèbes is no more a truly popular story with popular appeal than are the romances of Chrétien, Thomas, or Gautier d'Arras. It is addressed to an élite and not to the crowd. Very likely, too, the clerical preoccupation of the author may have been the cause of the absolute suppression of classical wonders and the substitution of the christian God for the Greek and Roman divinities. The Thebaïs of Statius, which, with some additions, the French poet turned into a romance,- whether directly from Statius or through another Latin intermediary has not been determined,- still retained the pagan spirit and the pagan nomenclature. Yet, the subject could not help having attractions for churchmen. Oedipus and Saint Grégoire,- whose life had been written in octosyllables at the beginning of the twelfth century,- resembled each other so closely that, the latter having attained to considerable success, the history of the former was sure to follow. Adaptations of the Grégoire-story were made down to the fourteenth century in France: and, abroad, even Hartmann von Aue held it worthy of imitation. Besides, according to M. Constans, there was another important reason on account of which the works of Statius exercised a powerful attraction for the clerical-minded.

> "Non-seulement Stace, comme les autres poètes, était classé parmi les philosophes, mais encore il passait pour un des ancêtres du christianisme, et l'on croyait qu'il avait reçu le baptême."1

1. Constans - Oed. - p. 149.

Others, it must be stated, have held this argument as of no particular value. The fact remains that, whoever the author may have been, and whatever his relations to the church, he chose a theme full of romantic possibilities, and emphasized the sides which were gaining favor among all classes: the sentimental and the realistic. For, the picture of medieval life among the higher orders, common to all the romances, answered a demand similar to that which saw the rise of the Roman de Renart and the popular satiric forms. Perhaps it would not be incorrect to say that the final principle of romance is a mixture of the realistic, as applied to the aristocracy, and, what has been called the idealistic, or more appropriately, the fanciful inventions of the individual writer. The supposition that romance has had nothing to do with real life is unfounded. It would be difficult to find a medieval romance in which a fairly faithful portrayal of the life of the upper classes is not given.

After the verse-romance came the continuations, imitations, and the prose-dilutions. As early as the first third of the thirteenth century, the Roman de Thèbes was turned into prose. The charming story of Parténopeus de Blois, and the romances of Hippomédon and Protésilaus, as likewise Athis et Prophilias by Alexandre de Bernai, one of the authors of the Roman d'Alexandre, have an intimate association with Thèbes, sometimes because of the episodes employed in them: sometimes because the name of the hero was taken from it. These tales are generally listed with the Byzantine narratives: but, as

is indicated in the authorship of the Athis, the only distinction between the Byzantine stories and the antique cycle lies in the employment of slightly different subject-matter. The method, the tone, the attitude of the writer, the literary vehicle suffer no change. the prose-versions inspired foreign treatment of the story of Thebes. Among others, John Lydgate, a disciple of Chaucer, wrote, in the first half of the fifteenth century, his Siege and Destruction of the worthy city of Thebes. Yet, the romance in verse, also, passed beyond the limits of France. Maerlant, the Father of Dutch poetry, is assumed to have given an abstract of it: an Italian adaptation in verse exists: and Konrad von Würzburg shows reminiscences of it in his account of Troy. The frequent allusions to it in Galerent, in Floire et Blanchefleur, in Lambert d'Ardre's Chronicon Ghisnense, in Christine de Pisan, demonstrate the popularity enjoyed by the Roman de Thèbes. In the Galerent, of the thirteenth century, a young girl, speaking of her course of reading, mentions the Roman de Thèbes with special partiality.

The romances of Alexandre and Thèbes, though in most points distinct from the chansons de geste, still retained a decided affinity for the epic. If some strong foreign influence had invaded French literature at the moment of completion of these works, bringing in its train the elements of romance, Alexandre and Thèbes might have passed unnoticed in the evolution of the novel, and taken rank with the later chansons de geste. But, once given the Roman de Troie, and the necessity for a new classification, no matter what effect oth-

er labors might have had, would have become imperative. With the Roman de Troie, the divorce between the masculine and feminine species of the medieval novel is declared absolute. War and the paraphernalia of war, indeed, are to be found in it: but they are embellishments, not essentials. Hercules has laid down his club and taken the distaff in his hands. His weapons are there, but he is forgetful of them while listening to an ever-old but always entrancing story.

Few romances of the Middle Ages can compete with the Roman de Troie in popularity. It was translated into all the languages of Europe, and continued to be a living book for Boccaccio and Chaucer and Caxton and was a favorite in France throughout the fifteenth century. It was imitated and referred to times without number: and more manuscripts of it have been preserved than of almost any other single book of the period in which it was written. It even influenced seriously the writing of history. What brought this popularity about? It may have been the subtle flattery in the title itself. Troy meant the fatherland of the Franks: Priam stood for the ancient founder of the house: Hector was the original national hero, more beloved than the Germanic Charlemagne, as the Spanish Philip II rivaled the Flemish Charles V in the heart of the people. In order that this assumption might be capable of proof, it would be necessary to demonstrate that medieval Frenchmen felt this near kinship with the Trojans. If that sentiment existed, what kept the Roman d'Énéas from rivaling, or at least equalling in popularity, the story of Troy? It is known, nevertheless, that the Énéas was never reckoned among

the most widely disseminated romances. This is the more surprising, since anything connected with Virgil, the favorite poet of the learned and the admired enchanter of the masses, might be expected to find more avenues to the popular heart than any other writing. The fact is that the mythical extraction of the Franks from Francus, the Trojan, has at no time constituted a theme of folklore caliber.

> "Die sogenannte fränkische Trojanersage ist keine sage in eigentlichem sinn, keine volkssage, sondern eine gelehrte, z. t. auf starken missverständnissen der quellen beruhende fabelei des chronisten Fredegar (7. jahrhundert--) der zufolge der Trojaner Francio von den aus Troja vertriebenen zum anführer auf ihren irrfahrten gewählt wurde und sie nach Europa führte; spätere auslegung machte ihn zu einem direkten nachkommen des Priamus." 1

If this legend had been taken seriously by the aristocracy, or been familiar to them, some chansons de geste ought to have treated it, in accordance with their special emphasis on the nobility of French forbears: independent references to it ought to be encountered throughout the entire extent of medieval literature. The allusions actually made to the story of Troy go back invariably to the romance as their true source. It would appear that the Francus-legend remained limited to the studies of the learned. What, then, rendered the Roman de Troie so irresistible? Was it the style of the poet? Undoubtedly that had much to recommend it in the eyes of readers: yet, it cannot be the sole explanation. Was it the fighting?

1. Wretzsch - Altf. Lit.- p. 283.

It would have had to be of an extraordinary kind in order to excite the jaded tastes of the barons. Was it the enchantments and miracles? There are plenty of them in the Roman de Troie: but they are no better, if no worse, than hundreds of marvellous happenings abounding in other works. Had Benoît excelled only in these respects, he might have charmed a certain small group of chosen spirits: he would never, merely because of such superiority, have enjoyed a homage that knew no distinction of classes. What turned all hearts toward him was his splendid, realistic picture of contemporary manners and customs, and his presentation, unsurpassed at the appearance of his romance, of the theme of love. Benoît is one of the first French poets to paint a gallery of fair women. Chrétien de Troies and Racine belonged to the same family.

It would not be impossible to obtain from the Roman de Troie an adequate notion of the period in which it was written. M. Morel-Fatio has written a fascinating essay on Don Quixote as a picture of Spanish society in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. A similar study of the Roman de Troie would furnish a more vivid idea of the twelfth century than is met in the histories. From what has already been said about the historical attitude of the poets, it will be understood at once that no description of ancient Troy, no account of Greek or Trojan life, is to be expected in the Roman de Troie. Everything has been brought down to the Middle Ages. Even the hot-temper and the heavy hand of the medieval husband have not been omitted. The Greek and Latin stories do not intimate the correction of women by the application of the closed fist.

But Benoît has sure sources of information at hand. Hector, the great Hector, had his little failings.

> "Um so mehr muss es uns wundern, dasz Hector, der sonst in jeder Beziehung als das Ideal eines wahren Ritters von Benoît hingestellt wird, in seinem Zorn eine unglaubliche Roheit gegen seine liebvolle Gemahle zur Schau trägt und sich beinahe hinreissen lässt sie zu schlagen."[1]

The matter-of-face and skeptical views of the medieval Frenchman could not be kept entirely concealed, even by Benoît. Since any baron would have been prompted to such action, why not Hector? Such indications may be the result of what has usually been termed medieval naïveté, or it may be a voluntary offering to the public craving. What we regard as ingenuousness is often not that at all in the time in which it occurs. In reality, it may be the height of sophistication and practicality. Writers like Benoît, we must presume, were familiar with all the devices necessary for captivating the attention of their audiences. Most of them were mature men, pursued literature as a profession, and desired to attain success. If they abstained from introducing literary gems or philosophical discussions into their romances, it was not because they were incapable of them, but because those delicacies would have been lost on the people for whom they wrote. Jean de Meun would have found a meagre public, at the end of the twelfth century, for his Roman de la Rose, though he might without additional labor have composed his encyclopedic allegory a hundred years before, if he had been living. In other words, every age contains most of the elements employed in later, profounder works,

1. Denedde - Ep. Stof. - p. 10.

but not every age is ready to accept the ideas which are beyond it. That is what constitutes the tragedy of strong, independent thinkers. During their lifetime, they bear the reputation of revolutionists or eccentrics or monomaniacs. After their death, they begin to wield an influence: not because their ideas have been changed, but because the public spirit has become altered and is ready for them. What the reading-public of the end of the twelfth century appreciated was the elementary feelings exhibited in such simple lines,- yet, exquisite even today,- as,

"L'enfes estoit mervelles biax:
Tendi ses mains et si lor rist
Com a sa norice fesist."
(R.de Thèbes,v.474 sqq.)

The intricacies of logic and metaphysics failed to affect those outside the academic precincts. Even within these bounds, extremely rudimentary notions were held concerning most branches of knowledge. The wonders of science had not been revealed to any great degree: but, in so far as they had been revealed, there were men thoroughly versed in them. Judged by the standards of the age, then,- which constitute the sole correct criterion,- the romances were modern, "up-to-date", adequate to contemporary demands. Authors faced the same problems that contemporary writers have to face. Benoît de Sainte-More was doubtless as eager to preserve the antique flavor as Sir Walter Scott or any of our historical novelists: but he had to accomplish his purpose in terms intelligible to his public. Nowadays, as the result of our extensive training in the classics,

it is hardly necessary to use a double vocabulary,- one presenting the facts, and the other elucidating them, accompanying them as a commentary. Benoît could rely on no such advantages. Preserving many Greek names for the sake of local color, he was obliged to paint around them in terms which he who was reading might grasp at once. Why has he mingled among his ancient heroes men bearing Christian names, or, at any rate, names current in the Middle Ages, such as Leopold of Rhodes (v. 5651) and Douglas (v. 7854)? Carelessness might explain it: yet that very carelessness, manifested thus, is equivalent to a confession of the prevalent state of mind. The abstract love of esthetic or historical principles yielded regularly to the need of concreteness and reality.

> "Zuweilen vergisst Benoît ganz, dasz seine Helden Heiden sind und lässt sie wie gute Christen ausrufen por Deu (v. 1041), por amor De'.--- Der religiöse Apparat ist fast ganz der christliche. In dem Tempel des Apollo befindet sich ein kostbares Tabernakel und ein reiches Ciborium, und als Friede zwischen Troern und Griechen geschlossen werden soll, trägt man die Reliquien aus der Stadt, um auf sie die Eide zu leisten (v. 25705ff.)"1

It is easy enough to attribute facts of this nature to forgetfulness. In so doing, however, the serious intentions of the writer are set at naught. Benoît was not, however, a novice, nor did he go to sleep over his task, as the scribes are said to have done in copying manuscripts. He was carrying out a settled plan. As to what that plan really consisted of, there will always be legitimate doubt. It is certain that he meant to give some sort of impression of antiquity: for, if he had

1. Clemedde - Esp. Stof - p. 10-11.

no such views, he might have employed other material. It is likewise certain that he was not trying to render the most faithful picture of an ancient Greek age. Evidently, the story and the authority of tradition appealed to him most of all. As far as he could, he narrated the tale in accordance with his understanding of the past. What he and his compatriots could believe, or have some semblance of belief in, he preserved: what struck them as utterly false, opposed to known facts or to hardened faith, he neglected. The gods of Greece were allowed to exist, to own their temples, to have sacrifices and prayer offered to them, to speak through their oracles. But they no longer manipulated the action or interfered in it. However much the old rôle of the gods might have pleased medieval audiences, on account of the marvellous occurrences made possible by them, Christian sentiment was against them. They might have a nominal existence, but not an actual one. The clerical condition of many of the poets would reenforce this standpoint. The theology of the average medieval person seemed to take it for granted that after the creation of the world, God permitted events to take their course, without special intervention. The distaste for the deus ex machina is observable in the total loss of power suffered by the Fates in the Roman de Thèbes, and, farther back, in the lives of saints, of which the Vie de Saint-Alexis is an instance. The inspiration from God might cause transformations in the life of a man: but God, or the gods, in the guise of a burning bush, of pillars of cloud and flame, or in any other bodily shape, had as little

reality for the people of the twelfth century as they have for us. Their supernatural beings,- the fairies, the wizards, the enchantresses,- were merely humans with a little more science and power than the common run of men.

To write an interesting, "live" story was the first aim of the romancer, no matter what the subject. It happened that Benoît saw the story-value of Dares the Phrygian's De Excidio Trojae historia. He utilized it as he would have utilized any other topic. His primary care was to present a fiction which would be read. Whether consciously or unconsciously, every novelist realizes that he must hold the attention of the reader by familiar associations. If a story is abstruse, philosophical, it will have a real value for persons conversant with the abstruse, but not for the generality of readers. In order to chain the public, the common facts of ordinary life must be dealt with. That is why a local, national topic remains vital within its own country and becomes foreign, stript of much of its rich connotation, as soon as it crosses the frontier. That is why, contemporary literature also is real to the average man, and the literature of the past is thin and pale, unless bolstered up by a tremendous study of all features of the life of the former epoch,- which constitutes our chief reason for accompanying each work of the past by copious notes, a review of history, religion, society, and a searching into the personal environment of the writer. Even then, we barely acquire a small fraction of the pleasure so easily obtained by contemporaries of the work. Benoît and his follow-laborers

were sensible enough to bear all this in mind, or to feel it, if they could not explain it. Consequently, in the amalgamation of ancient subject-matter with modern views, the latter afforded the realities and the former, the wooden, unpainted pegs on which to hang them. Benoît's Hector is not the simple soldier whose finest adornment is his martial figure and the horsehair-plume in his helmet which frightens the young Astyanax. When he appears in his scarlet garment brought from Saragossa, with its golden lion woven in, and its soft lining of ermine, he awakens in Benoît's readers that sensuous enjoyment in splendid colors and fine clothes which is one of the characteristics of the Middle Ages. Silks and satins are the ordinary garb of both Greeks and Trojans. The women dress in garments of Indian purple, threaded with gold. Medea's blialt is trimmed with costly furs, and over it she wears a kerchief imported from overseas and of great price.[1] When the Greeks and the Trojans spur against one another, they are mounted on magnificent Spanish, Arabian, and Nubian chargers, whose saddle-cloths , richly embroidered, are as the ransom of a city. The steeds captured by them in battle are led away by the esquires. After the fight, the bodies of the nobles are embalmed and placed in carven sarcophagi, whereas the bodies of those who died in the ranks are thrown on a common pyre,- a method, of course, carried over from Benoît's reading of ancient literature, but pertinent in his picture of medieval cus-

1. cf. R. de Troie - V. 1230 ff.

toms, because of the special treatment accorded to the nobles.

> "Das Grabmal Hectors ist --- besonders interessant, und das glänzende Tabernakel und das reiche Ciborium, welche bis in die kleinsten Einzelheiten beschrieben sind, erinnern an die schönsten Werke dieser Art aus dem 12. und 13. Jahrhundert."1

So it is with everything of descriptive character. The temples and palaces have the arches, sculptures, and paintings of the Middle Ages. The harness-decorations of the Greek and Trojan warriors are medieval: their swords, lances, and battle-axes are medieval: their shields bear medieval heraldic quarterings: their spears often carry at the point a guerdon of their lady-love: the infantry combat with medieval crossbows and feathered shafts. At the feasts in the palaces, songs are sung, and they are accompanied by medieval instruments. Of Aias and Antenor, it is told that they were expert in singing Breton lais. The forms of justice, of state, of local goverment are feudal, medieval, representative of the life about Henry II of England, at whose court Benoît lived and wrote.

Every theory concerning the intimate cause of a writer's method is likely to err by seeking too much and by interpreting the facts in the light of preconceived ideas. That Benoît sometimes followed his Latin authorities closely is undeniable. That he departed widely from them at other times is also undeniable. Why he was not consistent in either direction, is a question. If he meant to stick to the original in

1. Benedde - Ep. Stoff. - p. 8.

the bare facts, though not in the spirit, why did he not do so always? Why did he allow two sons to Hector,- Astornantes and Laodomata,- when history gave him only one, Astyanax? Why did he contrive to have Paris killed by the sword of Aias, whom the former had wounded mortally, when according to history, Philoctetes brought him down with an arrow that had belonged to Hercules? The exigencies of the story made some of these alterations indispensable: and the fancy of the poet was responsible for the rest. To expect strict consistency from a medieval romancer is to encounter disappointments. Few fictitious narratives,- whether novel or drama,- have felt bound by the historical facts: and Benoît was simply exercising one of the prerogatives of his profession. Nowhere is his freedom of fancy displayed, however, so lavishly and to so good advantage as in his portrayals of the love-passages between his heroes and heroines. Whatever the common impulse to dwell on love may have amounted to,- and it seems to have amounted to a great deal, as the later chansons de geste and Thèbes, Enéas, Troie, and Chrétien's romances demonstrate,- it is undeniable that Benoît contributed much of his own, personal feeling, and a large, humane view of the relations between man and woman. For him, the stereotyped formulas of Guillaume in Aliscans, recollecting sadly the virtue and affection of his wife Guiborc, and the rather trite repentance of Pepin toward Berte aus grans piés, were insufficient to give voice to the delicacy of sentiment of which he was capable. Paris, consoling Helen for the loss of her country and her friends, re-

veals in his many-sided arguments, a magnanimity and a tenderness unknown to most of the romances. His

"Confortez vos, ne plorez mie,"
(v. 4693)

is more than a dry phrase: it is evidence of a fine and true imaginative conception of the ways of love. These superiorities must be attributed to Benoît, as an individual, and cannot be spoken of as the natural consequence of an interest in sentiment. His representation of love is distinct from that of Chrétien.

> "Benoît's Liebe ist nicht so compliciert, nicht so höfisch, sie ist vielmehr eine frei, oft geradezu brutal wirkende Naturgewalt."[1]

Already, in Benoît, the artist is making his presence visible. The large, indefinite mould of the epic is giving way to the hairbrush of the careful painter. The women are differentiated from one another: they are becoming individual. The scant outlines of Dares Phrygius are filled in by the French writer. Briseïs, who in the Greek and the Latin, had remained the slave throughout, suddenly develops into a woman in the Roman de Troie: and Benoît has made a good beginning for the romantic theme,- undreamt of by his predecessors,- which was to be given more concreteness and power in Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida. She is not the helpless spoil of the victor in battle, but, on the contrary, a woman perfectly aware of the strength lent her by her sex, and discriminating in her choice of lovers. Hitherto, the heroines of French fiction

1. Witte - Ben. - p. 100.

had been endowed with only a few stock qualities such as faithfulness to their husbands, an unseemly readiness to force themselves on the men whose love they were anxious to win, submissiveness, bashfulness in taking a prominent part in public. This may or may not have been in accord with actual life,- and was probably not so, any more than the sordid, cynical representation of women in the fabliaux, or the forwardness of Spanish girls in the drama of Lope de Vega and Tirso de Molina,- but it had become a convention with the men-writers, a sop to the overwhelming, domineering instincts of the male population. Even Helen of Troy offered no innovation on this type. Her change of lovers indicated no self-assertion on her part. She remained always the sport of her beauty or of the stronger personality of Paris. Her character was essentially negative. Briséis, on the other hand, had a mind of her own. The intellectual excitement of flirtation appealed to her. She knew something of the secret vanities of men, and played on them to her own amusement. She is one of the earliest examples of the genuine coquette: flighty, disengenuous, self-poised. After diverting herself with Troilus, she transfers her interest to Diomedes, who, himself, is her equal in sentimental trifling. Diomedes is an out-and-out ladies'-man. On one occasion, he steals the glove of his sweetheart as a pledge of love. His speech is courtly, flattering, insinuating enough to turn the heads of those whom he tries to charm. The Homeric warrior who understood nothing beyond the eloquence of lance and shield has become a feudal cavalier, a student

of feminine psychology. It was fitting that he should pit himself against the wiles of Briseïs, and that she should feel the fascination of a kindred spirit. Their courtship, however, does not exhaust Benoît's study of the sentimental-theme. Helen and Paris, Jason and the violent, passionate Medea, Achilles and the pure-hearted, noble Polyxena,- all are lovers of different temperament, with distinctive notions about love, and an individual manner of expressing it. The calm, dispassionate course of love has turned into a thorny path. Sleep no longer smooths the couch of Cupid's victims. The night is an endless torment: and lovers spend it in long soliloquies, without finding much easement, nonetheless. Rooms are rooms no longer; they are chambres de biaute: beds cease to be simple beds; they become enchanted resting-places.

The enchantment did not stop there. In Benoît, there is a whole army of supernal beings, called indifferently devins, poètes, sages, enchanteors. They are the creations of the author's fancy: skilled mechanicians, ingenious artificers, who replace the malevolent agents of the Devil and the hateful sorcerers of the Infidels. In reality, they are men like other men, with a broader knowledge of building material and methods of transportation. Three of them,

> "--sages auctors/qui molt sorent de nigromance,"

wrought the four statues resting on precious pillars in the room of alabaster. Benoît probably had little faith in his wizards, and did not expect any overpowering conviction in the

minds of his readers. They were inevitable in a story which had to treat of Circe, and invaluable in a poem whose predominant characteristic is a wealth of description, later emphasized by the chroniclers.

> "Der Dichter sucht zwar die Beschreibungen interessanter zu machen, indem er verschiedene Gegenstände wählt, und die excurse in das Gebiet der Geographie (v. 23055 ff.) und der nigromance (v. 14553 ff. v. a.), sowie die reichen Schilderungen mit Vershcwendung von Gold, Elfenbein, Marmor, Edelsteinen etc. mögen auf den damaligen Leser die gewünschte Wirkung ausgeübt haben, uns berührt alle diese Herrlichkeit recht wenig."1

Like the stilted devices of the classical Renaissance, Benoît's enchantments are used for artistic purposes. The acquaintance of the medieval public with ancient mythology was limited: and something had to be substituted. The literary existence of fairies and modern adepts in the Black Art was accepted: and it was much more advisable for the poet to present an atmosphere of remoteness and wonder through them than to have recourse to the unmeaning traditions of antiquity. The public was fond of the supernatural, whether it believed in it or not, just as it was fond of lavish ornamentation and rich colors.

If we were to place side by side Benoît's sources and his romance, we should be inclined to credit him with an extraordinary power of invention. Dares Phrygius' De Excidio Trojae, Dictys Cretensis' Ephemeris belli Trojani, Ovid, Aethicus, Ser-

1. Witte - Ben.- p. 101.

vius, and such other classical authors and books as he may have made use of give no intimation of the variegated, passionate, realisitc portrayal which he has set before us. Even Homer, however, with all his excellencies, could not have inspired the kind of writing found in the Roman de Troie. For Homer, moreover,- whom Benoît probably did not know in the Greek,- an unconcealed indifference is shown in several lines:

"Omers, qui fu clers merveillos
Des plus sachanz, co trovon nos,
Escrit de la destruction,
Del grant siege et de l'acheson,
Por quei Troie fu desertee,
Qui ainc puis ne fu rabitee
Mes ne dit pas ses livres veir,
Kar bien savons sans nul espeir
Qu'il ne fu puis de cent ans nez
Que li granz oz fu asemblez.
N'est merveille s'il i faillit,
Qui onc n'i fu, ne rien ne vit."
(v. 45 ff.)

But, a study of the other authors of his day supplies us with the right perspective. Everybody was writing in much the same vein, whether the subject-matter was classical or modern, Byzantine or Occidental, chivalric or monarchical. Benoît's treatment of the Amazons is in all likelihood taken from a version of the Alexander-legend.[1] If the Roman d'Énéas preceded that of Troie, then the source of many of Benoît's marvels may be discovered in it. The Énéas copied William of Malmesbury's De Gestis Regum Anglorum, and Benoît imitated the Énéas. If Troie came after Chrétien and Gautier d'Arras, the origin of some of his medieval descriptions and of his sentimental episodes may be looked for in their fictions. If the Roman de Thèbes

1. cf. Demedde - Ep. Stof.- p. 6

anticipated Troie, the Briséis-episode may prove to be a development of the story of Antigone in the former. The artificial figures and instruments which evoked wonderful results may have been taken from any of a large number of contemporary works, or may have been inspired by them.

Evidently, the Roman de Troie did not initiate a new current in French narration. It is one out of many: and belongs to a school as distinctly marked as was that of the trouvères who composed epics. It is not essential to consider Benoît as a mere imitator, either. The public interest in certain sides of life forced all writers to apply the same method. The emphasis on natural scenery, on historical accuracy, on psychological truth, on social problems, is today required of the novelist by his audience. The Middle Ages had other favorite aspects. In the twelfth century, some fighting, some fancy, some dallying with love, some gorgeous description answered a public demand. Each poet was obliged to cater to this want, independently of all the rest. Hence, it is quite possible that Benoît did not owe to his contemporaries more than any creative artist owes to his personal environment. As in the case of every man of letters, if we were perfectly familiar with all the books Benoît had read, with the teachings of his masters, with his entire bringing-up, with the social circle in which he moved, with his friendships and his enmities, we might be able to put back into the original case all his borrowings,- though what good that would do is highly problematic. Certainly, not much would remain which could be termed

a genuine creation of Benoît's. The Roman de Troie, then, is only as original as the other fictions of the twelfth century. Benoît did not introduce the extended description, the lengthy monologue, or the rhetorical question,- if, indeed, any single person can be regarded as having naturalized them. Yet, as an individual piece of writing, the Roman de Troie is significant. Better than the other narratives occupied with classical legends, it proves the kinship of most of these stories with the Breton tales and with all that has heretofore rather narrowly been classed as "romance". Brunetière states that,

> "avec les moins historiques de nos chansons de geste, les épopées inspirées de l'antiquité servent de transition aux Romans de la Table-Ronde." 1

Strictly speaking, they cannot be characterized as transition-material: for in their chief elements they were identical with the romances of the Round Table. Besides, they were, so far as we know, contemporary with them: and it is almost impossible to decide which influenced the other. Both the ancient cycle and the Breton stories were phases of one and the same condition. They are all "romance." They were composed for similar audiences and depicted a similar criticism of life. They are distinguished, not from each other, but from the chansons de geste, which had a totally different object in view.

The superiority of the Roman de Troie is evidenced by the almost endless imitations of it and by the countless allusions to it in all literatures. It is one of the works in-

1. ~~Le Clerc — Hist. Litt. — p.~~
Brunetière — manuel — p. 9.

pagination wrong should be 160

strumental in causing Dante to bestow the palm on the French vernacular.

> "Dante---nous attribue l'avantage dans le récit des gestes des Troyens, des Romains, du roi Artus, et dans les enseignements (doctrinae), ou le genre didactique."1

Guido delle Colonne transferred it into Latin in the thirteenth century, without naming Benoît: and passed for a long time as the originator, whereas he was only the translator.[2] Herbart von Fritzlar based on the French romance, composed at the order of Hermann von Thuringen, his Liet von Troye, in the twelfth century: and later, Konrad von Würzburg made copious use of it in his Buoch von Troye. Segher Dengotgraf and Jacob von Mærlant gave the story currency in the Netherlands in the thirteenth century. Boccaccio included the Brisëis-episode in his Filostrato. His Teseide, derived from an unknown French source, has some connection with the Roman de Troie. Of the romance in question, M. Sandras says:

> "Je la rattacherais au cycle gréco-romain; je lui ferais une place entre le Roman de Thèbes et celui de Troie." 3

The English trouvère, as Chaucer has aptly been called, transformed Boccaccio's borrowing into the Knight's Tale, which in turn inspired the author of that admirable Elizabethan drama,

1. Le Clerc - Hist. Litt. I p. 481
2. cf. G. Paris - Litt. fr. - p.77
3. Sandras - Chaucer - pp. 54-55.

The prose-version of 1262 by Jean Flixecourt makes short shrift of the necessity of verse, and explains the preference for simple prose by accusing the poet of false statements, due to the ambition to finish out the rhyme satisfactorily.

the Two Noble Kinsmen. Chaucer may have obtained his Troïlus and Cressida from the Italian novelist, but has probably owed something to the Anglo-Norman trouvère, for he was unusually well-versed in the old French narratives and ~~had~~ is generally credited with having written an English adaptation of the Roman de la Rose. In Spain and in Scandinavian countries, the French romance gave rise to various versions, also.

French writers put the Roman de Troie under contribution time and again. Jacques Milet turned it into a mystery-play: the Mystère de la destruction de Troie la Grant (/ 1450): though, like Raoul Le Fèvre's Recueil des Histoires de Troie, (1464), it appears to have been directly inspired by Guido delle Colonne's Latin translation of Benoît's poem. In 1389, the story of Troy was represented before Charles V under the title: Entremest du siège de Troie. The Noble Roman de Troie, and the Roman d'Hector, or as it is sometimes called, the Roman d'Hercules, go back to Benoît as their source. In the thirteenth century, Jean Malkaraume interpolated several episodes taken bodily from Benoît into his Biblical history. Inevitably, the Roman de Troie was spread out into prose, and became a favorite novel of the bibliothèque bleue.

> "Au moi d'avril 1262, un moine de Corbie--Jean Flixecourt---avait 'translaté' sans rime l'estoire des Troiens et de Troies du Latin en roumans mot a mot'---et il donne plusieurs raisons de ce choix: le roman de Troie rimé (celui de Benoît de Sainte-More) est fort long; de plus, il est rare; enfin, le poëte ayant dû, pour 'belement trouver sa rime', ajouter beaucoup de choses de son invention, c'est par Darès de Phrygie' qu'on porroit bien savoir la vérité'."[1]

1. Le Clerc - Hist. Lit. 14 S.I - p. 499-500.

Thus, the popularity of Benoît's work, when not actually causing adaptations of the original to be composed, awoke an interest in the Latin treatments of the same theme. As for the longer or shorter borrowings in the most diversified types of writing, it would be difficult to name many authors down to the fifteenth century who had not felt the influence of the Roman de Troie and on some occasion or other given expression to it. The prose romance of Troylus; Adenès li Rois' Beuves de Commarchis; Gautier d'Arras' Ille et Galeron; Floire et Blancheflore; the Quatre Fils Aymon; Floriant et Floriette; the Roman de Renart; Baudüin de Sebourc; the Roman de Rou; the Fabliaux; the Dits de Baudoiun de Condé; Cligès; Berte aus grans piés: all show familiarity with the Roman de Troie. Later, the references and allusions to it fairly swarm in Deschamps, Christine de Pisan, Alain Chartier, Froissart, Jacques de Baisieux, Charles d'Orléans. Evidently, the Roman de Troie stood in much the same relation to general culture as the Roman de la Rose, or as the Bible, Hamlet, and Don Quixote, today. It was one of the commonplaces of a good education. The imitations of its devices ranged from barefaced plagiarism to liberal remodeling. In Foulque de Candie, the idea for the Chamber of Beauty came from Benoît: in Escanor, the enchanted beds were similarly derived. Several of the chansons de geste depended on the Roman de Troie for many suggestions. Such are Girart de Viane, by Bertrand de Bar-sur-Aube and Anseïs de Cartage.

"Am meisten hat der Dichter des Anseïs de

> Cartage den Trojaroman benutzt. Auch er schildert die schlimmen Folgen, die die Entehrung einer Frau nach sich zieht und weist gleich nach Erzählung des Frevels darauf hin, welches Unheil daraus entstehen werde (A. v. 717, Troie v. 4476.)"1

In Otinel and Violette, Benoît's description of the undressing of the warriors and the curing of their wounds by the women reappears. The eleventh book of Chrétien de Legoyvais' Ovide moralisé contains an account of the abduction of Helen not found in the Metamorphoses, but existing in the Roman de Troie. Herr Witte has exposed a curious method of literary mosaic-making in the use to which Benoît's verses were put in the Quatre Ages de l'Homme. In a long passage taken from Troie, the author of the Quatre Ages has made his own what had been another's by merely shifting the order of the original lines, and manufacturing such connections as seemed satisfactory to him. For example, verse 6076 of the Roman de Troie is followed in the Quatre Ages by verse 6089, and 6126 by 6081. In that age devoid of literary criticism and lax in literary morals, many sharp practices of this kind passed muster. To expect confessions of indebtedness to the Roman de Troie is vain. Modern works became public property immediately after their appearance. They commanded much less respect than Latin books: They did not have the authority of age behind them. Hence they were pillaged right and left and there must often be uncertainty concerning the genuine sources. Indeed, there are not lacking critics who regard this borrowing with tolerance: who see no special wrong-doing in it: who perceive in it a

1. Witte - Ben. - p. 54.

form of appreciation, rude in its manner, but sincere:- and they are probably right.

> "Chrétien et Gautier -- n'ont pas eu honte de piller leurs contemporains, j'ose à peine dire leurs devanciers, avec une franchise qui ressemblerait fort à du cynisme, si elle n'était plutôt une forme de la sincérité, et rien ne nous prouve que leurs devanciers n'ont pas agi de même avec les écrivains qui les précédèrent."1

There can be little doubt that the romance by Benoît supplied most of the early references to Troy. It was the only story in the vernacular on that topic: and the few authors living in Benoît's period, who take great pains in detailing their debt to Dares and Dictys, cannot always be viewed without suspicion. Some of them were not above robbing the living to glorify the dead. Through Benoît, the theme of the Trojan war passed all over Europe. The Renaissance had in him a stout precursor.

The mixture of fighting, enchantment, love, and the delineation of medieval customs and manners, which seem to be the distinguishing traits of romance, is not a constant process. In some stories, though all these characteristics are found, one or the other predominates. In the Roman de Troie, the balance is rather carefully preserved. The romance of Énéas is much more one-sided. Here, the love-theme is salient, nearly all-engrossing. If literary forms grew like plants; if the seed had to precede the flower by a long interval; if certain flowers were produced only by certain seeds; then the Roman d'Énéas might have to be considered the definite beginning of the purely sentimental novel. But literary species evolve quite differently. They are the result of a highly

1 Wilmotte — Ev. du R. - p. 339.

complicated miscegenation. The soil in which they grow may be composed of grains brought from the East, the West the North, and the South; from the present, the near past, and remote antiquity. They may even take on a particular complexion as the effect of an individual caprice. The unfolding is not continuous in one direction. A foreign scion may be grafted on a native trunk and completely dominate the old structure, causing it to assume postures previously thought impossible. The Senecan drama, introduced arbitrarily, turned the entire trend of English playwrighting. Stated in different terms, the evolution of any branch of the novel does not imply a definite beginning of that particular type at any special moment. The sentimental novel has existed even in the chansons de geste. It was only necessary that some author should specialize on the topic of love: should make all else subservient to it. At first, it was optional on the writer as to which strain he should develop in romance. The day of battles had gone by. The public played no favorite, though it seamed to prefer an amalgamation of the four elements previously mentioned. Finally, however, it required the preponderance of the sentimental: and authors were obliged to arrange their stories accordingly. The writer of the Énéas was under no such compulsion. It happened that he was qualified to paint love-scenes: and he painted them, with predilection. He started no sentimental school: his originality passed off without special notice, since every body was engaged in the same sort of work: he was not copied extensively. Between Benoît's more summary treatment of love

and the longer treatment found in the Énéas, there seemed to be merely a difference in extent,- not in kind. The Énéas, then,- whether it preceded Troie or followed it,- is only one of the more significant examples of the direction which the development of the novel was taking.

Out of a total of 10,400 eight-syllabled lines, about half of the Énéas centers around the theme of love,- a much greater proportion than is given in that longer work, the Roman de Troie:

> "--Les amours d'Énéas et de Lavine, joints au jugement de Paris, à la description des tombeaux de Camille et de Pallas et à l'épilogue final donnet déjà un total de 4,500 vers--."[1]

The epilogue, to which reference is made is an original continuation of the Aeneid, in which, for a time, the author represents Aeneas as reproaching himself for having neglected Lavinia, and then renders an account of their marriage, in the medieval style. The manner in which he has converted the Latin epic to his own uses demonstrates that his interest in the love-scenes is not accidental. In about forty lines, he sums up the destruction of Troy, the death of Priam, the flight of Aeneas, and dilates the heart-burnings of Aeneas and Dido much beyond the length alloted to them by Virgil. To give himself up as much as possible to his favorite subject, he omits the tragedy of Laocoon, the description of the festival

1. Pey - Énéas - pp. 62-63.

in honor of Anchises, the council of the gods on Olympus, and other passages dear to the heart of the Latin writer.

That which is conspicuous by its absence in Benoît, he also minimizes,- namely, the intervention of the gods. Jupiter, he names only twice: and Venus and Juno have a very insignificant rôle to perform. The miraculous side of the pagan fictions evidently had no attractions for the medieval public. It was contrary to the views of the Church, and in opposition to the facts of common-sense. It was impossible, in the estimation of medieval readers, whereas the modern fairies were only improbable. Hence, there is no occasion for surprise in observing that the space devoted to the deeds of marvellous animals,- of which the people of the twelfth century were fond, as is made clear in the popularity of Philippe de Thaon's Bestiaire, from which the author of the Énéas drew the crocodile (v. 471 ff.), the bird, Calǿde, (v. 7467 ff.), and others,-[1] almost equals that given to the actions of the dwellers on Olympus.

In other ways besides those mentioned, the trouvère indicates how much of an obsession the love-story was for him: in none, perhaps, more markedly than in the discussion of that passion by Lavinia and her mother. There is no difference between this debate and many an argument of Chrétien: and if the verses had not occurred in the Énéas, one might have supposed them an extract from Yvain or Cligès.

"Pire est amors que fievre ague,
n'est pas restors quant l'en en sue.

1. cf. Énéas.- by Jacques Salverda de Grave-Halle, Max Niemeyer, 1891 - p. LXVII-LXVIII, Introd.

D'amor estuet sovent suër
Et refreidir, fremir, trembler
Et sospirier et baaillier,
Et perdre tot, beivre et mangier
Et degeter et tressaillir,
Muër color et espasmir,
Giendre, plaindre, palir, penser
Et senglotir, veillier, plorer--"1

Already, the science of love, as elucidated by Ovid and the troubadours, has obtained a prominent position in romances outside of Chrétien. The attempt to establish Chrétien de Troies as the first French poet who shows signs of a strong Provençal influence, or, at any rate, resembles the Southern poets in many important respects, must fall before an examination of the Énéas. This is inevitable if we adopt the latest conjectures concerning the dates of composition of the early romances.

"Meist aber setzt man den Eneas gegen 1160, den Troja-roman etwa 1165 an, und Chrétien's Erec, das älteste von seinen erhalten gebliebenen werken, enthält unzweifelhafte Auspielungen auf den Eneasroman."2

Not the Provençal poets nor any individual French romancer was responsible for such manifestations as the extension of six Latin verses into over twenty pages, as is the case in the episode of Lavinia and Aeneas. The tastes of the public to which the story was addressed controlled the phenomena.

These preferences likewise regulated the choice of subject-matter and the manner of presenting it, in general. When Aeneas visits the lower regions, the French author does not grow in intensity and power with Virgil. The magnificent lines of the Augustan poet become ordinary: the rich allusions to ancient Roman history,- to the Gracchi, to Decius, to Fabius,- are set aside as unsuitable for the Christian age. The

1. Énéas - v. 7919ff.
2. Voretzsch - Altf. Lit.- p. 280.

whole journey is transformed into a naïve trip to a curious country, not so entrancing as the travels into the Orient, but having some interesting features. On the other hand, the descriptions of palaces, market-places, and tombs are often gorgeous. In especial, Camille's grave is set forth in an ample and highly-colored account, thoroughly satisfactory to medieval readers, who must,- if we may judge from the numerous instances in the romances,- have taken an unusual delight in the contemplation of splendid sepulchers. Buildings with magnetic walls, precious stones with wonderful powers, marvellous birds make of Carthage a fairy city not at all in harmony with historical fact, but quite realistic to the readers of Enéas. The market-place in Dido's capital might stand in Rouen, Caen, or Tours, in so far as its merchandise, its arrangement, and its frequenters are concerned.

"Grand marchié i aveit toz dis:
La vendeit on le vair, le gris,
Costes de paile, covertors,
Porpres, pailes, dras de colors,
Pierres, especes et vaissele-.
Granz rues ot en la cité,
Et palais riches a plenté,
Borgeis, mananz,--."[1]

The dress of men and women, their domestic habits, their ceremonials, are those of the twelfth century in France. When they offer battle, they conform to the usages of medieval combat. Aeneas and Turnus engage in a duel which would have done honor to any tournament. Mounted on horseback,- and not in chariots,- they attack each other with lances, unhorse each other, and

1. Enéas - v. l. 449, ff.

finish the struggle on foot with their swords. A description of Trojan or Latin methods of fighting would have been unmeaning for the audience to whom the Énéas was addressed.

The wealth of description indicated in the foregoing has induced M. Wilmotte to assign to the Énéas an exceptionally high rank:

> "Cette date de 1160, qu'on assigne à Énéas, est peut-être la plus mémorable à cet égard, de tout le roman français; avec elle naît et se lève l'aube d'un art nouveau."[1]

Since the Belgian critic regards the Roman de Troie as an offspring of the Énéas, and in many places so close an imitation as to border on plagiarism, he has claimed for the Énéas an importance which, if it were real, would make a landmark of the romance. There is, in fact, a perceptible difference between the kind of description found in the Énéas and that encountered, for example, in the chansons de geste. It is richer, more connotative, more metaphorical, more selective, mor artistic, The telling detail is sought more carefully, and expressed more fittingly: the rude, unimaginative characterization which follows had been left high and dry only in the epic: it had been supplanted in the other forms of story-telling:

> "Ciex Haucebiers fu de si haut renon,
> Qu'en paienime par tout en parloit on.
> Plus ot de force ke XIIII Esclavon.
> Plaist vos oïr un poi de sa fachon?
> Demie lance ot de lonc el caon
> Et une toise par les flancs environ.
> Espaules lees, ne semble pas garchon,
> Les bras ot gros, les poins carrés en son.
> Demi pie ot entre les iex dou front,
> La teste grosse et de chevens fuison;
> Les iex ot rouges, espris comme charbon.

1. Wilmotte - Ev. du R. fr. - p. 377.

Une caree porteroit bien de plon;
Fors Renouart, ainc ne fu si fors hom,
Ki puist l'ocist, si con dist la canchon."1

Though this is caricature,- which, for comic purposes, the author of Aucassin and Nicolette does not disdain to use,- it represents the serious, bald, inartistic conception of descriptive style in the chansons de geste. The figurative use of language remains foreign to the pure stories of war. Then, suddenly, according to some critics, the technique of description changed for the better. This alteration, M. Wilmotte thinks due to the iniative of the author of Énéas, whom Chrétien de de Troies followed. In the Roman de Thèbes, it is true, we find the same beauty of description: of the daughter of Daire, the poet observes that she possessed

"levres grossettes par mesure:
Por bien baisier les fist nature:"

of Tydée, he says finely,

"Le cors ot brief et le cuer grant."

Still, the Roman de Thèbes came after the Énéas: therefore, such excellence was not original. Nevertheless, the Roman de Troie contains similar gems, even if not, perhaps, so flawless. The portrait of the laughing-eyed Troïlus, who

"Par esguardoit si doucement,
Que deliz ert de lui veeir,"2

is sympathetic, an improvement on the colorless enumeration of physical members current in the older narratives. But, the Roman de Troie is said also to have been composed subsequently

1. Aliscans - v. 356 ff.
2. Troie - v. 5402-4

to the Enéas. If it were possible to derive each variation in literary art from a definite book or author, how smooth would the path of the critic become, and how scientific the history of literature might be made! Unfortunately, common-sense puts us on our guard against this "easiest way." The source of the progress of description must be looked for, not in the Enéas, but in the changing conditions of literary workmanship, in the transformation of the reading public, in the individual qualities of the writers. Given an imaginative poet like Chrétien, and all that he requires for the expression of his personal gifts is an encouraging environment. The romances were composed for reading, and not for recitation. Literary merits no longer went begging, but received perpetuation. The audience was appreciative of the subtler qualities. Hence, we find that the nature of the chansons de geste is undergoing a development identical with that of the Breton stories or the antique cycle,- though somewhat less lavishly, less brilliantly. The portrayal of Berte, lost in the woods, is full of an emotional power of description not inferior to anything in the Enéas or Thèbes:

"Par le bois va la dame, qui grant
paour avoit;
Ce n'est pas grant merveille se
li cuers li doloit,
Com cele qui ne set quel part
aler devoit.
A destre et à senestre moult
souvent regardoit,
Et devant et derriere, et puis
s'arrestoit.
Quant s'estoit arrestée, moult
tendrement ploroit,

Lors s'assiet souz un arbre,
car li cuers li falloit,

Ses très beles mains blanches
moult souvent detordoit."[1]

It is hardly probable that the Roman d'Énéas awakened such enthusiastic imitation among French and Anglo-Norman poets, among writers of antique romances, of Breton romances, of Byzantine romances, of chansons de geste as to revolutionize literary art. Moreover, nobody knows the exact date of the Énéas, nor the relative position in time which it occupied with regard to the other romances. If it is the earliest of the courtly romances, notable for their combination of fighting, enchantment, love, and medieval description, it can still have little more than its own personal value, since it was not as popular nor influential as Troie or Alexandre or Chrétien's books, and called forth little direct imitation. It did not suggest the ancient cycle as a romantic theme, for Albéric had done that long before the Énéas could have been thought of.

Like the rest of the romances, the Énéas is written in verses of eight syllables. This fact would seem to be an indication of the comparative lateness of its composition. Having the majestic hexameters of Virgil in front of him, what could have caused the author to adopt the short, undignified measure of the Arthurian stories unless it were the prevalence of that form in the kind of romance which he intended to write? Surely, he could not hope to rival the original with the disadvantage under which he labored because of his voluntary choice. He might have employed the decasyllable of the Chanson de Roland,

1. Berte aus grans piés - ed. by Aug. Scheler - 1874 - v. 744 ff.

which in spite of its rudeness, breathed seriousness and gravity: or, even better, he might have taken the twelve-syllabled verse previously used in the Pèlerinage de Charlemagne à Jérusalem. In either case, he would have strengthened his translation or imitation,- whichever he meant it to be. Whenever we recollect, however, that more than half of the poem is undisguised invention on the part of the author, and that his least desire seems to be to approximate Virgil in theme or in language, we can understand how slightly he must have valued an ample metre of stately tone. Unless we are willing to accept him for a surprising genius hidden by his own modesty and the jealousy of contemporaries, we must assume that he was following the fashion in most things, and not creating it: that he was sentimental because sentimentality had been received with favor before him; that he used the octosyllable because it had been successful in profane works before the appearance of his poem. Of course, it is possible that he was not aware of the dignity of Virgil's epic: that he might have been copying an epitome or an adaptation. This theory would be precarious, no doubt, in view of the fondness for Virgil in the Middle Ages. But an examination of both works makes it practically untenable:

> "La description de la tempête et les plaintes d'Ève dans Virgile sont assez exactement reproduites par le trouvère, et nous pourrions citer plusieurs vers qui traduisent fidèlement le texte latin."[1]

The reason for assigning the Énéas to an earlier period than Chrétien's works has been of a double character. In

1. Pey - Énéas - p. 5.

the first place, Heinrich von Veldeke translated the French work into German. How Heinrich is presumed by some to have begun his translation as early as 1155. Consequently, the French poem must have seen the light in that year, at the latest. According to Gaston Paris, it was written

> "dans l'Ile-de-France vers 1155, où l'Énéide a été traitée à peu près de même façon que la Thébaïde l'avait été dans le roman de Thèbes. Ici les descriptions magnifiques, les récits de combats, mais surtout les scènes d'amour, avec des monologues et dialogues subtils, dans le goût courtois, quoique avec d'étranges grossièrtés, se donnent encore plus librement carrière."1

Yet, writing more recently, Dr. Voretzsch states, in his mention of Heinrich's Eneide:

> "Der erste teil des gedichts ist von 1174, der zweite zwischen 1184 und 1190 entstanden:"2

and he himself is inclined to locate the Énéas in the year 1160. From this, it would at least appear that Heinrich is no proof of the priority of the Eneas over Chrétien's romances or over the antique cycles of Thèbes and Troie. The second method for determining the date consists of an examination of other stories, with reference to their borrowings from the Aeneas-legend and their imitations of the phraseology and situations of the Énéas. To the unprejudiced mind, free from the enthusiasm of a supposed discovery, the arguments adduced might appear to prove as well the opposite of what they allege. In Chrétien's Érec, reference is made to Lavinia (v. 5891-5893), and to Aeneas and Dido (v. 5337-5346). In his Cligès (v. 5299-5301), Helen and Paris are spoken of: as also, in Érec (v. 5343-5345). Förster considers these passages as dependent on the Roman d'Énéas:

1. Paris - Esq. - p. 108.
2. Voretzsch - Alt[illegible]

but Emecke, with as much reason, queries why they cannot have been taken from Virgil himself.[1] Wilmotte derives the origin of Chrétien's treatment of the sentimental in Cligès from the Énéas: though why it might not have come from other sources is not clear. In addition, he sees a conscious copying of the Énéas in Cligès, and compares several selections in the two poems:

Énéas, 1255-6:

"--Ne puet guarir, si se demeine
Molt trait la nuit et mal et peine."

id. 1270-71:-

"De mortel rage estoit esprise,
Molt l'angoissoit li feus d'amor."

Cligès, 875-882:

"--que la demeisele demeinne.
Tote nuit est an si grant painne.
Qu'ele ne dort ne ne repose.
Amors li a el cors anclose
Une tançon et une rage
Qui mout li trouble son corage
Et qui si l'angoisse et destraint
Que tote nuit plore et se plaint."[2]

These resemblances may, to be sure, be the result of the use of a rather conventional vocabulary or of a common source. Erec's robe was fashioned by four fairies: but, as there are three fairies in the Énéas, Chrétien must have borrowed his image from that romance. If the general opinion were not emphatic in placing the Roman d'Énéas before Chrétien, it might be as easy to prove that its author copied the great romantic novelist,

1. cf. Emecke - Chret. - p. 9 ff.
2. cf. Wilmotte - Ev. du r.-p. 364.

rather than that the reverse was true. Yet, Chrétien's literary habits strengthen the presumption that he owes something to the Énéas, though generally non-essentials, and not the excellences which have made him famous. Besides the fairy robe taken from the Énéas, he has clipped from the Roman de Thèbes the figurative representation of the four arts; from the Roman de Troie the precious stones of this same description, and the fur of the barbiolettes; and made other excerpts from various works. The contribution of the Énéas to Chrétien's romances, though slight, is undoubted. But it produced no revolution either in the art of Chrétien or in that of his contemporaries.

The influence of the Roman d'Énéas appears to have been far below that of Troie or Alexandre. Occasionally, as in Marie de France's Prologue (v. 28) and in Lanval (v. 584), there are allusions pointing to the romance:[1] but they are neither long nor frequent. Nine manuscripts have been preserved: but the accompanying conditions are such as to detract from the notion that it was widely loved for its own sake. In most of them, it formed part of another story, such as the Brut, the Roman de Troie, Thèbes. Undoubtedly, the popularity of other stories tended to keep it in the background. Perhaps, also, its very simplicity and comparative unity, which we regard as one of its chief merits, militated against it among medieval readers, fond of constant variety and mere length.

1. cf. Salverda de Grave - Énéas - p. XXIV, Introd.

The Roman d'Alexandre is twice, and the Roman de Troie three times, as long. Even in its prose form, it enjoyed a more limited vogue than several other romances of the antique cycle.

The authorship of the Énéas is in as much doubt as the date of its composition. Externally, in so far as the language and the use of particular phrases are concerned, it might well be the work of Benoît de Sainte-More. It has the Norman peculiarities of the Roman de Troie, and repeats almost without alteration some of its lines. Internally, in its poetic devices, in its treatment of the love-theme, in its catalog of names, in its interest in tombs, and in other devices, it parallels Troie. That one man may have composed both romances is possible: that the one preceded the other, is, of course, certain. The consensus of opinion among critics seems to be in favor of priority in date for the Énéas, and against Benoît as its author. For the purposes of this study, the settlement of these questions is not vital. The works themselves exist: and it is known about when they were written. If an effort were here being made to classify the writers according to their contributions to literature, or to grade the romances in the order of their merit, some answer to many doubtful points would be obligatory. But such are not the aims of this ~~paper~~ study. What it is attempting to show is how the novel started, what modifications it underwent as a literary form, approximately when important divergences in content and form occurred, why it progressed in one direction rather than another.

Among the romances based on classical subject-matter may be mentioned Li hystore de Julius Cesar in prose, by Jean de Thuin, a writer of the thirteenth century. Here, too, a Latin subject has been made the vehicle of medieval customs and manners, and of an elaboration of love-scenes, only hinted at in Lucan's Pharsalia, its principal source.

> "Manches ist der eigenen Phantasie des Verfassers entsprungen, so die Schlachtenschilderungen und die umständliche Erzählung des Liebesverhältnisses zwischen Caesar und Cleopatra---."[1]

Curiously enough,- and showing, as Gaston Paris thinks[2], how hard it was at first to become accustomed to the reading of prose,- Jacques de Forest, about the year 1250, took hold of Thuin's story and turned it into verse. Along with the great romances already described, were composed shorter stories, lais, contes, on Pyramus and Thisbe, Narcissus, Orpheus, to which attention will be called later. In addition, the Roman d'Éracle, by Gautier d'Arras, has often been included in the antique cycle: but, since it deals with an entirely Oriental plot, historically located six hundred years after Christ, the mere fact that it bears a Roman name should not determine the category to which it belongs in point of content. It is a Byzantine, not a classical, romance.

1. Demedde - Ep. Stof. - p. 58.
2. Paris - Esq. - p. 177.

The classical romances form one of the first divergences from the chansons de geste. They have more in common with the latter than the Arthurian tales. More of the genuine spirit of war is found in them. Their method is a compound of the French chansons and the Latin versions of classical epic. They are not problem-novels, like Chrétien's stories, but plain narrations of purposeful conflicts embellished by medieval description and sentimentality. That most of them, like Troie and Enéas, also made use of the favorite tools of Arthurian romance is certain. But they were written rather in the epic manner. They tried to keep up the historical illusion. The chansons de geste, specializing in the deeds of national heroes, suggested the richness of the material of the past. The educated circles, for whom the romances were composed, required emphasis on other than epic qualities. The poets themselves,- and it is to be noted that the earliest, conscious artistic poets in the long story were the romancers,- chose the octosyllable as their medium of expression, because, like the Elizabethan playwrights in their preference for the regular dramatic blank-verse, they recognized its superiority over the lumbering epic measure.

Everything points to the conclusion that the classical romances constituted a premeditated alteration of story-telling methods. Something distinct from the epic system was thought essential, just as in the French drama, tragedy for a long time was allowed to retain its poetic form while comedy came more and more to be written in prose. Once established

as the proper mode for non-epic composition, the eight-syllabled verse became the typical metre for the classical and Breton romances, the Byzantine novels, the lais, the dits, the fabliaux, the Roman de Renart, the Roman de la Rose: for all that was not chanson de geste. By the end of the twelfth century, the epic had a consecrated, immutable form, originally fashioned for recitation, and later maintained as a tradition. The romances had a reading-public in mind and employed a verse-measure not so far removed from prose. Had they appeared before the day of Aliénor and of Marie de Champagne, they would undoubtedly have resembled the regular chansons de geste even more closely than the Roman de Thèbes and the Roman d'Alexandre resemble them. Receiving their initial impulse from the sole popular, narrative type of fiction, the chansons de geste, they stand for an enrichment of subject-matter and an improvement in style. They contributed to the development of the novel that which later became an essential in the narrative form destined for reading,- namely extended description. Where the chansons de geste merely related happenings, the classical romances added localities, pictures, portraits. In the Roman de Troie, hundreds of lines[1] are employed in the presentation of a series of personal miniatures. The romans bretons went a little further, and made incident and description subsidiary to psychological study.

1. cf. Troie, l. 5093-5582.

B.- The Breton Romances.

While some writers were specializing in warlike narration, and some in a mixture of combat, the marvellous, and the sentimental, with the first element as the causal motive, others were bringing out more distinctly the love-theme, though still using the same box of colors as the rest. We might represent the situation graphically by imagining three painters of different temperaments at work on the same subject,- let us say, a knight rescuing a maiden near an enchanted fountain. The first artist, absorbed in the treatment of battles, outlines the girl and the fountain in thin, flat colors, but gives a glaring brilliance to the charger and its bright trappings, to the rider, his shining armor, his wrought buckler, his heavy lance with ashen shaft. The cavalier dominates the scene: grass, trees, hills offer only blurred suggestions. The second, susceptible to all the aspects of his picture in an equal degree, lays his colors evenly, paying as much attention to detail in the conformation of the fountain and the figure of the damsel, as to the martial appearance of the horseman. The third, immersed in ideas rather than in concrete objects, throws a halo of light about the girl, makes her tell her story in her attitude, her disheveled hair, her flushed face, her bended knees, her upraised head, and converts into accessories both the man and the fountain. In some such way, the differences in the chansons de geste, the cycle antique, and the Breton romances may be suggested. During that great story-writing

period,- from about 1150 to 1300,- surpassed as such only by the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries, the figures in the picture remained constant in the aristocratic narratives. Barons, vassals, knights, high-born ladies, giants, dwarfs, orchards, fountains, strange birds and beasts, Saracen soldiers and princesses, castles, walled cities, lances, swords, coats of mail, wonderful gems, magnificent tombstones, precious cloths, with an occasional market-place and an occasional peasant, were the conventional objects on which writers could exert their skill. Today, they describe statesmen, soldiers, working-people, society women and shop-girls, trusts, the down-trodden consumer, Devonshire landscapes, airships, automobiles, French counts and Mexican señoritas, city flats and restaurants, stock-tickers, palatial hotels, diadems and tiaras, beautiful gowns, department-stores, cattle-ranches, and socialists: the externals have changed, indeed, but quite naturally, in accordance with social changes. What is far more significant is that the point of view of novelists has been completely displaced. It is practically impossible now for the story-teller to plan his novel without previously determining upon the effect he wishes to produce. Sociological and historical interests have invested the novel with a purpose. The artlessness of an earlier age has passed away. Narration for mere entertainment is almost extinct. Novelwriting is becoming scientific. As in agriculture, intensive labor is supplanting superficial, wide ranging.

Yet, in the twelfth century, too, some selection was

made by the novelist. Those issues were emphasized in which the writer took the most pleasure. Out of an epic subject,- such as Berte,- a romance might be written: out of a romance,- such as Gautier d'Aupais,- an epic. The content mattered nothing: the avenue of approach, the fundamental aim, were all-important. If a sensible classification of medieval novels had been made, this fact would scarcely need discussion. Even as things stand, however, it is perfectly clear that divisions and sub-divisions in intent were being formed at the very beginning of the novel. These were not chronological differentations: that is, the rise of one division was not dependent on the decadence or disappearance of another. They were mental, personal differentiations consequent on the interests of the author, or social differentiations resulting from the interests of the audience addressed: and they could, without any incongruity, occur simultaneously. That is what happened. The historical novel began to take shape in the chansons de geste and the classical romances: the psychological novel, in the Breton stories: the bourgeois or "realistic" novel, in the fabliaux. As the cycle antique was the first attempt to describe in the long, narrative form events of the remote past, and must have been regarded as historical,- though actually supplying an accurate picture of the present: as the fabliaux became the principal channel for the treatment of topics related to the populace: so the romans bretons were immediately considered as the most proper vehicle for elevated sentimentality. Whoever had a tale of passion to tell, enclosed it in Breton

vestments. Breton apparatus became a symbol for love of not too innocent a sort, just as, in the modern novel, triangle-plots are most frequently laid in France; heavy tragedy based on jealousy or the point of honor, in Spain or Italy; pastoral or elegiac love, in Germany; the love between pauper and plutocrat, in America. In the romans bretons, the lady steps into the foreground, though the cavalier and the enchanted fountain are by no means relegated to the obscure background. The success of the Breton romances, in turn, was a necessary preliminary for the fruition of the indubitable sentimental novel.

For most people, the term "romance", as applied to medieval French fiction, is so closely associated with the name of Chrétien de Troies as to seem synonymous with it. The belief that such romance always,or nearly always, had to do with King Arthur and the Round-Table is commonly held. Enchantments, sentimental adventures, courtly address are supposed to be peculiar to the Breton novels. Chrétien's services in popularizing Breton material cannot be overestimated: but the truth is that he originated nothing, in the way of either form or content. The legend of King Arthur had become known to French writers through Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia regum Brittanniae (ƒ 1135),- a most popular narration in prose,- and through such French adaptations of the Historia as Gaimar's Histoire des Engles (ƒ 1150) and Wace's Brut, or the Geste des Bretons (ƒ 1157). The theme treated by Wace for the entertainment of Aliénor, the Queen of Henry II of England, Chrétien

took up at the behest of Aliénor's daughter, Marie de Champagne, and presented under different aspects in Yvain, Cligès, Erec et Énide, Perceval, Lancelot. Writing before Chrétien, either Thomas or Béroul had dealt with the story of Tristan and Yseult, a branch of the Breton material,- and Chrétien had imitated the one or the other or both, in the lost Tristan, of which he makes mention in his introduction to Cligès. Contemporaneously with him, Marie de France wrote her Lais, founded on matière de Bretagne. As far back as the end of the eighth century, Nennius had represented Arthur as a great hero, in his Historia Brittonum.

Chrétien, then, was not the creator of the Breton romances. Had it not been for the suggestions of Marie de Champagne, his protectress, he might have taken up the antique cycle, for which he shows a decided inclination in his translations from Ovid: but whatever the sources of his stories, it is pretty certain that he would have written in the vein of the romances of chivalry. His training, his refined tastes, and the circle in which he moved fitted him for the rôle which he was going to play in the history of the novel: namely, that of leader of a genuine "school" in literature. His glory rests, not on the establishing of romance, but on the founding of a new art: the art of conscious poetry. What he said is not as important as how he said it. He is among the first, - if ~~not~~, indeed, the very first, ~~- literary artist in French~~ literary artists in French. He is not His airy, graceful language is a distinct innovation. It is necessary to apply to him other standards of criticism than

those used in connection with most of his predecessors and contemporaries. The question of personality is paramount in his writings. His effects are not due to chance or to the qualities of the stories which he handles, but to his individual reactions. If a list of spirits kindred to his were to be drawn up in the entire history of the French novel, but few names could be cited. It would include D'Urfé,- perhaps,- Mme. de La Fayette, Marivaux, Flaubert, Maupassant, and three or four more. The story is no longer all important. The vehicle and the substance are inextricably bound together: and it is difficult to decide as to which is the more largely responsible for the enjoyment derived from the reading.

If Chrétien did not discover the material of his stories, neither did he invent the metre. The octosyllabic couplet, which had become a fixture in the narrative outside of the chansons de geste, had been handed down to him. That he improved on it, is to be expected. The rather rude singsong of the Roman de Troie, the bald simplicity of the Vie de Saint-Alexis, have become ductile in his hands, fluent, varied, musical. His verse is as different from Benoît's as Racine's is from Rotrou's. In many ways, indeed,- in their command of refined, emotional language, in their feminine appeal, in their preference for topics of a tender character, in their conviction as to the irresistible power of love,- the author of Érec and Lancelot, and the author of Iphigénie and Phèdre resemble each other strongly.

Among the powerful, individual currents which carried forward the development of the novel, the stream of Breton origin is among the deepest and the steadiest. It accompanied the chansons de geste and the romances of antiquity, and continued to flow along after they had practically reached the end of their course. Or, one might say, in the early history of the novel, certain literary mines were worked as indefatigably as the silver mines of Potosí. When one was exhausted, another was claimed, staked out, and exploited. It is marvellous how long a space was required before the writers of fiction became aware of the unlimited, handy subjects existing all around them in the lives of their neighbors. Possibly they saw all this, but could not use it, in the more serious kinds of writing, for the same reasons as those alleged by La Bruyère in explaining the necessity of satire in his own day. It is more probable, however, that the employment of cyclic material was in strict keeping with the esthetic and ethical range of the medieval mind. The theory of art for art's sake had no protagonists: the notion that "beauty is truth, truth beauty" had not been enunciated: the principles of "will","environment", "heredity", were as unthought-of as the sciences of biology and psychology: the doctrine of intense motion in a state of rest, of the terrific battles which a man might deliver in an extremely restricted area, of the worthiness of concentrating the attention on an individual, was beyond the scope of medieval conception. The subjective element,- though by no means lacking in the romances,

1. cf. Stoddard's remark, Ev. of Eng. Nov., p. 17,
"Fiction XX begins with the objective novel; it progresses into the introspective and the subjective novel."

and least of all in Chrétien,- was completely overshadowed by the objective. As soon as the objective material of a special theme,-the "story ",-became exhausted, new pastures were sought. After the national legends had been dwelt on ad nauseam, or as soon as they palled on the audience for which they were intended, or wherever they found an unfavorable reception, the story-teller hunted up other subjects, indeed, but treated them in the same old style. While the national spirit was rampant,- or at any rate, while conditions were ripe for stories of local heroes,- the majority of the narratives were cast in the one mould of fighting and unlimited boasting: when a more courtly spirit took possession of the readers, all the forms of fiction,- chansons de geste, the antique cycle, the Breton romances, the Byzantine tales,- took on a courtly exterior. Everything was cut according to the same pattern. Causes of this kind explain the tremendously large number of works devoted to Breton themes. Down to 1250, in the course of about 100 years,- the following stories, which by no means represent the total,- appeared in Breton garb: Gaimar's Histoire des Engles; Béroul's Tristan; Thomas' Tristan; Chrétien's romances; Wace' s Brut; Marie's Lais, besides those written by others,- such as Graelent, Ignaure, le Cor, the Folie de Tristan; Fergus; Ider; Méliadeuc, or the Chevalier aux deux Épées; Durmart le Gallois; Guinglain; Meraugis de Portlesguez; Torec; Beaudous; Robert de Boron's Joseph d'Arimathie, Merlin, Perceval; Palamède; Perce-forest; Gautier d'Arras' Ille et Galeron; La Mule sans Frein: and the interminable adaptations

The salient feature of the Breton romances seems to be a new interpretation of love. The temptation to identify them with an entirely original sentimental interpretation of this sort,

in prose, some of which were already circulating before the middle of the thirteenth century. When the Breton theme had run its course, a new type of story took the field, and satisfied better the changed attitude of the public, at the same time bringing the novel much closer to our modern conception than it had ever been before. The Breton and the Byzantine romances and the chansons de geste continued to be composed, of course, but they were coming nearer and nearer to the point of disappearance as living species.

The temptation to identify the Breton romances with an entirely new sort of love, foreign to the French genius, but characteristically Celtic, is hard to resist. Gaston Paris, speaking of Thomas' Tristan, describes it in eloquent terms as the striking example

> "de l'amour illégitime, de l'amour souverain, de l'amour plus fort que l'honneur, plus fort que le sang, plus fort que la mort, de l'amour qui lie deux êtres l'un à l'autre par une chaîne que les autres et eux-mêmes sont impuissants à rompre ou à relacher."1

This passionate, sensual, wild, unconquerable love is supposed to be essentially Celtic: and Chrétien's Lancelot gives color to the hypothesis. Certainly, the pathos of Ysolt's lament over the dead body of Tristan is met with, perhaps, in no other work of that period:

> "Ysolt vait la ou le cors veit,
> Si se turne vers orient,
> Pur lui prie pitusement:
> 'Amis Tristan, quant mort vus vei,
> Par raisun vivre puis ne dei,
> Mort estes pur la meie amur,

1. G. Paris - Poemes et Legendes du Moyen-Age - Paris Societe d'Edition Artistique - pp. 139-140.

E jo muer, amis, de tendrur,
Quant jo a tens ne poi venir
Pur vos e vostre mal guarir.
Amis, amis, pur vostre mort
N'avrai jamais de rien confort,
Joie, ne hait, ne nul deduit.'"1

Yet, one must bear in mind Thomas' concluding words, in which he states clearly that he has written a story for lovers, putting into it all that he was capable of:

"Si dit n'ai a tuz lor voleir,
Le milz ai dit a mun poeir,
E dit ai tute la verur,
Si cum jo pramis al primur
E diz e vers i ai retrait:
Pur essemple l'ai issi fait
E pur l'estorie embelir,
Que as amanz deive plaisir,
E que par lieus poissent trover
Chose u se puissent recorder:
Aveir em poissent grant confort,
Encuntre paine, encuntre plur,
Encuntre tuiz engins d'amur."2

Thomas' skill, however, fails to receive equivalent imitation in the Breton romances by other poets. The love of Lancelot and Ganièvre, as depicted by Chrétien, is just what we should expect of the author. The situations are thrilling in their contrast. Out of love for the Queen, Lancelot breaks the code of honorable knighthood by taking his place in a cart and exposing himself to the scorn and ridicule of his companions. At her request, he, one of the bravest of the Twelve and one of the most indomitable, allows himself to be overcome ignominiously in a tournament. Whatever Ganièvre commands, that he does, because he loves her. Such pictures are not common in the literature of the twelfth century, and one might readily

1. Tristan, by Thomas - Bédier's ed. - l. 3080 ff.
2. Thomas - Tristan - ed. Bédier, l. 3131 ff.

be pardoned for attributing their special quality of passion to the intrusion of a new note brought from strange lands. Nevertheless, this wild love in Chrétien but reflects his own depth of sentiment: and that was much more restrained than Thomas'. Again, if we recollect that Marie de Champagne, as he confesses, suggested to him both the "matter and the sense", we shall be likely to give much less credit to the Celtic genius for Chrétien's treatment, than we might otherwise do. As a matter of fact, all the romances by Chrétien are a concrete representation of the code of love drawn up by André le Chapelain with the cooperation of Marie de Champagne. The outside influences, the Celtic interpretation of love, counts for little in the stories. Similarly, what we recognize in Thomas is not a faithful portrayal of the sentiments of a foreign people, but merely a proof of the author's strength in depicting passion of an original kind. Few writers of the twelfth century,- if any,- could so enter into another world than that to which they were accustomed as to render faithfully a different criticism of life. The dissimilarities were always toned down to the level of the writer and his audience. The Greek notion of Fate could not be reproduced by the author of Thèbes: and the Celtic notion of love, if it was other than that familiar to the poet, could not be reproduced by him. It is doubtful, indeed, if any writer has ever been able to paint truthfully the psychology of the past. If Thomas had centered his attention on the story of Phaedra and Hippolytus,

he would in all likelihood have made it the vehicle for passion of the same degree of violence as is exhibited in his Tristan. The honor resulting from the representation of love in the romance redounds to the personal credit of Thomas and not to the enhancement of the Celtic reputation for strong feeling. How true this is may be gleaned by an examination of other treatments of the love-theme. Indeed, the words of Dido, in the Énéas, are not much below Ysolt's:

"Heu lasse, ira s'en il ainsi,
que faz ge douc que ne m'oci?
por queil vi onc ne ne conui?
por quei vint il a cest rivage?
por quei le requi en Cartage?
por queil colchai ensemble mei?
por quei trespassai ge la fei
que ge plevis a mon seignor?
por quei me venqui si m'amor?"1

If the Breton style of love was so marked, why has it not made itself felt in other expositions of illegitimate relations? Why is it not as conspicuous in Marie de France as in Thomas? That it was not so, M. Schiött's study of the Lais proves rather conclusively:

"Les rapports du héros et de l'héroïne, qu'ils soient adultères,-----ou qu'ils ne le soient pas, --sont toujours d'une nature simple et affectueuse sans qu'aucun des amants cherche à s'emparer de la suprématie."2

Nonetheless, Marie's personages are Breton, Celtic, and involved in situations not inferior in possibilities to those of Tristan and Lancelot!

1. Énéas - ed. Salverda de Grave - l. 1975, ff.
2. Schiött - Lais - p. 28.

Whatever else the romances of chivalry founded on Breton material may stand for, it is quite certain that, with rare exceptions, they do not typify deep feeling. Their partial dependence on the lyric poetry of the troubadours, their approximation to the light, sprightly sentimentality of the Provençal poets, and their predilection for Ovid, at once place them outside the pale of genuinely strong emotion. The master of the school, Chrétien de Troies, is the first French writer who took a regular course with the troubadours: he is likewise one of the earliest translators of Ovid,- of the Ars Amatoria, the Remedia Amoris, the episode of Procne and Philomela,- and everything in his manner bespeaks a graceful, winsome, but not profound sentimental spirit. As a school, the writers of romance lack the sense of the tragedy of love. Occasionally, as in Érec et Énide, they have hints of real pathos. The submissiveness of Énide, one feels constantly, should have been rendered in heart-breaking language, instead of the pretty and rather trifling accent of court conventionality. A Thomas would have brought out the hidden tears. The rest of the romancers were incapable of it. Mr. Ker rightly remarks that it would be useless to seek among them

> "words like those of Hervor at the grave of her father, or of the parting between Brynhild and Sigurd or of Helgi and Sigrun--"[1]

The suspiria de profundis are not in their province. Courts have never been the home of sincere, emotional expression: and

1. Ker - Ep. & Rom. - p.326

most of the writers of romance were composing for a courtly public, to whom the tone of overwhelming passion would have appeared an evidence of lack of culture and an ignorance of gentlemanly etiquette. There, as at social functions, the realities must be submerged, and the great sorrows or the great joys of the soul must be varnished over with the unmeaning smile of polite society. In vain, then, we look for the truest love in the romances. Perhaps, for similar reasons, the highest reaches of any strong sentiment whatsoever need not be sought in them. To the frequenters of courts, war is not the exciting struggle that it is for the masses: it is not the inspirer of an insane patriotism. The strings that pull the puppets are visible to those behind the scenes. Struggles which strike the casual spectator as the effect of mighty forces are, to the initiated, simply the result of petty grievances or ridiculous accidents.

The common belief that a sudden revolution in the conditions of national sentiment had taken place is probably erroneous in part. The chansons de geste were contemporaneous with the romances. Between 1100,-when the earlier epics appeared,- and 1150 or 1160,- when the antique and the Breton stories were in their zenith,- the political situation of the higher classes was identical. Even before the efflorescence of the chansons de geste, the monarchical spirit, which they are supposed in large measure to represent, had given way to feudal sentiment.

> ""A l'intérieur du royaume français, une révolution dynastique venait de s'accomplir (987). Elle n'a point inauguré, à proprement parler, une ère nouvelle. L'autorité royale était depuis longtemps ruinée; l'Église et la Féodalité, toutes-

> puissantes. Hugue Capet, choisi et couronné par un archévêque de Reims, n'était qu'un baron, investi du titre de roi et de la prérogative royale, mais incapable d'en jouir effectivement ailleurs que sur son domaine propre."1

Strangely enough, if history has been written correctly, the monarchical aspirations, instead of being on the wane during the time that Benoît, Chrétien, Gautier d'Arras, Marie de France were engaged in their literary labors, arrogated more power to itself, and from the coronation of Louis VI in 1108 down to Louis XIV in the seventeenth century, the monarchy grew in strength, and the feudal lords lost. To oppose the Breton romances to the chansons de geste as indicative of a transformation in the general social order is, therefore, too much like forming a theory and then making the facts fit it. Moreover, among the most important of the chansons de geste are those thoroughly imbued with the feudal doctrines: Renard de Montauban, Girard de Roussillon, Huon de Bordeaux, Raoul de Cambrai, the cycle of the Lorrains, and many others. They apotheosized the independence of the barons as over against the king. But they did not take the place of the national epics nor stifle them. The two classes existed side by side. The main current, certainly, was the feudal: but the other existed, too, and could have found as many listeners among the barons and, above all, among the people, as its competitor. The national spirit was just as strong when Chrétien wrote as when the authors of Ogier le Danois and Basin wrote: for there was no interval of time between them.

1. Luchaire - Hist de F. II - p. 5.

The real difference lay in the point of view of the poets, which was determined mainly by their environment, by the interests of their audience. The epic trouvères, composing for a mixed public, treating historic or pseudo-historic themes, and appealing to the fighting instinct, approached their tasks in a serious frame of mind. They had to do with an elemental psychology, for which things had to be made what they seemed.

> "Pouvait-on comprendre," M. Bossert asks, "dans une société ainsi faite," that is, the feudal society of the thirteenth century,- "les anciens poèmes héroïques, où tout respirait le sentiment de la communauté, l'attachement au sol natal, où l'on ne prenait enfin les armes que pour un but sérieux? Où leur préféra bientôt des ouvrages purement chevaleresques, surtout ces longs romans où étaient célébrés les guerriers de la Table Ronde."1

As a matter of fact, both sides could be comprehended in the same epoch by the two different publics found in it. Society was not homogeneous. The space between the masses and the classes was as great as that between the average bourgeois of 1150. The aristocracy for whom the Breton romances were written, blasée and précieuse, fonder of the love-story than of the number of wounds given and taken in battle, demanded individuals, not causes. The feminine readers,- notably Aliénor and her daughter, who brought with them the atmosphere of Provence,- took especial pleasure in the graceful, the witty, the courtly, the dilettante: and the Breton cavaliers became the models of these qualities. The abstract picture was being supplanted by the concrete: the army of warriors by the single knight:

1. Bossert - Litt. All. - p. 160.

the band of heroes by the individual hero. By this is not meant that the Breton romances alone represented an evolution of the kind described, but only that they carried it further and more consistently than the other types of writing.

Several critics have discovered very deep motives in the romances of chivalry. Chrétien and his followers have been represented as expounders of political systems and legislators in the laws of knighthood. According to Daunou,

> "Le but de ces compositions fabuleuses, si multipliées depuis l'avènement de Louis le Gros jusqu'a celui de Philippe le Bel, fut d'accréditer ces expéditions si romanesques elles-mêmes,-"1

namely, the Crusades. Fauriel, discussing the efforts of the Church to retain its hold on the institution of chivalry and to mould it to its own purposes, observes:

> "Ces idées, ces tentatives de l'Église, relativement à la chevalerie, trouvèrent des poëtes romanciers pour les proclamer et les seconder. Il y a dans le cycle général des épopées de la Table-Ronde tout un cycle particulier de romans composés dans ce but et qui portent tous les caractères de leur origine: ce sont ceux que l'on a designés par la dénomination spéciale de romans du Graal."1

It is as if the poets of romance were salaried agents of the throne or of the church, disseminating under the guise of pleasing fiction ideas suitable for the public mind, like, for example, a Fernán Caballero: or as if, like Zola, they were supporting a scientific thesis. The known facts do not seem to bear out

1. Daunou - Ét. des Lett - p. 296-7.
2. Fauriel - P. P. II-p. 331

these suppositions. At the court of Marie de Champagne, which was the headquarters for Breton romances, the principal pastime was the debates on the tender affections,- as it continued to be in her native-land of Provence. There is nothing to indicate that Chrétien and his school were interested in anything else. They hold no brief for the Holy Land: and it would have required a peculiar mind to note any connection between their narration of purposeless adventures and an intent to emphasize the Crusading spirit. They did not lend color to the fondness for kinght-errantry, but rather took their own color from it. During the epoch in which enthusiasm for the Crusades might have been spread among the people, the Breton romances commanded a narrow audience, made up of the very persons who were for the crusades, anyway,- namely the kinghts and barons. It is possible to attribute too much in literature to purposes other than those of art or mere enjoyment. Few novels have fulfilled a utilitarian end. When they have done so, they have been the result of wrongs carried to the point of unbearableness and an earnest temperament which has felt them. Dickenses and Charles Reades are of recent appearance. The twelfth and thirteenth centuries were not behindhand in the scourging of certain social evils: but the <u>fabliaux</u>, though stating the defect, had no thought of a remedy. The idea of serving some useful end was far from the thoughts of romance-writers. Farthest of all, was any desire to exploit the wishes of the Church with regard to the institution of chivalry. The portrayal of criminal love in an attractive form, the unedifying style, the heaping up of

superstitious miracles in which God had no participation, could not have been performed by persons who meant to render assistance to the Church. Even those who were clercs by profession, effectually divested themselves of the cloth when they prepared to tell a pleasing story. So far as Chrétien's works give evidence, it is not even certain that he was a clerc. The feeling of serious contemporary churchmen toward the Breton romances must have been that of the author of Le Songe du vieux pèlerin, who wrote in the fourteenth century:

> "Tu te dois delecter en lire ou oyr les anciennes histoires pour ton enseignement--. Tu te dois garder des livres et des romans qui sont remplis de bourdes, et qui attraient le lisant souvent à impossibilité, à folie, vanité et pechié--. La vaillance du roi Arthus moult fu grande; mais l'histoire de lui et des siens est si rempli de bourdes qu'elle en demeure suspecte."[1]

This advice was addressed to Charles VI.

A still more general assumption is that the Breton romances denote a highly idealistic view of life. The marvellous incidents connected with the lives of the leading heroes give the stories an air of remoteness from the doings of the everyday world. The spirit of faerie hovers over all. Lancelot, brought up by a fairy, receiving from her an enchanted ring, sleeping on a charmed bed, riding over magic bridges; Fenice's use of the wonderful potion in Cligès, by means of which she remains intact from the desires of her husband; the unearthly commotion about the bewitched fountain in the forest of Broceliande,- in Yvain; the awe-inspiring sights beheld by Perceval in the room of the Graal:- these and many more divergences from

1. Le Clerc - Hist. Litt. XIVS - p. 245 - v. I.

the common experience of mankind cast a glamour over the Breton romances which may easily be construed as a conscious effort to mount into the more elevated regions of a higher existence. The adventures of the knights of the Round-Table lend themselves to symbolic interpretation, as was observed by Malory in his Morte DArthur and more delicately by Tennyson, in the Idyls of of the King and by Abbey, in his mural paintings in the Boston Public Library. The personal history of Arthur himself appears to be a combination of the earthly and the immortal; and it is sometimes difficult to separate it into its constituent elements. According to one school of criticism, Arthur was a mere man: according to another, he was a god. Mr. Rhŷs has summed up the contentions in the following words:

> "--it may be granted that there was a historical Arthur, who may have held the office, which under the Roman administration was known as that of the Comes Britanniae; that he may, like Aurelius Ambrosius, have been partly of Roman descent; that Maelgwyn was his nephew, whom Gildas accuses of slaying his uncle: that his name Arthur was either the Latin Artorius, or else a Celtic name belonging in the first instance to a god Arthur,-- In either case, the name would have to be regarded as an important factor in the identification or confusion of the man with the divinity. The latter, called Arthur by the Brythons, was called Airem by the Gordels, and he was probably the Artaean Mercury of the Allobroges of ancient Gaul. His rôle was that of Culture Hero, and his name allows one to suppose that he was once associated, in some special manner, with agriculture over the entire Celtic world of antiquity."1

The romances of the Grail, in particular,are full of material adapted to allegorical treatment. Perceval's meeting with the five angels, who instruct him in chivalry: the wonderful pow-

1. Rhŷs - Arthur.L. - p.47-48.

ers of the vessel called the Grail: the bleeding lance, flashing with precious stones as it is borne through the hall: ought, of necessity, to contain a cryptic meaning far more important than that which superficially attaches to them. Aside from the marvellous, the sentimentality of the Breton romances is said to be idealistic. The love-scenes described by Chrétien are held to represent, not how love actually manifested itself, but how the knights and ladies of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries would have liked to see it carried on.

The amount of idealism actually found in the Breton romances depends, of course, on two points: first, the attitude of the writers, and second, the divergence between the facts of courtly life in the time of the romancers and the picture presented by them. The latter issue really signifies the harmony or lack of harmony between the chivalric and sentimental codes as described in the romances and as positively obeyed by the knights and ladies. If the poets are wanting in ulterior motives; if they consider that they are dealing with fictitious events in a practical way, and without the desire to engage in mysticism of any sort: and if their descriptions of manners and customs square with reality: then it will be just to assume that the application of the term "idealistic" to the Breton stories is not merely inaccurate and misleading, but even useless. A proper criterion for judging their idealistic qualities is the French pastoral novel of the beginning of the seventeenth century. In the pastoral, a mode of life utterly at variance with actuality is set forth. The living persons did

not seek the country: they did not dress as shepherdesses: they did not tend any flocks: they did not love after the manner of peasant-swains: they were not simple in their tastes, fond of out-door Nature, elegiac in their conversation. The pastoral mode of existence is only another phase of Utopia. If the Breton romances are truly idealistic, it is fair to suppose that Scott's Ivanhoe has no historical basis.

What was the attitude of Chrétien toward his work? Did he intend to imply certain consequences not expressed clearly in his novels? Did he wish to point out subtle truths for which his tales furnished the background? Regarding the Cligès and the Yvain, there can be no doubt at all. Both are collections of knightly episodes connected more or less loosely with the principal personage. Nothing in either of them indicates an idealistic attitude on the part of the writer. He gives them for what they are,- interesting stories. In Lancelot and in Éreс, two problems in love are displayed: but Chrétien fails to draw any conclusions, or to suggest them to his readers. That work which seems most appropriate to idealistic expression, the Perceval, or the Quest of the Holy Grail, rouses Chrétien to no heights of clairvoyance. What the Grail and its accompaniments might entail in the way of divine illumination, he misses.

> "As far as his portion of the Conte del Graal is concerned the legendary element is entirely absent. Perceval, the hero, is instructed by his mother in the doctrines of the Church, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, the Holy Prophet, His Death upon the Cross, and His Crown of Thorns. --But those objects which later on become the centres of Christian Legend, Grail and Lance, have as yet no sacred significance. A

> squire brings in a bleeding lance; the Grail appears borne by a damsel and shining beyond the light of stars; but Perceval does not ask the meaning of either apparition."1

Robert de Boron suffers other limitations, though he developes with much care the symbolical aspects of the Quest. His history of the Grail has no intimate relation to Breton romance. If it were not for a few Celtic names scattered through the fragments left by him, it would be hard to see in his account anything else than the sacramental and moral exposition of a subject of christian antiquity. The leading figures are Joseph of Arimathea and Josephes, his son, who becomes the guardian of the Grail. The references to the knights of the Round-Table are few and brief, and do not involve them in the action, since the scene is located in the time of Christ. Robert, explaining how he came by the history of the Sacred Vessel, tells of a Trinity-doubting monk of White Britain, who, in the year 717 A. D., was put in possession of the true account through the direct interposition of the Lord. This book, which was delivered to him after many vicissitudes contained the story of the Grail, and was copied by him. The French poet has left only the story of Joseph d'Arimathie and the beginning of Merlin. What he made of the Perceval is problematic. Whether or not he expanded the characteristically Celtic traits can only be guessed at: and the prose form in which they have been handed down is no guarantee of the nature of the original. It is probable that he used the Breton material merely as a framework for

1. The Legend of the Holy Grail - by Dorothy Kempe - Early Eng. Text Society, Extra series - XCV - p.IX.

the christian legend: for in his Joseph, the helpful Beast, reminiscent of Yvain's lion, and the wonderful fountain are important accessories. Galahad, Uter Pendragon, Arthur, are mentioned in passing.

> "Par le commandement chelui fu engenres galaad. Et quant il fu engenres, n'assemblerent il mie par coveitoise qu'il eurent de nule luxure, mais pour acomplir le commandement de son signour, qui semenche avoit demande a ioseph. De chestui galaad descendi la haute lignie dont li plusour furent saint homes religieus en lor vies--."1

> "Et de chele onction meisme",- with which Christ anointed Josephes,- "furent enoint tout li roi deske la crestientes vint en engletere iusqu'a uter pandragon, qui fu peres le roi artu--."2

Other handlings of the Grail-theme by Gauchier de Dourdan, by Manecier, by Gautier Map, by the author of the Perlesvax, bind the legend closely to King Arthur's Court. The Quest becomes a recognized source of knightly adventures: and the majority of writers employ it, just as they employ the Fountain of Brocéliande, the succoring of hapless damsels, the storming of enchanted fortresses,- as a means, not an end; as a concrete labor, not an abstract ideal.

> "The 'Quest of the Holy Grail' has played a large part in imaginative literature, but the romancers themselves wrote with no clear idea of what that Quest menat. The conception which they have in common can be stated only in the barest outline and implied no more than 'the hero's visit to a magic castle, his omission while there to do certain things, the loss and suffering thereby entailed.'"3

1. The History of the Holy Grail, Englisht, A B. 1450 A. D. by Harry Lonelich, from the French Prose--of Sires Robiers de Boron - re-ed. by F. ~~PJ~~ Furnivall.— ~~2.~~ Early Eng. Text Society - Extra Series xx - 1874 reprinted 1901 - p. 72.
~~3. Dorothy Kempe - op. cit. - p. VII.~~ 3. Dorothy Kempe—

Whenever Gauvain, Perceval, or any other knight of Arthur's Court appeared as a seeker for the Grail, the episode became a simple adventure, without further import. The author sets no ideal before his heroes. Their actions are not significantly influenced by their Quest.

Perhaps religious views are not a fair test of the loftier sentiments in the Breton romances. In spite of the fact that the authors were often connected with the Church, that they quote frequently from the Gospels and use Biblical names, that they make use of the Book of Proverbs and the laws of Moses, they seem to have no desire to present characters moulded by saintly forces,- excepting, in a factitious way, in the case of Perceval,- or brought to repent of their pride, their lust, or their unlawful commerce. Arthur, it is true, is pictured as the soul of truth, the acme of wisdom, a pillar of strength to his people, the exemplar of largess:[1] but he is the one vague figure in the romances, and he exists in most of them by courtesy, and not as a vital power. In addition, he stands for no more than Alexander the Great, on whom he seems in part to be modeled. Is everybody else, however, actuated by nobler motives than those governing society? Does everybody conduct himself in accordance with a code opposed to the common laws of the day? Are the relations of men and women on a higher plane than in real life?

There is no doubt that Chrétien's personages are an improvement on reality: But so are most of the characters of fiction. Selection is inevitable: the thousand and one plat-

1. Cf. Yvain, 6384-6393; Cligès, 310-311, 2187-2189: Érec, 6667-6672, 2060-2068, etc.

études spoken and the thousand and one insipid deeds committed by every man cannot be detailed in literature. The question is: are Chretien's heroes suitable to be held up for imitation before the society of the twelfth century? Are they always generous, magnanimous, impeccable?

Yvain is by many considered the finest of the Breton romances. The characters in it are diversified. There is Kẽn, the scoffer: Calogrenanz, who admits that he let himself be unhorsed, and returned in shame to his host's: Yvain, who steals away to get to the fountain before his King, who had sworn to go, by

"L'ame Øter pandragon son pẽre
Et la son fil et la sa mẽre:"[1]

the Queen, who leaps from her place by the side of Arthur, to listen to the stories of the men: the peasant, who had ears like an elephant's, eyes like an owl's, and a nose like a cat's: Laudine, the variable widow: Lunete, the faithful serving-maid: Gauvain, the fearless, who battles with Yvain, neither knowing who his adversary is.

Where is the ideal of chivalry in this romance? Certainly, the hero, Yvain, is full of inconsistencies. One of the tenets of the code of chivalry required the fulfilment of all feudal duties: yet Yvain steals away by himself after he has heard the express wish of the King clearly to the contrary. Another tenet demanded faithfulness to one's word: yet Yvain breaks it to his wife, by staying away longer than he had promised. Even the Spartan doctrine, "Come with your shield or on it", which was an essential feature of chivalry, had been trans-

1. Yvain - v.663-4.

In 1209 knighthood was conferred on Louis de France in the presence of an enormous number of visitors, and was signalized by vast expenditures for food and gifts.[2]

gressed by Calogrenanz. In general, of course, the men of the Breton romances are brave and eager for battle: but that quality is a sine qua non of the gentleman of the twelfth century. Tournaments are the order of the day: and even strangers came to France to take part in them. Warlike exercises were practiced regularly, as a preparation for life: and the sons of kings took a leading part in them.

> "A ces joutes sanglantes, dont raffolait la noblesse, tout le monde trouvait son compte, les 'folles femmes' qui y affluaient, le le menu peuple qui aimait ces spectacles, et les marchands qui faisaient des alentours de la lice un champ de foire."1

Liberality, likewise, was a common practice. Noblemen were often rated by their expense-sheets. The trouvères glorify rather the patron who is generous than the one who is valiant or good. Generosity was an article in the code of chivalry. The Breton romances were not inculcating in this respect any principles that had become decadent. If they had encouraged the opposite tendency,- prudence, economy,- they would have performed a work of genuine idealism. In 1181, Lambert d'Ardre's son, who had been dubbed a knight, threw handfuls of gold to the crowd of servants, monks, jesters, who surrounded him. At the plenary Court of Mayence, in 1184, an intense rivalry in distributing largess manifested itself.

> "Cinq ans plus tard, le comte Baudouin de Hainaut célébrait la chevalerie de son fils à Spire. Les chevaliers, les clercs, les domestiques, les jongleurs et jongleuses quittèrent la fête, comblés de présents. La chevalerie de Louis de France eut lieu

1. Luchaire - Hist. de F. III - p. 368.

> en 1209 'avec une telle solennité--parmi un tel concours de grands du royaume et une si énorme affluence d'hommes, au milieu d'une si copieuse abondance de victuailles et de cadeaux que jamais, jusqu'à ce jour, on n'avait vu chose paréille.'"[1]

In all that concerns the warlike, Chrétien is at one with the chansons de geste and the romances of the antique cycle. Hector, who through his wisdom and valor deserved to be master of the whole world[2] is fully the equal of Arthur or Gauvain: Guillaume's defense of his nephew, Vivien, or Roland's firmness in holding his ground against overwhelming odds, compares favorably with the most dazzling exploits of the knights of the Round Table. There is, however, a noticeable difference between the knights and the older warriors in their application of the warlike spirit. Ogier, Guillaume, Renaud de Montauban, fight for a concrete cause: for France, the fatherland, for their king, or for their fiefs. Yvain, Érec, Kex, Lancelot, sally forth as individual adventurers, without a goal, and without a mission. This very lack of a settled policy seems to furnish their actions with a veil of apparent altruism which conceals the real motives. Whither do all these valiant deeds tend? Have they any fixed purpose,- and if so, is that purpose located on a high moral plane? Érec engages in numberless encounters: but he is merely desirous of convincing his wife Énide that he is not a recreant knight. Lancelot conquers time and again, and even permits himself to be vanquished: but all for the love of Ganièvre. Yvain jousts with the guardian of the fountain: but only out of a spirit of revenge.

1. Luchaire - Hist. de F. III - p. 368.
2. Troie - v. 7658 ff. - ed. L. Constans.

Evidently, the ideal traced by the romances of chivalry has many complications. It is not nearly so disinterested as ideals should be. Moreover, it is not peculiarly the possession of the Breton stories.

> "Huon de Bordeaux, la chanson des Saisnes, Foucon de Candie /which are chansons de geste/ ne diffèrent, à plus d'un endroit, des récits consacrés aux chevaliers d'Arthur que par leurs décasyllabes et leurs laisses, de longueur inégale, tandis que ces récits sont écrits en octosyllables, rimant deux par deux. Pour le surplus--et le surplus est, ici, l'essentiel--on trouve de part et d'autre les mêmes moeurs courtoises, le même idéal d'amour et de courage, la même disproportion entre les exploits et les sentiments attribués aux héros et la réalité toute plate, telle qu'elle nous apparaît dans les textes de pure histoire."1

This being the case, the Breton romances must share with other species the honor of having provided the novel with a more elevated interpretation of the story-telling art. The uncertainty concerning the chronology of narratives written at the end of the twelfth century makes it impossible to say positively that the romantic chansons de geste were inspired by the Breton stories. It is probable that they were: it is even more probable that they arose through the very causes which gave the tone to the other romances of chivalry. However that may be, the latter had no monopoly in the so-called "ideal" portrayal of life.

It is in the treatment of love that the idealistic conception is said to be most faithfully and most undeniably carried out. According to M. Bédier,

> "Alors, en regard des fabliaux qui, à la même époque, se confinent dans leur étroit

1. Wilmotte - Ev. du R. - p. 325

> réalisme, les Romans de la Table-Ronde nous ouvrent la porte d'ivoire du monde romantique. Dans un décor enchanté, au milieu d'un univers inconsistant et charmant, une atmosphère surnaturelle nous enveloppe, très lumineuse et très douce."1

Before yielding to this general impression, it is worth while to scrutinize the works themselves. Do they consistently favor a well-defined code of sentimental conduct? If an author like Chrétien believes in an ideal, it is reasonable to assume that he will throw all the strength of his art toward it: that he will make clear his intentions in an unmistakeable manner: that he will so twist the facts of reality as to give point to his thesis. Thus, the pastoral novel slights the attractions of the city altogether, or mentions them in unfavorable contrast with rural pleasures: the religious story depreciates the joys to which the flesh is heir: the socialistic novel of perfectibility dismisses with scant respect the sledge-hammer evidence of the centuries as to the weakness of man and his inability to progress in the direction of unselfishness. If Chrétien or any other Breton romancer has a conscious ideal, we should expect him to adhere to it not in one book only, but in all.

Let us suppose, with the majority of critics, that Chrétien's ideal is an overruling passion which knows no bounds, admits no obstacles, and, in the event of conflict, sacrifices parents, relatives, secular law, and the commandments of God. Applying this ideal, we find that Lancelot fulfils the requirements. A loyal knight, he gives himself over body and soul

1. Bédier - Fab. - p. 325.

to Ganièvre, at the risk of public shame and future torment. With her, love is a caprice: with him, a form of worship. Having submitted to the disgrace of the cart, to the scorn of being pointed out as a fainéant, he reaches the lowest rung of knightly degradation when he consents to appear as her champion, after she has been accused of adultery with Kei. As a matter of fact, she had sinned with Lancelot. To her, public opinion was of some import.

> "La tête haute, le regard clair, Gueniêvre
> va chercher Lancelot pour lui demander
> devant toute la cour d'être son champion."[1]

With the knowledge of his own guilt and the lie he is defending,- deaf to all his vows of chivalry,- he enters the lists and triumphs for the wrong. Evidently, the ideal of knighthood has been shattered. But the ideal of love, as the mightiest of forces, has come out victorious. The Provençal "service d'amour" has received a splendid embodiment. The absolute power of the woman over the man has been proved conclusively, even in the most minute details. When Lancelot hesitates on being ordered to take his place in the cart, and allows it to pass him by two paces, Ganièvre indicates her scorn for such love as this, which can vacillate for even a moment. The thrall in which she holds him is aided by her beauty, before which,- as she delivers herself up to him,- Lancelot kneels in adoration as of a "corps saint". The Provençal system of love could go no further. How powerfully Chrétien's presentation affected the minds of men, Dante illustrates in his story of Francesca and Paolo. Yet,

1. Borodine - Chrét. - p. 184

Dr. Voretzsch concludes that this trend of thought was not agreeable to the French poet.

> "Aber dass eine tendenz dieser art dem verfasser des Erec und des Cliges nicht kongenial war, begreift sich leicht: er hat seinen roman nur bis zur einmahlerung Lancelots (bis ca. 6165) geführt und den abschluss Godefroi de Leigni überlassen."1

Myrrha Borodine conjectures that the real reason for the fragmentary condition in which Chrétien left the Lancelot may be sought in a misunderstanding between him and Marie de Champagne, who was probably something more than his patroness. Whatever the truth, some students are inclined to regard the type of sentiment in Lancelot as only slightly characteristic of Chrétien's ideal. The rest of his works support this notion. In Érec and Énide, the heroine has no such influence as Ganièvre. Because she has wounded Érec's pride, she is treated as a slave and forbidden even to warn him when he is in danger. Instead of showing a courtly bearing toward her, he acts the boor. Énide remains the faithful wife, but transgresses his command more than once. The Provençal ideal is no longer in force. The woman occupies a subordinate position. She does not order: she obeys. Érec looks upon Énide much as a bourgeois looks upon his wife. Cligès presents still another problem. Neither sex has the ascendancy. Soredamor is as ardent as her lover, Alexandre: Fénice is as passionate as her suitor, Cligès. Each commands and obeys, in turn, just as in the lais of Marie de France. In Yvain, the wife rules; but, after marriage, the husband is lukewarm. The wife has strength of character, an

1. Voretzsch - Altf. Lit. - p. 316.

indomitable will: the husband is weak. His love is not strong enough to keep him by her side, nor to cause him to remember his promises. Perceval, likewise, obeys the call of adventure and the homesickness for his mother, and deserts Blancheflour. The woman is sacrificed to several duties. Love is shallow, and at the mercy of every wind that blows.

Where, now, is the idealistic representation of the love-theme in Chrétien de Troies? Which one of the many aspects viewed by him is the ideal? Does he favor the dominance of the woman? What, then, is to be done with Énide? Does he speak for the supremacy of the man? What is to be done with Lancelot? Does he believe in the reciprocal, equal love of both sexes? What is to be done with Perceval?

Apparently, Chrétien had no desire to grant the preference to one sort of love over another. His interest lay in love, as a general element of the story. It may be said that he pictured love in a particular fashion; as something distinct from the rudeness of the outside world: and in this respect, his treatment seems idealistic. The language used by his lovers is cultivated, refined, often précieux: their dallying with sentimental ideas is light, sophisticated, and not too emotional. Some of the dialogues would not be out of place at the Hôtel de Rambouillet, in the time of Voiture. But, strangely enough, we encounter exactly the same language and the same ideas in the Roman de Troie, the Énéas, the Éracle, the Ile et Galeron, the Escoufle. It is, therefore, to be presumed that all are idealistic in so far as love is concerned, and that the

Breton romances have blazed no new path. Yet, if we knew a little more about the expression of the people with whom Chrétien and the others came in contact, we might be justified in asserting that the courtly, elevated style of the romances is not a thing apart from reality, but thoroughly representative of it. Some of the fabliaux are written in precisely the same tone:

"Pour remembrer et pour retraire
Les biens qu'on puet de femme traire
Et la douçor et la franchise--."[1]

What has probably been chiefly responsible for the conviction that the Breton romances have to do with imaginative conditions is the conspicuousness of the marvellous element. The groundwork lacks a firm foundation. If, however, the enchantments are excepted from these works, stories not unlike reality of a courtly kind are the result. Take away from Yvain the fountain of Broceliande, the magic ring which renders him invisible, the humane lion, the giant, Harpias de la Montaingüe, the Castle of the Embroidering White Slaves, and nothing "idealistic" remains in the story. The fighting is in accordance with the descriptions of tournaments handed down by the chronicles: the trappings and the dress are contemporary: the manners and customs are of the twelfth century. Even the speech may be presumed to be that of the ladies and gentlemen of the court of Marie de Champagne or of Aliénor, her mother: and is a repetition of that employed by the author of Enéas. Undoubtedly there is some affectation in the lines quoted below, but

1. Le Vair palefroi - v. 29 - Montaiglon et Raynaud - Fabliaux, I, 3.

in all likelihood no more than in the stereotyped exaggerations of the précieuses or in the mannerisms of the ultra-fashionable society of today:

"'Mes seez vos, si nos coũtez
Comant vos estes si doũtez.'
'Dame', fet il, 'la force vient
De mon cuer, qui a vos se tient;
Aũ cest voloir m'a ñes cuers mis.'
'Et qui le cuer, biaũs douz amis?'
'Dame, mi oel.' 'Et les iaũz qui?'
'La granz biaũtez, qui aũ vos vi.'
'Et la biaũtez qu'i a forfet?'
'Dame, tant que amer me fet.'
'Amer? Et cui?'- 'Vos, dame chiere.'
'Moi?'- 'Voire.'- 'Voir? aũ quel meniere?'
'Aũ tel, que graindre estre ne puet--.'"[1]

Similar playing with sentimental ideas is found in the Énéas:

"'Anna, ge muir, ne vivrai, suer.'
-Quei avez donc?- 'Falt me li cuer,
nel puis celer, jo aim!.- Et cui?-
Gelte dirai; par fei, celui'--
et quant ele le dut nomer,
si se pasma, ne pot parler.'"[2]

The same method of speaking, taken together with the vastly increased amount of conversation between a man and a maid, as compared with the older chansons de geste and other narrative forms, leads to the conclusion that the courtly writing of the latter part of the twelfth century,- whether chansons de geste or romances of the antique cycle, whether Breton stories or romans d'aventure,- was imitating a common language. Why we should feel sure that the fabliaux and the Roman de Renart have preserved for us the actual speech of the masses, and that nothing has handed down to us the speech of the classes, is hard to comprehend. Each type had to address its audience in familiar terms: the noble as well as the vulgar. The vocabulary

1. Yvain - v. 2013 ff.
2. Énéas - v. 1273 ff. - ed. Salverda

and the inventions of the Breton romances are in all probability based on the realities of court circles. The distinction in the literary currents of that period is not between the idealistic and the realistic, but between aristocratic realism and democratic realism. William de Morgan's Joey Vance speaks the dialect of the people: but it is no more genuine than the correct, polished language of his benefactors. Even Lyly's Euphues, steeped in affectation, as it is, represents the phraseology of many of the courtiers and ladies of his day. The Breton romances place before us the concrete life, not the vague longings, of the select society of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In the case of Chrétien and one or two others, the delineation is modified by the genius of an artistic personality. We may expect Chrétien to be a little better than the rude facts: we may be sure that he will choose his data with telling effect. His work is more artistic, more eclectic than that of the average trouvère, but it is none the less based on reality.

It is possible to draw from any of the Breton narratives a vivid picture of the period in which it was written. There can never be doubt as to the country, the nation, or the time. Whatever the condition of Wales or of Armorica may have been in the twelfth century, the poets paid no attention to it, probably had very little accurate material on this head at their disposal, and would have made meagre use of genuine facts, if they had had them. Just as Shakespeare's Cleopatra appeared

in the dress of Queen Elizabeth, so the characters in the Breton romances wore the garb of the medieval Frenchman. It is necessary, however, to study these descriptions with the proper corrective,- namely, a constant toning-down. The colors are always brighter than the real: the stuffs are richer and cleaner: the chargers are handsomer; the cities are larger, busier, and built more symmetrically: the personal habits are more delicate: the armies are more numerous: the heaps of slain lie about in greater quantities: the knights are more perfect specimens of God's handiwork: the women are more beautiful: the leaders are wiser:- everything and everybody are improvements on the actual, either in the way of perfection or in the way of villainy. But, the right reduction having been made, the picture remains true to life. The use of the comparative or of the superlative is always based on the positive. Érec, galloping along behind King Arthur's hunting-party, dressed in his ermine cloak, his silk cote embroidered with flowers, his stockings or gaiters (chaŭces) of brocade brought from Constantinople, his golden spur, and his sword,[1] is clearly a young French nobleman, and not a Welsh warrior of the past. Érec's return to Cardigan, for the purpose of getting his arms and returning to offer battle to the master of the dwarf is in accordance with the sentiment of the twelfth century, which could not let the sun go down on an insult.[2] The comings and goings within the walls of a castle correspond to our knowledge of medieval French customs and manners obtained from historical sources:

1. Érec - v. 225 ff.
2. Érec - v. 95 ff.

"Li un peissoient par les rues
Espreviers et faucons de mues
Et li autre apartoient fors
Terciaus, ostors muez et fors.
Li autre joent d'autre part
Ou a la frime ou a hasart,
Cil as eschas et cil as tables.
Li garçon devant cez estables
Torchent les chevaus et estrillent.
Les dames es chambres s'atillent."[1]

This conglomeration of falcon-feeding, of horse-currying, of gambling at dice or playing at chess by the men, of primping by the women, of scurrying about of dwarfs and of maid-servants, of the sending of messages by the ladies to the knights of their acquaintance, what is it but a lively picture of a feudal household in the time of Louis le Gros or Philippe-Auguste in France? The historical Baudouin II, Comte de Guines, was the master of just such a castle as this. The welcome given to Erec on his return home, with its noisy manifestations of joy, the running about of retainers, the blowing of horns, the curtaining of the streets with tapestries, the bestowing of presents,- of a golden cup, a shield, a Spanish barb, a sword, a falcon,-[2] may be taken as a faithful representation of the joy indulged in by a medieval baron at the sight of the prodigal.

Almost every detail tends to strengthen the impression that the poet was painting after life, and not in accordance with the requirements of an ideal existing only in his imagination. As soon as one becomes convinced of this fact, the Breton romances take on a color, a vividness which cause them to mean for us something of what they meant for the original readers. In

1. Erec - v. 351 ff.
2. Erec - v. 2329 ff.

The chivalry of the Breton narratives is French chivalry. Indeed, we have no evidence that the institution of chivalry ever existed among the Celts. At any rate, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, they alone among all the nations of Europe,--excepting only the Slavonic races,--refused to adopt it.[1]

1. cf. Guest, Mab., Int. p. XI.

literature,- and especially in the novel,- the consistent development of imagined effects out of imagined causes is a recent innovation. The inclination of the early novelists has always been toward the realistic. The groundwork has always consisted of the facts of contemporary manners and customs. To expect anything else implies a misunderstanding of the evolution of literature as an art. Granted that the Breton stories were inspired by Welsh or Armorican lays,- it does not really matter which,- it does not follow that the medieval trouvères will put us in tune with the sentiments, the mode of life, the genius of Brittany or Wales. A cursory glance at the list of proper names employed in any of the romances will convince one that the range of knowledge is far beyond that possible for the contemporaries of King Arthur, but thoroughly consonant with the learning of the twelfth century in France. Adam, Alexander, Absolom, Anjou, Bilis, the king of the Antipodes, Cappadocia, Carthage, Caesar, Constantinople, Dido, Aeneas, Helen, India, Laurentum, Macrobius, Samson, Solomon, Troy, Thessaly, Tiebaut,-the first lover of Orable, the wife of Guillaume d'Orange,- this array indicates a desire to appeal to a medieval French audience by means of commonplaces with which they are familiar. Exactly the same thing is true of the lais of Marie de France: Burgundy, Lorraine, Anjou, Boulogne, Flanders, and the like are employed in illustration of Celtic,- and supposedly Welsh,- tales. But, apart from concrete description, the Breton romances are instinct with the French notions of feudal relations, of judicial conventions, of private virtues and vices. When,

in Yvain, Landine thinks of taking another husband, she consults her barons.

> "Cette coutume féodale de prendre conseil des barons pour le mariage de leur dame joue un rôle analogue dans le roman déjà cité d'Amadas et Idoine." 1

In Cligès, the fact that Alis has committed perjury in breaking his word not to marry again creates a prejudice against him at once in the minds of medieval readers. The scorn for the lower classes, so pronounced among the nobles, Chrétien expresses again and again, and most emphatically of all in Yvain:

> "Qu'ancor vaut miaz, ce m'est avis,
> Un cortois morz qu'uns vilains vis."2

God, in the Breton romances, is the God of the Middle Ages, the originator of natural phenomena, the best friend of the holy, the One to whom to turn in times of need. Of the commerce of men, they speak in terms of medieval convictions. That a knight must always be brave and undaunted, goes without saying. Next to valor, the highest virtue is largess. Fast friendship among men is a sign of the greatest nobility, which the Crusades in foreign lands,- where, far from their kin, warriors fought side by side, slept, ate, lived and suffered in common,- elevated into a relationship of the utmost consideration. Treachery is, of course, the unspeakable crime. Professional boasting,- so frequent and unconcerned in the chansons de geste,- has become a source of ridicule.[3] Inactivity, especially as brought about by uxoriousness, is frowned upon.

1. Borodine - Chrét. - p. 209.
2. Yvain - v. 21-22.
3. cf. Yvain, v. 592-3: Erec, v. 4434-6; 5923-28

What notions the Welsh had of public spirit and private conduct concerned Chrétien and his followers very slightly. Undoubtedly, he attempted in various ways to create a Celtic atmosphere in his romances: but the best that he could do was to introduce Celtic names for persons and places. It would be hard to find in his whole work a single scene taken from Welsh reality, or a single costume copied faithfully from life, or a single custom described from personal knowledge. The few details probably based on the Welsh, he took from Geoffrey of Monmouth or from some other written source, just as Shakespeare gleaned material facts from the so-called histories of his day. All this is likewise true of the lais of Marie de France.

> "Die äusseren Formen des Verkehrs zwischen den Herren und Damen, die ritterlichen Einrichtungen wie Turniere und Zweikämpfe, das Verhältnis des Fürsten zu seinen Vasallen, das Gerichtswesen, wie es in Graelent und Lanval geschildert sind,--beweisen, dasz die französischen conteors und ihnen nach die Laisdichter unbedenklich in ihren Erzählungen und Gedichten den Mären, die sie aus der Bretonen Mund verhahmen, das Gepräge der sozialen, militärischen und religiösen Anschauungen ihrer eigenen Zeit verliehen. Vorzüglich gilt dies von der Auffassung der Minne."1

In other words, the Breton romances, like the chansons de geste, the stories about antiquity, the romans d'aventure, and, in fact, every type of the novel during the formative period, were novels of manners and customs, in so far as the setting was concerned. In this respect, they stand in close relation to comedy.

1. Warnke - Lais - p. XXXIII.

The three elements which constitute romance,- combat, the marvellous, and love,- receive unequal treatment in the Breton narratives. By far the favorite study,- in Thomas, in Chrétien, in Gautier d'Arras, in Marie de France,- is the sentimental theme. Fighting is not much indulged in for its own sake. The catalogs of warriors, so prominent in the national epic, occupy a very limited space. Whole armies meet rarely. Hector and the Trojans, Achilles and his myrmidons, Turnus and his Latins, to say nothing of Charlemaghe and his battle-lines, or of the swarms of Saracens, have no analogues in the Breton romances. Each knight fights by himself, and for the edification of some lady. Wars of conquest are a thing of the past. The explanation is not to be sought in social amelioration: for the barons were still encountering one another with their vassals at their backs, or were struggling with the Moslems in the Orient. Nothing but the existence of a new patronage can account for the difference. The circumstances in which the poets worked appear to have determined the tone of their stories completely, and the choice of subject-matter, largely. Writers at that time could not throw on the market, as today, the results of their personal inclinations, and feel certain that they would find a satisfactory clientèle. They were as much paid retainers of the nobles as the fighting-classes or the court-servants. The authors of the chansons de geste,- if worst came to worst,- were able to count on the general interest in their heroes, on the sense of national pride, on the associations in the minds of their hearers effected by a traditional, popular familiarity. Any

epic jongleur or trouvère could be sure of an audience and of largess: their subjects commanded attention, even if only through respect and local vanity. In reality, as Fauriel points out, the chansons de geste remained the favorite type of fiction all through the Middle Ages, and were much more often made over for the benefit of the lower orders than the romances of chivalry. Nothing is more natural. The Arthurian stories dealt with individuals practically unknown by the average Frenchman: they spoke of places which had little meaning for him: they emphasized a view of life foreign to him. Satire, laughter, buffoonery, coarse sensuality, naïvete,- in other words, the component parts of the esprit gaulois,- were lacking in them. The taste for them was acquired, not innate.

But at the court of Henry II of England, of Louis VII of France, of Marie de Champagne, the rude, national epics already represented an ancient literature. They could not help being distasteful to royal ladies accustomed to the sights of languishing nobles and the tender beseeching poets of Provence. It is no mere coincidence that almost all the early romances, including those of the antique cycle and the lais of Marie de France, were written at the behest or for the pleasure of Aliénor or her daughter Marie. For the latter Chrétien wrote: for the former, Benoît de Sainte-More and the Anglo-Norman poets. A broader knowledge of the lives of these two noble women would probably make it possible for us to say that they were chiefly responsible for the changes in the content and style of the novel: that to them, more than to any one other cause, is owing the wholesale introduction of the sentimental, which was

to affect the course of the novel so powerfully. Benoît, dedicating his Troie to Aliénor,- then queen of England,- transformed his material into a romantic love-story: Chrétien, composing his Lancelot in accordance with the subject-matter and the theme furnished him by his patroness, was obliged to make of it a story of passion, in which the dominance of the woman is supreme. That the development of the novel was bound to follow the evolution in the status of woman was a foregone conclusion; that this would have occurred somewhere in the twelfth or thirteenth century, is highly probable: but it is possible that, without the encouragement of Aliénor and Marie, the Breton romances would not have existed at all, or would not have reached us in the entrancing character which has served to inspire a vast amount of literature in all countries and a large number of genuine poets. The intimate history of the courts of Aliénor and Marie ought to throw more light on the derivation of Breton material for narrative use than all the theories about the wanderings of the Welsh or the transmittal of Round-Table lore by Anglo-Normans who had occasion to listen to Welsh minstrels. The genuine merit of the Breton stories lies, not in the employment of the supernatural,- which is found elsewhere just as fully,- nor in that of the warlike, but in the subjection of these and other qualities to the purposes of the love-theme.

Brunetière sees in the romances of the Round-Table an inspiration which is "foncièrement celtique."

> "--le merveilleux n'y est pas celui des pays du soleil (that is, of Provence), non plus que le paysage en général;--

> l'adoration mystique à la fois et sensuelle dont la femme y est l'objet ne ressemble pas du tout à ce qui respire dans les chansons des troubadours;--la passion y affecte un caractère de tendresse et de profondeur qu'elle ne présente nulle part ailleurs;--et le tout s'y enveloppe d'un voile de melancholie et de tristesse même qui n'a certainement rien de méridional."[1]

This definition will fit the Tristan, and, among these many romances, the Tristan only. The mystic adoration of woman in Chrétien de Troies,- where it does exist, though that does not happen often,- is precisely the light, surface mysticism noticeable in any troubadour. Melancholy, profound passion,- there is none. The statement to the effect that the marvellous and the scenery are not of the South has little force. Whatever Chrétien has borrowed has been adapted to his own surroundings. If it has not the Provençal color, neither has it the Celtic complexion. His marvels are taken from everywhere,- usually from sources near at hand,- and have been painted in with the strokes of his original fancy. Lancelot, it is true, was brought up by a fairy who lived on an island in a lake: and it may be that in this instance a Celtic legend has been used. But Chrétien states specifically in his prologue that he has received the matière for his romance from Marie de Champagne: and, as he does not present other fairies in his works, it is altogether likely that this suggestion came from the countess. Marie de France much better exemplifies the influence of Breton faerie: and her fairies in Lauval, Tidorel, and Guingamor harmonize more exactly than the romances of Chrétien and his followers with our notions of this Celtic trait. But, even in the lais, the loc-

1. Brunetière - Manuel - pp. 10-11

Add to note 2:

Wace even went so far as to visit the spot itself, though his labor proved fruitless in so far as the wonders were concerned. Huon de Méry also made a pilgrimage and saw the fountain and its phenomena just as Chrétien described them.---cf. Guest, Mab., pp. 69-70.

cal color is scarcely Celtic: and the emotions are neither melancholy nor profound. The later elaborations of the wonders of Celtic tales depend, not on Chrétien, but on the lais, on Robert de Boron, on folklore, on Geoffrey of Monmouth,- on everything that a literary worker in wonders can put under contribution. As for Chrétien, the strange, the wild, the eery, play but a small part in his stories: and they scarcely differ from the exotic in the later chansons de geste. The grateful lion is not an invention of his. Holland[1] gives a long list of such lions, and demonstrates that from the time of Aulus Gellius and Seneca down to the French fables of the twelfth century, they were well-known and often made the subjects of narrations. Moreover, Golfier de Tours, of Provence, had, like Yvain, been rescued from a serpent by a lion, who thenceforth followed him as body-guard: and Chrétien was probably familiar with this incident. The miraculous fountain in Yvain, the water of which, sprinkled on a certain stone, starts an awful tempest into being, was no creation on the part of Chrétien. That same marvel of the forest of Brocéliande had appeared previously in Wace's Roman de Rou, and Chrétien undoubtedly borrowed it.[2] The magic-ring given to Yvain by Lunette is described in almost the same terms as the one presented to Jason by Medea.[3] The aid afforded by Yvain to the king of the Ile des Pucelles, who

1. Holland - Chrét. - p. 162 ff.
2. cf. Borodine - Chrét. - p. 195.
3. cf. Troie - ed. Constans - v. 1677ff.

has to send each year thirty maidens to the two monsters levying tribute on him, is a remembrance of the story of Theseus and the Minotaur. The enchanted cloak which Erec wore at his coronation, asserted several times by Chrétien as occurring in Macrobius,-[1] though not there at all,-[2] is, perhaps, the most striking commentary on the kind of supernatural machinery employed by Chrétien and the sources of it:

> "La robe est l'oeuvre de quatre fées; elles y ont brodé la représentation figurée de quatre des sept arts; enfin, quatre pierres précieux ornent les 'tassiaux'. Il n'y a guere que le chiffre de quatre, devenu fatidique, qui, dans tout cela, appartienne à Chrétien. Car ses fées sont prises a l'Enéas, ou il n'y en a que trois, il est vrai; la figuration des arts est une réminiscence du roman de Thèbes, où les sept arts sont representés sur le char d'Amphiaras, et il en est de même des pierres précieuses."[3]

An acquaintance with Chrétien's literary methods is sufficient to raise a presumption against his priority, even though his contemporaries were pursuing the same procedure. At any rate, the supernatural of which Chrétien avails himself is not distinctively Celtic.

The treatment of love is not Celtic, either. If any fact in the life of Chrétien stands out sharply, it is his relationship to Provençal poetry. His own tastes and those of his protectress tended to make him imitate the style of the

1. Érec - v. 6736 ff.
2. cf. Emecke - Chrestien - p. 10 ff.
3. Wilmotte - Év. du R. - p. 340-1.

troubadours. Along with Auboin de Sezanne, he was one of the earliest to acclimatize the Southern lyric tone in the North of France: and his successors, Godefroi de Leigni, Gautier de Denet, Gerbert, Manesier, Raoul de Hondeng, Huon de Méri, Guillaume, Clerc de Normandie, walked in his steps. But at the same time that he cultivated the methods of the troubadours, Chrétien studied the art of Ovid. He imitated the former in his original lyrics, and translated the latter. Each strengthened the hold of the other in his mind. Ovid's erotic strain offered no contradiction to the sentimental bent of the Provençal writers. On occasions, the two types of love-lyric are identical: and the French poets are not behind the Latin in their sensuality. What appears to be greater delicacy is usually nothing more than the veneer of a disingenuous segment of society. There are passages in the Provençal lyrics which, for pure crudity, deserve the palm over anything that Ovid described. Both the Roman and the Provençal writers reduced love to a science: Ovid called it ars; the others called it the gai saber. It is indeed possible that the Provençal notions were strongly under the influence of Ovid. Herr Schrötter calls attention to many places in Giraut de Bornelh, the Roman de Jaufre, Arnaut de Maruelh, Bernard de Ventadorn, which are undoubtedly genuine copyings from the Heroïdes, the Remedio Amoris, the De Arte Amandi, the Metamorphoses.[1] Whatever the debt of Provençal poetry to Ovid, no question can arise concerning that of Chrétien and his school.

1. Schrötter--Ovid - pp. 41 ff.

> "Chrestien de Troyes, le poète favori de Marie de Champagne et des grandes dames qui se rémassaient autour d'elle à la cour du comte Thibaut, est le premier, semble-t-il, qui ait mis en français, vers 1160, le De Arte Amandi."1

Many of his poetical advices are Ovidian: such as the representation of love as a warrior in his lyric beginning "Amors tençon et bataille".[2] His colleagues, carrying further the teachings of Ovid, amalgamated the Roman doctrines with the French in such wise as to make it almost impossible to distinguish them from each other or from the Provençal. André le Chapelain,- whose sentimental system Chrétien de Troies put into practice,-[3] chose a title similar to that of Ovid's chief treatise, and discussed under it the rules of love familiar to the Southern ladies for whom he wrote. His De Arte Honeste Amandi contains in the last chapter the decisions regarding love rendered by Aliénor, by her daughter, Marie, by Ermengart de Narbonne, by the Comtesse de Flandres. On these judgments, the famous theory of the Courts of Love was erected.[4] Not a few narrative works, including Chrétien's Arthurian romances, elucidated at length the sentimental problems posed by André. Florence et Blanchefleur, Hueline et Aiglentine, Mélior et Idoine, and the fabliau, Vénus la déesse d'Amour, were inspired by him. Gautier d'Arras, who composed at the court of Blois, over which Aélis, the sister of Marie de Champagne ruled, came, of course, under the influence of the sentimental theories of these various Provençal ladies

1. Langlois - Rose - p. 21
2. cf. Schrötter - Ovid - p. 87.
3. Neilson - Court of L. - p. 176
4. Langlois - Rose - pp. 24-25.

and of their expounder, André. It is curious to observe how the family of Aliénor, scattered over France and England, obtained a monopoly of romance-writing: how rarely any important poet with an aristocratic bias remained beyond the pale of their attraction. If it can be said with any semblance of accuracy that Louis XIV gave the tone to the literature of his reign, then it may be asserted likewise that Aliénor, her daughters, and friends, fixed the style, the atmosphere, of romance: and that the poets are often only journeymen, with a certain task before them, set by their superiors.

In such surroundings, the Provençal standards were sure to predominate. The troubadours frequented the courts of Aliénor and her daughters. Peire Roger and Bernard de Ventadour were popularizing there the idea of the Court of Love and the gai saber already touched on by other troubadours. The notion of love as a ceremonial was incorporated in the stories of the Round-Table. The individuality of Celtic passion as portrayed in the Tristan,- if, indeed, that quality was not merely personal with Thomas,- always remained foreign to them. M. Bédier assumes that the Celtic feeling came to counterpoise the artificial expression of the troubadours.

> "Pourquoi Tristan est-il aimé d'Yseut. Pour son élégance? ou parce qu'il a su puiser dans le magasin de recettes galantes d'Ovide ou d'André le Chapelain? Non: parce que c'est lui, et parce que c'est elle. Leur passion trouve en elle-meme sa cause et sa fin."1

But the romances in which this manifestation occurs are few and far between. The vast majority of them combine the apparent

1. Bédier - Fab.- pp. 324-5

idealism of the troubadours and their conventional rhetoric: their antitheses and their Gongorism: their superficial refinement and their complex code of sentimental conduct. The sleeplessness of Chrétien's lovers: their acuteness in the metaphysical debate of sentiment: Alexandre's transports over the shirt in which Soredamor has woven a lock of her golden hair: Lancelot's ecstacies on finding the comb containing some strands of Guenivère's hair: the spinning-out of the theme of two hearts in one body: the frequency of sentimental punning such as Chrétien's play on the words Soredamor and l'amer, the latter of which is imitated from Tristan:[1] the subjection of man to woman: the interposition of out-door Nature in the affairs of love:[2] the melancholy introspection of lovers and their self-communion:- all these traits are characteristic of the Breton romances, of the stories of the antique cycle, of the romans d'aventure: they are not to be met with in any considerable measure in the earlier narrative types: and they are the essence of Provençal lyric poetry. The latter, it is hardly necessary to say, held precedence in the field. If Celtic passion means anything else, it is conspicuously absent in the Breton romances. That the lyric should have had a tremendous effect on the novel ought to occasion no surprise. Though we usually regard the lyric as a specific type of poem, we have in

1. cf. Cligès, v. 543-552: & Tristan, ed.Bed.,vol.I, p. 146.
2. cf. Cligès, - v. 6351-6361.

mind not the form, but the underlying emotion. In the seventeenth century, in which lyrical poetry is said to be wofully wanting, it existed, as a matter of fact, in diverse shapes. The tragedies of Racine are genuinely lyrical: the fables of La Fontaine are often lyrical: the Télémaque of Fénelon is lyrical: Bossuet's sermons are lyrical. It happened in the twelfth century, that the poetry of the troubadours constituted the principal exhibition of lyrical emotion. The writers of romance, borrowing much of their inspiration from a foreign art, did nothing more than the later novelists, who constantly modified their subject-matter and at intervals their technical methods by recourse to the allegory, the nouvelle, the drama: to scientific progress, political theories, economic hypotheses. In almost all cases, when the novel has enriched itself, it has been obliged to assimilate substance apparently not cognate with it. Its development within the bounds marked by pre-existing novels has been insignificant. Even the historical novel has not evolved solely from the historical novel: it owes most of its advancement to bona fide chronicles, to pseudo-historical writings, like Holinshed or Geoffrey of Monmouth, and to popular traditions. Dumas' novels are in only a minor way dependent on the long line of historical novels previously existing.

What Chrétien owed to the troubadours, his contemporaries owed also. The author of Énéas, interested above all in cities, castles, and populated places, gives scant attention to the aspects of Nature, but, on the other hand, in his picture of Dido's anguish and Énéas' remorse at having forgotten Lavinie,

is lavish in formulas and turns of expression consecrated to the Provençal lyric: as, for instance, in this passage:

"D'ilŏec esguarde le vasal,
ele comence a tressaŭer,
a refreidir et a trenbler
sovent se pasmë et tressalt,
senglot, fremist, li cuers li falt,
degete sei, sofle, baaille,
Bien l'a Amors mise en sa taille!"1

Benoît de Sainte-More, of an expansive temperament, celebrates as perfectly as any troubadour, the arrival of spring:

"Quant vint contre le tens novel,
Que doucement chantent oisel,
Que la flor pert e blanche e bele,
E l'erbe est vert, fresche e novele;
Quand li vergier sont gent flori
E de lor fueilles revesti,
L'aure douce vente soëf,
Lors fist Jason traire sa nef--"2

His exposition of the pangs of love are as truly Provencal.[3] Herr Witte's statement[4] to the effect that the Troie and the Énéas represent a more violent love than that prescribed by courtly parlance to Chrétien has no foundation in fact, since many extracts might be cited from the Cligès and the Lancelot, proving that all these poets are at one in their analysis of the grand passion.[5] Indeed, M. Wilmotte considers Chrétien an imitator of the Énéas in this respect:

"Et, j'ajouterai: (that the Énéas is) la source de Chrétien, dont le Cligès, particulièrement dans ses développements d'ordre sentimental, dérive d'évidente façon de l'Énéas."[6]

1. Énéas - ed. Salverda - v. 8072 ff.
2. Troie - ed. Constans - v. 953 ff.
3. cf. Troie - v. 17535-17716; 17979-18080.
4. cf. Witte - Ben. - p. 59
5. cf. Cligès - v. 875-882.
6. Wilmotte - Év. du R. - p. 364.

Gautier d'Arras, the author of Éracle and Ille et Galeron, likewise drew his sentimental style from the troubadours: his description of the beauty-contest in Éracle (v. 2294 ff); his application of the terms medisanz (v. 1777) and losengiers (v. 2587) to certain deceivers; his personifications of Malebouche (1844) and Faus semblant; his antithesis between corps and coeur in several places. The priority of the troubadour poetry is, of course, undisputed. As a formal art and a sentimental science, it had built up its rules by the end of the eleventh century.[1] The literature of the North of France, having to enter on a new phase because of a profound alteration in the social condition of the higher classes, took up as entirely appropriate, the note struck in Provence.

> "La poésie déjà existante se modifia pour se conformer aux idées nouvelles. L'épopée, par exemple, à l'origine purement guerrière--s'ouvrit à des sentiments qui lui avaient été jusque-là à peu près inconnus; l'amour des combats ne fut plus le seul à inspirer les pairs de Charlemagne; la défaite des rois païens les préoccupa moins que la conquête de leurs femmes ou de leurs filles. La poésie lyrique provençale passa la Loire et vint raviver celle de la France du Nord."[2]

Such was the power of the Provençal conception of love that when Chrétien dealt with a theme similar in inherent violence to that of Tristan and Yseult, he qualified the uncontrollable passion, disciplined the sentiment, subjected it to the rules of the South, applied to it the code and the jurisprudence of the troubadours.[3] When the works of the French authors of romance passed over into Germany, they carried with them the troubadour-spirit, and strengthened the original tendencies of the Minne-

1. cf. G. Paris - Esq.-p. 89.
2. Langlois - Rose - p. 4
3. cf. Rayn[illegible] - Rom. S - p. 3ff.

senger.[1]

An examination into the sources of Chrétien's literary material is sufficient to prove that he was not uniquely interested in the Breton traditions, though he realized their novelty and the advantage of opening an unhackneyed store of story-telling stuff. His education appears to have familiarized him with the principal narratives in several literatures outside of the French: it does not seem to have made him acquainted at first hand with the Breton legends themselves. To see in him a collector of Breton lore, a real student of the spirit and the manifestations of a strange genius, is to take him out of his environment and to locate him in the nineteenth or twentieth century. Sir Walter Scott conjectures that Chrétien may have obtained his Breton information from the original sources:

> "It is difficult to ascertain, whence Chrestien de Troyes procured his subjects. The tales may have passed to him from Armorica: but, as the union between Britain and Normandy was, in his days, most intimate, it seems fully as probable, that he himself collected in England, or from English authority, the ancient British traditions, which he framed into romances."[2]

In reality, the only writers who convince us of their conversance with the popular legends of the Welsh or the Armoricans are Thomas, the author of Tristan, and Marie de France: for they possess in large quantities facts not known to their contempor-

1. cf. Bonstetten - Rom. et Ép. - p. VIII.
2. Scott - Intr. to Sir Tristrem - Quoted in Holland-Crest. — p. 9.

aries, and their tone has all the marks of a reproduction,- through a French or English medium, indeed,- of a strange civilization. Just as the author of Thèbes, of Enéas, of Troie, of Alexandre, levied on a mere handful of written sources, and made no attempt to gain an intimate perception of ancient ideas, nor even an accurate grasp of elementary facts, so Chrétien and his colleagues were satisfied with a few writings which gave them the broad outlines of the history of Arthur and his knights. Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae,- preceded by Nennius' short history of the Britons, in which Arthur is mentioned for the first time,- had inspired Gaimar's Histoire des Engles, Wace's Roman de Brut, and a few other adaptations. Each poet added some details to Geoffrey's list,- as, for example, Wace's mention and description of the Round Table, lacking in the Historia Regum Britanniae;— and Chrétien had the plan and the substance for his romances. Besides these, he had at his disposal the Tristan of Thomas or some predecessor of the latter, and composed, himself, a narrative of the Roi Marc et d'Iseut la Blonde, no longer extant, but mentioned by him in the prolog to Cligès. Upon the Tristan, he modeled his Cligès, making the relations of Cligès' parents a pendant to those of Rivalen and Blancheflor in the older work: and from the Tristan, he copied some expressions, as the play on l'amer, already indicated. In addition, he specifically compares Cligès with Tristan:

> "Cist sot plus d'escreime et d'arc
> Que Tristanz li niés le roi Marc
> Et plus d'oisiaus et plus de chiens:"[1]

1. Cligès - v. 2789 ff.

The characteristically Welsh Mabinogion, mentioned by Mr. Rhŷs as the only genuine Mabinogion in the strict meaning of the word, namely, Pwyll Prince of Dyved, Branwen the Daughter of Llyr, Manawyddan the Son of Llyr, and Math the Son of Mathonwy, are undoubtedly older even than Arthur and his knights,[1] since they contain no allusion to those heroes; they certainly have little in commom either in style or in tone with The Lady of the Fountain, Peredur the Son of Evrawc, Geraint the Son of Erbin.

and the accusation of Ganièvre's misconduct,- supposedly with Kex,- is patterned after the episode in which the King Marc discovers blood-stains on the bed of Isolt. Everything points to the conclusion that Chrétien utilized French or Latin sources, and not such as were written in the language of Wales. The hypothesis favoring the Mabinogion as the immediate inspiration of Chrétien's romances is discredited today. These Welsh tales are now dated after the appearance of the French works, and are, by some, regarded as a direct derivation from Chrétien. Mr. Rhys, it is true, seems to consider the Mabinogion as much older even than Arthur and his knights[1] since they contain no allusion to those heroes: but he stands practically alone in his opinion.

Chrétien nowhere exhibits an intimate acquaintance with the Welsh character, Welsh topography, the Welsh tongue. If he had been drawing on genuine Welsh stories, he could scarcely have kept from introducing, in the course of his many romances, some foreign idioms, partly for effect, and partly through inadvertence,- as happened constantly in the German adaptations of French works. There is probably no Welsh name used by Chrétien which cannot be traced back to Geoffrey of Monmouth, Gaimar, Wace, Thomas, and one or two other writers who had dealt with Breton material. Some assistance he may have received from Marie de Champagne and from oral tradition, but that, apparently, was small. In general, Chrétien appears to have

1. Rhŷs - Arth. L. p. 4.

depended on the stock features of Breton romance already exploited before him, on his wide reading in Latin and in the vernacular, and on his own fancy.

Whatever the extraction of the Breton romances may have been, their popularity was largely a tribute to Chrétien's personal worth as a narrator. Outside of the Tristan versions, Gautier d'Arras' Ille et Galeron,- evolved from Marie de France's lai of Éliduc,- and a very few other independent themes, the stories of Arthur and of the Holy Grail were composed by conscious imitators of Chrétien. Some, like Gautier de Denet, Gerbert, Godfroi de Leigni,-Manesier, continued work left unfinished by the master. Others, like Gautier d'Arras, Renaud de Beaujeu, and the Provençal author of Flamenca, were acknowledged pupils of Chrétien, either during his lifetime, or after his death. The later handlings of the Tristan theme, Gaston Paris believes due to Chrétien's lost poem of that name.[1] The esteem in which the romancer was held is evidenced in Huon de Méri's Tornoiement Antécrist, written about 1240:

"Por ce que mort est Crestiens
De Troies, qui tant ot pris
De trover, ai hardement pris
Por mot a mot mettre en escrit
Le tornoiement Antecrist."[2]

Raoul de Houdan, the most notable author of Breton stories after Chrétien, not only borrowed episodes from Chrétien,- as in

1. G. Paris - Litt. fr. - p.94.
2. cf. Holland- Crest. - p. 12

Meraugis de Portlesguez, - but close followed his style, with all its niceties and conceits. Everything tends to prove that in Chrétien, we have one of the earliest men of letters in France: a professional writer, a literary artist, with faith in his own achievements and in the merit of the vernacular:

"Des or comancerai l'estoire
Qui toz jorz mes iert an memoire
Tant conjurra crestiantez;
De ce s'est Crestiens vantez."[1]

As if sharing Horace's feeling of monumentum exegi, Chrétien is careful to preface each of his stories with some personal references, such as the list of his writings in Cligès, or his debt for the matter and the 'sense' of Lancelot to Marie de Champagne. Thanks to these details and to allusions by his contemporaries, it has been possible to reconstruct much of his life, and to determine with a fair amount of accuracy the influences which led him to center so much of his attention on Arthurian material. In his case, there is no doubt concerning the inspiring role played by his benefactress.

This very preeminence of Chrétien, however, was a factor in checking the dissemination of Breton romances in France. What he had done so well; what he had identified so closely with a particular class of society: others were rather chary of handling, as the quotation from Huon de Méri indicates. In truth, the stories of Arthur, though deservedly popular, never had the hold on the masses possessed by the chansons de geste or the fabliaux. Their subtlety and refinement were not con-

1. Erec - l. 23 ff.

vincing: they seemed too far removed from the understanding of the average man. Hence, when they were edited as colportage-books in the fifteenth century, their tone was adapted to the character of the prospective readers. Lancelot du Lac, 1494, Perceval le Galloys, 1530, Giglan, fils de Gauvain, 1530, Les nobles faits d'armes de Meliadus de Leonnoys, 1528, Ysaïe le Triste, became endowed with a more elementary psychology than that of the heroes of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Though, in France and Italy, the Breton romances failed to awaken the general enthusiasm accorded to the adventures of Charlemagne, in England, Germany, and Spain, preference was given to Arthur's knights. In the latter countries, the novels of Chrétien and his school held sway. The German reading-public, in particular, found these stories in harmony with their own ideas. In England, the influence of this group

> "was far more powerful and widespread--than that of any one of the others: nay, we should probably not err, in saying that it outweighed in importance the other three put together,- "[1]

namely, the cycles of Troy, Alexander, and Charlemagne. It must not be assumed, though, that the Breton romances were wanting in influence. If they could not stir sincere affection in the hearts of the people, as Roland, Berte, Charlemagne, the sons of Aymon had done, they were able to make an impression on many minds: especially on the imaginations of writers. Among those who brought this about, Chrétien was, as Victor Le Clerc states, by far the most significant.[2]

1. Rhŷs - Arthur L. - p. 390. S.
2. cf. Le Clerc - Hist. Litt. 14b--p. 436-v.I.

It would require a special study to find out the full extent of the debt of succeeding novelists to the Breton romances. A study of this kind would repay the effort entailed, since it would prove how vital they have been in fructifying imaginative literature, and to what a large extent they make up one of the traditional international themes of art. Dealing with a small group of men in a country of slight political standing, the Arthurian material, by its own sheer charm and the genius of its exponents has come to stand for as much in the minds of men as the fate of the Atridae, the conquests of Alexander, the feats of Charlemagne's paladins, the waywardness of Don Juan de Tenorio. Down through the centuries, its intrinsic romantic value has appealed to genuine poets. In Italy, the sculptured work of the cathedral of Modena,- said ? to have been carved in the latter part of the eleventh century,- and in America, the Boston Public Library, during our own days, alike attest the power of the Arthurian spell. Perhaps the signs of it are less numerous in France than elsewhere: and it is a criticism of some weight to realize that, after Chrétien, no great poet, no great dramatist, no great novelist founded any work of note on Arthurian subject-matter. The very romance of the stories, which so enchanted the medieval imagination, has been their worst modern foe in France. The French temper has changed much since the twelfth century. Nevertheless, the references to the Breton stories are not uncommon, even down to a relatively recent date. While they were at the height of their popularity, they were ransacked

for suggestions, adaptations, comparisons. Amadas et Idôine, of the end of the twelfth century, made use of the idea in Cligès, whereby Fénice, though married, retains her virginity. Flamenca, written in the South by one of Chrétien's cleverest pupils, shows a thorough knowledge of Yvain, Gauvain, Perceval, Tristan.[1] Also, in Provence, the troubadours Raimbaut de Vaqueiras, Richart de Berbezieux, Barthelemy Zorgi, Arnault d'Entrevenas, Guiraut de Bornelh, Arnaut de Marsan, mention Perceval and other knights of the Round Table: a fact which induced Fauriel to postulate the anterior existence of Provençal versions of the Breton romances. In Jaufre, written in the langue d'oc at the court of a king of Aragon,

> "l'auteur transporte même dans le ~~midi~~ midi de la France la cour du roi Arthur avec la scène de son récit."[2]

The writer of the so-called popular version of Floire et Blancheflor was familiar with the works of Chrétien.[3] Guillaume de Lorris,- the next greatest individual in the history of the novel after Chrétien,- knew the latter by heart, and borrowed much from him. Several of his allegorical figures appear to go back to Cligès, Lancelot, Yvain. Thus, Male-Bouche already occurs in Cligès (v. 5226-30): the fancy of the key with which Love locks the heart of the lover is derived from Yvain (v. 4632-4634): the efforts of Dame Raison to turn the young man from the service of Love recall a similar passage in Lancelot.[4]

1. cf. Ker - Ep. & Rom. - p. 359-360.
2. G. Paris - Esq. - p. 115
3. Reinhold - Floire - p. 117.
4. cf. Langlois - Rose - pp. 88, 89.

Later, Rabelais resurrects many of the Arthurian heroes in his narration of the adventures of Epistemon's Ghost in the lower regions, including Lancelot du Lac, Gauvain, Giglan. The Géraud Paragon contains names

> "di fantasia o tratti dall' epopea cavalleresca come Le Peloux, l'Endormeur, la roigne Pampinee, le chevalier Delibere, Lancelot du Lac--."[1]

In addition, the Breton romances seem to have started the fashion of writing novels in prose: and Gaston Paris mentions the Lancelot (/ 1210) as the first in this style.[2]

But, by far the widest acceptance of the Breton material occurred in other countries. Italy, though more partial to the Carlovingian romances, soon developed a taste for the Breton stories, and exhibited a particular fondness for the prose-dilutions. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, several of the Arthurian group were reprinted, one or two going through half a dozen editions. Among them may be mentioned the Istoria di Merlino con le sue Profezie, I Quattro Libri della Tavola Rotonda, Girone il Cortese, by Luigi Alamanni, the Innamoramento di Lancilotto e di Ginevra, by Nicolò degli Agostini, the Libro di Battaglie di Tristano e Lancelotto, the Lancilotto, by Erasmo Valvasone, the Innamoramento di Galvano, by Fossa Cremonese, L'Avarchide, by Alamanni, the Parsaforesto. Indirectly, too, the Amadís novels, which became favorites with the Italian public, were a manifestation of the interest in

1. Toldo - Nov. fr. - p. 86
2. Paris - Esq. - p. 118-9

Breton subject-matter. These were a remodeling of prose-versions of Arthurian legends,- which, it is interesting to note, entered Spain before the Carolingian novels.

> "Que en España al menos las ficciones caballerescas de aquel ciclo (i. e., the Breton) precedieron a las del llamado Carlovingio, queda ya suficientemente demostrado--."[1]

El Caballero Cifar, which, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, curiously anticipated Sancho Panza and some of the situations in the Don Quixote,- though never mentioned by Cervantes,- a prose Tristan of about 1330, El Baladro del Sabio Merlin, Tristan de Leonis, Amadís de Gaula and his unending progeny,- such as Esplandian, Palmerín de Oliva,- Tablante Y Jofre, the Cavallero del Sol, are simply an indication of the manner in which Breton material hypnotized the Spanish reading-public, and thereupon branched out into other countries, exerting an influence on the novel scarcely inferior to that of their originals in France, of which the Spanish works were merely a renaissance.

Why Spain refrained from an extensive acquaintance with Breton material until the beginning of the sixteenth century cannot be learned with exactitude. It is possible that social exigencies imposed a more serious attitude on fiction. Occasional Breton romances, such as the Amadís and the Caballero Cifar, had appeared as early as the fourteenth century, but had been without much effect. To a people confronted by

1. Gayangos - Caball. - p. xvi.

an ever-present foe in the Moors, busied in its struggles toward a position of note in the politics of Europe, the lack of practicality, of purpose, in the Arthurian legends may have been wanting in attraction for the vast majority of readers. The national pride in the heroes of their romances may have constituted a sufficiently large obstacle to the naturalization of foreigners. The narrative verse-form of the French stories may have proved uninteresting to the Spaniards, trained, as they were, to a taste for the simple, the grave, the dramatic. More than this, the literary niceties of the masters of romance must have been antipathetic to a nation at that time in relatively the same circumstances as the French of the chansons de geste. In the fifteenth century, however, Spain was able to take breath. Money was plentiful: a large reading-public existed. The age was in harmony with that of French chivalry. Passages at arms, tournaments, knightly exercises were in vogue. Valor was the quality most highly prized. The fever for adventurous exploration seized everybody. Writers, themselves warriors, glorified the military spirit. The theme of love, in these Spanish romances, though not neglected, played an entirely secondary role: it served as the thread connecting episodes of battle. The psychological interest, which is the salient characteristic of the French romancers, and makes of Chrétien the beginner of the psychological novel, is completely wanting in Amadís and its successors. The difference between the two classes is that

the French stories detail the science of love against a background of combat, whereas the Spanish detail the science of battle against a sentimental background. For that reason, the Amadís romances lent themselves much more readily to burlesque, since fighting, reproduced at too great length, can end only in extravagance, whereas sentiment indulged in, tends to become finer. Other novelists than Cervantes realized the speciousness of the Amadís method after the first bloom had been rubbed off. The author of Don Florindo, el de la Extraña Aventura, (1549), mingled the realism of the people with the so-called idealism of romance. His hero,

> "poco observador de las leyes que constituían el antiguo código caballeresco; casi nunca pelea á caballo y armado de todas armas, como sus prototipos, sino á pié y las más veces con espada de dos filos, estoque, y rodelo, á la usanza de Italia y España. Al salirse de su caso tiene bien cuidado de proveerse de medios para el camino, hurtando á su madre, la Duquesa, el cofrecillo donde tenía sus alhajas. Lejos de abrigar en su pecho una pasión constante, como la de Amadís, esplandian o Lisuarte, se ocupa en devaneos, obsequia primero á Tiberia, después á la princesa Glariano, y casa por último con una hija ó sobrina del Preste Juan, á quien nunca antes había visto--."[1]

Before the publication of this novel by Don Fernando Basurto, El Caballero de la Cruz, Lepolemo, (1543), had presented the same combination of popular realism and aristocratic extravagance. The enchantments, love-philters, duels, tourneys, giants, had given way to the rational, the credible. Through a natural reaction, the picaresque novels, composed during the

1. Gayangos - Caball. - p.L.

same period obtained a more favorable reception than, perhaps, they deserved, either as stories or as works of art.

The Spanish employment of Breton material received its impulse from the French versions in prose, and consequently represents a tradition at variance with the genuine romances of chivalry written by Thomas, Chrétien, and their adherents. German writers, on the contrary, drew on the original sources, and stood close to them in point of time. Just as the history of French medieval literature is largely an account of story-telling, so that of the German literature of the Middle Ages is largely an account of story-telling in imitation of French romance. Not even the epics were free from this tendency: and the frequently intercolated scenes of chivalry in the Kudrun are an evidence of public fondness, though not always of careful workmanship. Occasionally, it is impossible to distinguish the epic from romance in the same work.

> "Sur la limite qui sépare la poésie héroïque de la poésie chevaleresque se placent quelques poèmes qui appartiennent à la première par la forme extérieure et par les noms des personnages, mais qui se rapprochent de la seconde par les moeurs et les caractères. Tel est, par exemple, le Jardin des Roses.--- Les héros sont Sifrit et le roi Théodoric. Et pourquoi se battent-ils? Est-ce pour un royaume, comme dans le Chant de Ravenne ou seulement pour un trésor, comme dans les Nibelungen? Non, c'est pour une couronne de roses."1

The twelfth and thirteenth centuries were prolific in Breton romances adapted by German poets of genius from the French. Elhart von Oberge's Tristan und Isolde, Ulrich Zatzikhoven's

1. Bossert - Litt. All. - p. 163.

Lanzelet, Hartman von Aue's Erek and Iwein, Gregorjus, Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival, Gottfried von Strassburg's Tristan und Isolde, Wolfram's Titurel, Willehalm,- the latter an imitation, in part, of the French epic, Aliscans,- Ulrich von Türheim's Artusfahrt, and a host of minor stories indicate Germany's debt to the French romancers.

> "Romans antiques, romans bretons, romans d'aventure, fableaux, Renard, on traduisit tout, avec plus ou moins de liberté et une liberté plus ou moins heureuse, suivant le talent et la personnalité du poète."[1]

The passion of Thomas' Tristan was rendered by Gottfried with a depth of feeling not inferior to that of the Anglo-Norman poet, and in a form perhaps more attractive, more animated, more variegated. Ulrich von Türheim, with less ability, continued the unfinished story at the request of a noble of Winterstetten, who wished to pay homage with it to his lady,[2] and a few years later, Heinrich von Fryberg carried the romance still further, dedicating it to Ulrich von Lichtenstein. According to most critics, too, Wolfram von Eschenbach's Parzival is far superior to Chrétien's Perceval, which he imitated, though he gives as his source Kyot, the Provençal. That Wolfram knew Chrétien's romances thoroughly is evidenced in many places, two of which refer directly to the Cligès.[3] Wigalois, by Wirnt von Grafenberg, celebrating the career of Gauvain's son; Wigamur, which resembles Lancelot du Lac in

1. G. Paris - Esq. - p. 137.
2. cf. Bonstetten - Rom. et Ép. - p. 282.
3. cf. Holland - Chrest. - p. 57-58.

parts; Heinrich von Turlin's Abenteurkrone, reported by the author as a translation from the French: were, among others, the result of interest in the Breton romances. Toward the end of the thirteenth century, enthusiasm for these stories began to wane. Nithart, who spoke for the masses, represented the winning side, and Ulrich von Lichtenstein, the losing side; that of chivalry and elevated enthusiasm. The number of bourgeois poets increased: they were still under the spell of the courtly writers, and followed their lead in general style. But the subjects which had occupied Hartmann, Wolfram, and Gottfried ceased to hold their attention, As in France, the "people" was coming into its own. What became of the romance in the interim, between its disappearance and its resurrection in the fifteenth century, is what became of French romance. A new kind of story was disengaging itself, assembling itself from among the various forms in which it had previously existed: namely, the prose-chronicle or history:

> "If German versions were made of Latin historical works, it was only for the purpose of 'amusing and entertaining the laity;' the style of historical narrative in these translations became more graphic and full of detail; stories and legends were inserted, and in fact we can trace everywhere the strong love of stories characteristic of this age, and the desire to give to history the form and completeness of the tale." 1

Undoubtedly, in both countries, the chronicle was instrumental in causing the novel to don the dress of prose. When the novel adopted this form, the Breton romances maintained their

1. Scherer - Hist. Germ. Lit. I- p. 263

popularity. Ulrich Füterer's Buch der Abenteur, the history Herrn Tristants und der schönen Ysolden, Wigoleysz vom Rade, Der weisze Ritter, Der Ritter Galny,- one of the most widely read stories in the sixteenth century,- Der Ritter Pontus, maintained the French tradition until the Amadís line supplanted it, though that, too, came by way of France in 1546. These romances of Breton derivation held the field quite successfully along with other species. The following is a piece of specific evidence of value:

> "Der Frankfurter Buchhändler Michel Harder verkaufte nach seinem Meszmemorial--auf der Fastenmesse 1569 von dem Ritter Pontus 147 exemplare, vom Galny 64, vom weissen Ritter (Herpin) 144, von den sieben weisen Meistern 233, von Paulis Schimpff und Ernst 202, vom Fortunat 166, von der Magelone 176, von der Melusine 158 und von Tristan 56."1

The Amadís merely continued in Germany the influence of the Arthurian legend.

In England, where many of the Breton romances were composed; where Nennius, in his Historia Britonum, had mentioned Arthur in the tenth century; where Geoffrey of Monmouth had given the start to the stories of the Round Table in the Twelfth Century: imitation of Chrétien and his school was constant. It never, indeed, reached the heights of the German poets: it took its start later, because of the dominance of the French language: but it flourished nonetheless. In the early years of the thirteenth century, Layamon translated Wace's Brut ,- a fabulous account of old English history. Apropos

1. Bobertag - Romans - p. 43.

of this maistre, whom Tyrwhitt speaks of as Robert Wace, Ritson has a curious note:

> "--in the first place, a double name (the latter not being from the place of birth or residence) would be a singular circumstance in that remote age, and, secondly, Wace or Gace was actually a Christian name; there being two other ancient poets so called, viz. Gaces Brule, and Gaces de Vigne."1

From the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries date two manuscripts of the Welsh Mabinogion,- now believed to have had Chrétien for a model,- Sir Gawayne, Sir Perlesvaus, Ywaine and Gawin, Gower's Confessio Amantis,- consisting of groups of tales based on the Bible, Ovid, Cassiodorus, Troie, Alexandre, Lancelot du Lac, and the Gesta Romanorum,- Chaucer's stories, showing a detailed knowledge of French romances and lais, and containing episodes from Marie de France's Guigemar in his Dream and probably of the lai d'Emare in his ~~Rhyme~~ man of Law's Tale; are an indication of the power of the French romance in England in the fourteenth century. When Caxton established his press, he did not print Bibles or theological works, as might have been expected, but romances and legends translated from the French, most of the actual translating being done by Caxton himself. These were the books chosen by a clever businessman. As Blades observes,

> "the 'prynces, lords, barons, knyghtes, and gentilmen', were craving for 'joyous and pleysaunt historyes' of chivalry, and the Press at the Red Pale (i. e. Caxton's) produced a fresh romance nearly every year."2

1. Ritson - Bib. Poet. - p. 7.
2. Putnam - Printing I p. 129.

From Caxton's house was issued Malory's Morte DArthur in 1485, an epitome of the best of the French tales, in a style as graceful as it is simple, as faithful to the spirit of romance as to the individuality of the writer. In order that no mistake may be made as to his sources, Malory refers time and again to the French Book, and uses names almost as they are found in the original, as Gerine le Grose, Brewnor le Noire, Brian de Listinoise, Elaine le Blank, Isoud la Blanche Mains, La Cote Male Taile, and Cliges, Chrétien's hero. In the fifteenth century, also, Herry or Henry Lonelich, skinner, translated in verse the romance of the Saint Grayl, and

> "Thomas Chestre made thys tale
> Of the noble knyzt syr Launfal."1

The Italian and Spanish method of narration captivated the English writers of the sixteenth century: but even then the French current still flowed on, as Ye noble Helys Knighte of the Swayne, Sir Isumbras, Sir Eglamoure of Artois, prove.

Scarcely any country in Europe escaped the attraction of Breton romance. Yvain and Erec had become Scandinavian property in the thirteenth century: Tristan, the lais, and other Breton material, likewise, during the Middle ages.

> "The Northern literatures in the thirteenth century were invaded from abroad by the same romantic forces as had put an end to the epic literature of France; translations of French romances became popular, and helped to change the popular taste in Norway and Iceland."2

1. Ritson - Bib. Poet. - pp. 52-3
2. Ker - Ep. & Rom. - p. 246-247.

In the Netherlands, the Conte del Graal and Lancelot had found a generous audience: and many imitations of Chrétien, such as the Roman van Noriaan and the Ridder metter mouwen appeared. The Breton romances went as far as Constantinople, where they were retold in modern Greek and became a part of popular folklore.

> "Les héros de la Table Ronde chantés dans la langue d'Homère, voilà certes un exemple curieux de ce mélange de races et de civilisations qui caractérise le moyen âge."1

In 1540, Nicolas de Herberay, Sieur des Essars, translated the first eight books of the Amadís de Gaula, bringing back to French soil the belated offshoot of the Breton romances, which had been transplanted in Spain. Between that date and the beginning of the seventeenth century, half a dozen of the Spanish series became popular in France, not only among the educated readers but among the masses, also.[2] The heroic novels of La Calprenède and Mlle. de Scudéry carried on much of the method of Amadís, though not the subject-matter. The chivalry of the seventeenth century required stronger meat than that of the Middle Ages. The airy undertakings of Arthur's knights had yielded to the unparalleled war-preparations of an Artamène. The science of the heart had become profound, complex, almost painfully refined.

The greatest debt of the European novel is due to Breton romance. That type spread over Europe as no other form had done. It aroused England, Germany, and Spain to a con-

1.Bossert - Litt. All. - p. 177-178.
2.cf. Nisard - Litt. pop. - p. 436 ff.

sciousness of the possibilities of fictitious narration. It brought about the separation of narrative fiction from history. It presented the first modern international theme. It formed the prolog to the genuine, sentimental novel. With its existence, we know that the novel, as a literary species, exists. It is the trunk of that tree of which the chansons de geste are the roots and the various kinds of modern novel, the branches. In one way or another, because of imitation of it or opposition to it, Breton romance must, in the history of the novel, occupy the most prominent place, and receive consideration as the most vital and decisive moment.

CHAPTER 3.

The Sentimental Novel.

As prolongations of the chansons de geste, the classical and the Breton romances had taken diverging paths in subject-matter, but had maintained the same attitude and the same principles of composition. They were always drawing nearer the free treatment of sentiment as their fundamental inspiration. The time was coming in the development of the aristocratic novel when one basic thought should underlie all its concrete manifestations,- namely, the unifying idea of love as its breath of life. The personal relations between a man and a woman were to submerge all other interest. War was to exist for the purpose of separating lovers, or exalting the man in the eyes of the maid: shipwrecks were to occur in order that the anguish of lovers might be portrayed: miracles were to happen merely as obstacles or aids in the course of love. The weeding out of secondary motives, the placing of the sentimental theme in its right perspective, were begun shortly after the popularity of the romances took shape. This procedure had its source in the classical and Breton narratives, and affected the later examples of those categories. It was, in turn, fortified and completed through foreign influence.

Brunetière, in an article on the novel of the seventeenth century, describes the condition in which that form of literature then existed.

> "Le roman français du XVIIe siècle n'a pas eu conscience de la nature ou de l'objet du roman: je dirais volontiers de sa

> destination. Il n'a pas su ou il n'a pas pu, comme le faisait précisément alors la tragédie, sa rivale en popularité, se différencier des espèces littéraires voisines: épopée, tragédie, comédie, satire. Et tendant constamment vers sa définition sans y pouvoir atteindre, son histoire n'est, depuis L'Astrée jusqu'à Gil Blas, que celle de ses tâtonnements ou de ses aventures à la recherche de lui-même."1

Before this period, not only had the novel failed to differentiate itself from other species, but it had known practically no differentation within itself. Today, the novelist has a clear path to follow. If he wishes to present a tale of adventure, he chooses his subject with that end in view, subordinates details to that purpose, suits his language to his theme, combines the individual actions of his plot so as to bring about the proper culmination of excitement. If he wishes to present a historical story, he applies himself chiefly to background laid on with a brush dipped in the country, the people, and the time which he describes. If he wishes to present a psychological study, he steeps himself in those facts of human character applicable to the individual with whom he is concerned, and minimizes all other influences. The writing of novels has become an art, with distinctly formulated rules, and an increasingly complete theory. Treatises on its technique are appearing constantly. Some day, the regulations for the composition of the novel will become as fixed as the rules for the classic drama.

In the Middle Ages, however, discussion on the novel as a type of literary art was practically nil. All stories

1. Brunetière - Études, IV - p. 31.

were a hodge-podge. The best means to an end were scarcely thought of. The method employed was panoramic. Few authors wrote more than two or three books: and they felt under the obligation of stuffing these with their entire range of knowledge. As Lope de Vega said of Gongorism, 'You can make a culto poet in twenty-four hours: a few inversions, four formulas, six Latin words, or emphatic phrases,- and the trick is done'; so one might say of the medieval romances: 'to each one hundred lines, so many describing combat, so many telling of strange creatures, so many dealing with sentiment, so many detailing colors, fabrics, precious stones, a dozen allusions to antiquity, a few to the Bible, half a score of foreign names, two or three proverbs.' The chansons de geste, to be sure, did not stress exactly the same items: the Byzantine stories substituted a handful of other elements. But, by and large, that was the character of story-telling down to recent days. The conglomerate style was the only style considered possible. Artistically, the simpler chansons de geste may be regarded as superior to the romances, in that they sustained the highly important principle of unity of interest. Yet, that superiority was short-lived even in that very class. The wider curiosity of the public and the limited possession of books gave the preference to encyclopedic works. The demands for action, thought, and sentiment had to be met in each individual narration. Under these conditions, differentiation within the novel was difficult.

Nevertheless, such differentiation was proceeding,

though slowly. In the first place, the general basis of the novel was receiving a more stable definition. Fiction was disengaging itself from history. The epic, which had originally been a rude representation of historical events, was becoming more imaginative. Amis et Amiles, Jourdain de Blaivе, Orson de Beauvais, Aiol et Mirabel, Elie de St. Gilles were only slightly connected with actual happenings. Toward the beginning of the thirteenth century, history was beginning to be presented as such. Ernoul's history of the loss of Jerusalem, Baudouin de Flandre's historical compilation, Calendre's Histoire des Empereurs romains, the Livre des Histoires, written in prose about 1225, Villehardouin's Conquête de Constantinople, Philippe Mouskêt's Chronique, denote the line of separation which was being drawn between the statement of fact and the statement of fiction. In the second place, the greatest of all the species of the novel,- the sentimental,- was disengaging itself from the other types. Huet, speaking in the latter part of the seventeenth century, derived the sentimental novel,- which constituted for him the only genuine novel,- from Asiatic sources. In reality, it was a French product of early invention. Its history dates back to the beginning of novel writing in France.

> "Je ne pouvais pas ne pas rappeler qu'il faut chercher dans notre Moyen Age les premières origines du roman de sentiment comme celles du roman d'aventures."1

Down to Mme. de La Fayette's Princesse de Clèves, it had not established itself as a pure form, but it was always coming nearer that as its term.

1. Reynier - Rom. Sent. - Avertissement, p. V.

The explanation usually given for the efflorescence of the chansons de geste is founded on the presumption of a special audience and of a special state of society which made obligatory the treatment of war in unvarnished, rather crude language. If we remember that the epic flourished side by side with the romances of Chrétien, we can realize that the necessity of a rough style was not absolute. If we recall that Berte aus grans piés is a love-story, rather than a chanson de geste, and that Floire et Blancheflor, Aucassin et Nicolette, Athis et Prophilias, L'Escoufle were written along with the epics and romances toward the end of the twelfth century, we can understand how little compulsion there was for an exclusive emphasis on themes of combat. To assume that any persons or any groups of persons were so constituted as to be able to enjoy only one kind of story, and to demand it on all occasions, is to go against common-sense. The contents of the old manuscript-volumes, as indicated by M. Bédier,[1] show the promiscuity of taste among medieval readers. That same fondness for variety rules the world of books today, and has been responsible for the success of the weekly and monthly magazines. There should, then, be no difficulty in granting a prominent place to the sentimental novel at the very starting-point. Nor should there be any obstacle to our seeing in Aucassin et Nicolette or in Floire et Blancheflor full-fledged sentimental novels, in which love of a man for a maid is the all-engrossing subject. It is true that these remote specimens are generally

1. cf. pp. 158-159, of this thesis.

shorter than the chansons de geste and the romances, and that from the psychological point of view, they are naïve and rudimentary. Yet, there is no great distance between them and Paul et Virgine.

However, we must not be led into the assumption that the sentimental novel took its origin in any one class of story-telling. In some ways, almost every novel after the year twelve hundred was a sentimental novel. Whether consciously or unconsciously, writers saw the expediency of dallying with the affections. Once admitted on the stage, the love-theme never abandoned it. Adequately to show the progress of sentiment in the medieval novel would require a separate study,- which still remains to be done, just as there remains to be accomplished a thorough investigation into the growth of realism in the novel of that epoch. This, the present paper cannot attempt. Nevertheless, an examination into the principal moments of the sentimental novel will prove sufficiently that the latter was gradually disengaging itself from factitious elements and crystalizing into a class sui generis.

It is a noteworthy fact that the genuine chanson de geste is, of all the kinds of narration, the least colored by sentiment. As a result, literary historians have been inclined to deduce certain sweeping notions concerning the relation between the chansons and real life: to see in the epic a fairly accurate portrayal of the position of woman, and her insignificance as compared with the charms of territorial conquest and human strife. Accordingly, epics like Huon de Bor-

deaux and Aie d'Avignon are discussed among the last, since their greater interest in the sentimental and the adventurous must be proof positive of more recent composition. It is supposed that the chansons based on historical happenings must have seen the light first: that those compounded of fact and fiction must have followed them: and that those of entirely imaginary make-up must have come last of all. This is logical, perhaps, but it does not seem to be chronological. Few chansons de geste preceded those just mentioned. In the few years intervening between a ruder and a more refined epic,- wherever a space of time can be supposed to have separated them,- social conditions, public interest, can have changed very little. Instead of seeking an explanation in social environment alone,- or even in preponderating measure,- we must concede much to individual initiative. The writer of chansons de geste who has seen other conntries or become interested in them, will,- like the authors of Bovon de Hanstone, the Saisnes, Le Chevalier au Cygne,- dress up foreign traditions in French costume. He who has been fascinated by the Crusades will write a Chanson d'Antioche. He who is most susceptible to the softer emotions will express himself in a Berte. For, when all is said and done, literature is made by men and not by machines: and no matter how well-established a particular type may be, nor how faithfully a writer may desire to keep within prescribed bounds, his personal tastes will out. Hence, many of the chansons de geste allow a considerable place to sentiment: and it is not necessary to imagine that,

> "si Orable est mieux traitée dans la Geste d'Orange, c'est en raison de ses vertus viriles plutôt que de ses charmes féminins."1

Let us admit that even a writer of chansons de geste may have expressed himself like a man. It still remains certain that the love-theme had no civil rights in the epic of war, was treated as a foreigner by the adepts, and never became naturalized. The origin of the sentimental novel should not, then, be sought in the chansons de geste, but in some of the other species in which it played an important role. To trace the growth of sentiment in the former would, of course, be both interesting and instructive. It would demonstrate the influence of other branches of the novel on the primitive type, and might show where the sentimental form had its ultimate beginning.

Where shall we look for that beginning? Seek where we will outside of the stereotyped chanson de geste, and the prominence of the sentimental is unquestionable. The romances of antiquity are permeated with it: Benoît de Troie in one work has added four portraits to the gallery of fair women; Helen, the sensual, Medea, the passionate, Briseis, the coquette, Polyxena, the pure of heart. In the Breton romances, Thomas has made immortal the love of Tristan and Yseult: Chrétien has applied a very fair sort of psychology to definite sentimental problems, and has proved his solicitude about the affections by bewailing, in Yvain

> "den Niedergang des Amors-Ordens in der Gegenwart, während die frühere Zeit demselben eifrig angehangen hätte."2

1. Wilmotte - Ev. du R. - p. 331-2
2. Emecke - Chrest - p. 38

Provençal poetry was occupied entirely with the science of love. In Marie de France's lais,- excepting those of Milun and Le Fraisne,- love is triumphant: it is freely-given, it is faithful, it is the only object in life. Among the fabliaux, when sentiment is not satirized, it is represented as a serious business, as in the Dieu d'Amors and the Vénus la déesse d'Amor. Can we say that the sentimental novel originated in any one of these forms? If so, in which? To try to determine this point means the consideration of the sentimental novel as a fixed type at a very early date. Yet, as M. Reynier rightly observes, it was not until the

> "première moitié du XVIe siècle que les différents genres romanesques tendent le plus nettement à se détacher les uns des autres. Alors seulement commence à apparaître chez nous un roman qu'il faut appeler sentimental, puisqu'on ne peut encore l'appeler psychologique et dont le caractère distinctif est qu'il attache moins d'importance aux aventures, aux éléments extérieurs de l'action qu'à l'analyse et à l'expression des sentiments."[1]

The Princesse de Clèves, in the second half of the seventeenth century, is, perhaps, the first clear-cut example of the genuine sentimental-novel of artistic merit, though Hélisenne de Crenne's Angoysses douloureuses qui procedent d'amours (1538) may be looked on as the first sentimental novel in content and general style.

For a long while, near the beginning of the thirteenth century, the sentimental novel seemed about to burst its cocoon. The material was at hand: the time was propitious: the ante-

1. Reynier - Rom. S. - p. 3

cedents had been satisfactory. Following closely on the stories of antiquity and those of Breton inspiration, arose a class which cannot be called romance, since the spirit of that type is lacking in it. The elements constituting it are sufficiently like those of the romances to make a distinction seem unnecessary. There is fighting, of course: there is wonder-working, as in the salve obtained from a monster in Florimont, the marvellous stone discovered by Éracle, in Gautier d'Arras' fiction, the enchanted carbuncle in Floire ~~and~~ & Blancheflor: there is description of castles, market-places, cloths, tombstones: there is a heightened interest in the thoughts and acts of loving couples. But these factors are so combined as to yield a new result. In Chrétien, it is almost impossible to decide as to whether the author was most taken up with the adventures of the sentimental happenings. Each phase in his work seems equally important. Yvain would not be the romance with which we are familiar, without the battle at the fountain or the combat with Gauvain. Lancelot would not be the chivalrous figure represented to us, if he had not been engaged in unceasing, hazardous feats of arms. The mixture of unusual, warlike hardihood and unexpected emotional tenderness, varnished over with a gloss of elegant expression, is what has lent an appearance of idealism to the romances. The romans d'aventure and the Byzantine novels, however, are rather indifferent to the depiction of battles and tournaments.

> "Lors des fêtes qui sont célébrées à Rome, à l'occasion du couronnement de Guillaume et d'Aélis, il décrit longuement la pompe

> "qui est déployée par toute la ville et détaille avec complaisance la riche toilette d'Aélis, mais c'est à peine s'il fait une fugitive allusion au tournoi qui eut lieu à cette occasion."[1]

Though not all these tales show the same indifference in this respect, they exhibit in an equal degree the absorption of the writers in topics of a highly sentimental character.

For that reason, a special classification of them should be made: and no term describes them better than the "sentimental novel." By some, Éracle is treated as a romance of antiquity, simply because it bears a classical name; by others, as a roman d'aventure. Cligès has been designated as both a Breton romance and a Byzantine composition. L'Escoufle, Floire et Blancheflor, Aucassin et Nicolette, have received various appelations. If the division into minute categories served some useful purpose in a study of the evolution of the novel, the names Greek, Byzantine, romans d'aventure, romans à tiroirs, might be allowed to stand. But such is not the case. True, the word "Byzantine" indicates the probable source of the stories so defined: and it might be of use, if the entire classification of novels were arranged according to sources. Yet, the traditional methods of listing them have been so heterogeneous that it is high time a practical terminology were employed. Under Romans d'aventure, for instance, Gaston Paris speaks of Romans d'origine sans doute bretonne: Romans qui paraissent mélangés d'éléments celtiques et byzantins: Romans dont la scène est en Occident: Romans d'histoire

1. L'Escoufle - ed. Michelant et Meyer - Introd.p. XXXIX - Paris, 1894.

ou de légende nationale: Romans plaisants: Romans à tiroir.[1] The same plan applied to the chansons de geste and the romances would end in confusing minutiae. From the point of view of development, Occidental, Oriental, Breton, Byzantine mean nothing. They indicate the material, but not the fundamental principle of any type. To study the evolution of the novel under the aspect of subject-matter leads nowhere, supplies us with no useful lesson, and helps us to foresee in its history only to the extent of convincing us that all provinces of knowledge are obliged to contribute at one time or another. The underlying motive of any story serves as the safest criterion for placing it. War is that motive in the chansons de geste: an elegant mingling of war, love, and the marvellous is that motive in the romances: love, first and foremost, is that motive in the poorly classified novels under consideration.

The sentimental novel appears to have grown up under two vital influences, namely, the Breton and the Greek or Asiatic. Of the former, it may be said that it was exerted principally through the reputation of Chrétien and his disciples, and the desire to imitate them. Amadas, Ille et Galeron, Partonopeus de Blois, as also the Provençal Flamenca, show familiarity with the works and the ideas of Chrétien and Marie de France. Curiously enough, many of these stories, though consciously modeled on Breton romance, take their point of departure in the name of some hero of antiquity or of some person-

1. G. Paris - Litt. fr. - pp. 106-109.

age in the chansons de geste. Partonopeus, Ipomedon, Athis et Prophilias, Protésilaus, are named out of the Roman de Thèbes. Florimont is connected with the Roman d'Alexandre through its protagonist the grandfather of the Macedonian conqueror: Floire et Blancheflor is related to Berte aus grans piés through Blancheflor, who, in the chanson de geste, is Berte's mother. But, aside from the name, they have little in common with the earlier stories. Most of them are the invention of the writers. Occasionally, an effort seems to have been made toward utilizing contemporary events for the purposes of fiction. Thus, Massmann indicates that the Éracle,- in many respects a genuine sentimental novel,- deals with real persons and places, and is a true roman à clef. Here, too, that family most powerful in the literature of the twelfth century enters on the scene again.

> "Keiner wird in solchen weltgeschichtlichen Gleichungen vollständige Deckung aller Züge and aller Gestalten verlangen--aber gewiss ist die Aehnlichkeit im vorliegenden Falle gross. Dort die einbesperrte Athanais - hier die unfreywillig enthaltsame Alienore; hier Held Parides - dort vielleicht nicht bloss Heinrich, der künftige Gemahl (wie Parides). Im Gedicht williges Absteigen zur Armuth,-- in der Wirklichkeit Herabsteigen vom Königs - zum Herzogsstuhle, darnach aber wieder erheben auf einen neuen Königsstuhl. Dort der getäuschte König von Rom, hier von Frankreich."1

Even the latest of the Breton romances, however much they may be interested in the tenderer emotions, devote a preponderating amount of space to valorous deeds, sorcery, and an increasing throng of knights of the Round Table. In Escanor, by

1. Massmann - Éracle - p. 442.

Girard d'Amiens (/ 1285), the love-story of Kei,- the old cynical seneschal having developed into a languishing swain,- is forced to divide the honors with the narration of the opposition between Escanor and Gauvain. So, likewise, the heroes of Claris et Laris, under the stress of ill-requited love, fare forth into the world and become involved in so many perilous undertakings that the inspiring cause is often lost sight of. There is never any question as to the part played by the affections, for these romances begin with them and end with them. But there is usually legitimate uncertainty concerning their share in the action.

That all the Arthurian romances, down to the most recent, formed one of the weightiest factors in the progress of the sentimental novel cannot for a moment be questioned. It would be quite possible, indeed, to derive that species from the Arthurian romances alone, provided we were to attach less importance to the adventures than their space seems to warrant. From the Érec et Énide to the translations of Amadís de Gaula, the Breton romance has preserved almost intact the triple characteristic of brave deeds, refined love, and strange marvels. The clear-cut sentimental novel might have branched off from the Arthurian stories: but some link would have to be imagined as connecting them, either in the way of a powerfully individual writer, who could at one fell swoop crush whatever stood in the path of a full expression of the feelings, or in the way of a competing class, which, after marching side by side with romance, imitating it and influencing it, finally succeeds in absorbing it and making it subservient.

Both events happened. The authors of the Roman de la Rose gave to sentimental fiction such a push forward as no type of story had ever received before: and all the while another kind of novel was exerting a great pressure on everything around it. This was the Oriental novel which, fostered perhaps at first by oral tradition, laid the foundation for the favor with which it was received in such written form as Theagenes and Chariclea in the sixteenth century. It is of some importance to note that these works commonly bore the name of both the hero and the heroine, as Amassin et Nicolette, Floriant et Florete, Cristal et Clarie, Roman du roy Ponthus et de la belle Sidoine, Pierre de Provence et la belle Maguelone. Only rarely was this the case in stories of different derivation.

The name "roman d'aventure" applied to most of these Oriental tales is, unfortunately, a misnomer, and affords another reason for revising the terminology of the field comprised by the novel. The objection that certain expressions have been sanctified by long usage ought to have no great weight. There is no law of the Medes and the Persians which forbids us from rectifying the errors of those who have preceded us. Efficiency in scholarship is just as valuable as efficiency in business. Often, an incorrect terminology is responsible for the widely differing opinions emitted by learned men. We cannot, of course, blame those who foisted the title romans d'aventure on that particular class; for they undoubtedly meant no harm in so doing, and thought their wording a fitting defi-

Furthermore, the ultimate origin of the romans d'aventure, as that of the Arthurian narratives, is to be found in the chansons de geste, and the more undeniably and directly in the case of the former, since it is chiefly the epics which popularised Oriental material.

nition. Yet, the fact remains that the term gives an entirely wrong impression. No less a critic than Gaston Paris has pointed out the defect, though not emphasizing it particularly.

> "Cependant, pour la plupart, les 'romans d'aventure' présentent ce trait distinctif, que tout y est subordonné à ce qui fait l'objet propre du récit: la naissance et le développement de l'inclination des deux amants, les traverses qui les séparent et leur réunion finale; l'aventure au sens du roman breton, c'est-à-dire l'accomplissement d'une prouesse difficile, ne joue ici d'ordinaire aucun rôle, et il n'est pas question de la chevalerie errante. Par le sujet comme par l'exécution, les romans d'aventure sont les vrais précurseurs des romans modernes."1

As a commentary on the progress of literary art, this statement is invaluable. It indicates how long a time has been required by modern literature in arriving at its goal in one of its most important branches: and by how long it was forestalled in countries of Greek tradition. But it does not mean that the romans d'aventure were the only precursors, nor that the chansons de geste and the romances were unsuitable for their epoch or without worth in the evolution of the novel. On the contrary, if the older types of story-telling had not been popular in the middle ages,- if, as in Spain, heroic ballads and apologues had for centuries comprised the chief methods of narration,- the romans d'aventure would in all likelihood have found but a precarious foothold, and might not have had an influence on the novel until a much later date.

1. Paris - Esq. - p. 121.

The Oriental stories mark a distinct innovation in narrative art. They emphasize that unity of interest in the fate of the principal characters which was considered essential in all good novels until the other day, when the realistic school attempted to combat a very strong psychological need by presenting a fragment of life and leaving it in a fragmentary condition. The chansons de geste were in the habit of sending their paladins on expeditions, the supreme interest of which lay in the number of heads cracked and bodies split in twain. The romances dealing with antiquity told of the wars of cities and nations, and centered the attention on no individuals. The Breton romances despatched their knights on aimless wanderings, and made each adventure seem of equal importance with every other. In the romans d'aventure, however, there is a plan: there is order: there is a beginning and an end: there is a main theme, which is never lost from view during the whole exposition. Generally, two lovers are separated through some contrary turn of the wheel of Fortune. Blancheflor is sold into captivity because of the anger of King Felis of Spain at the infatuation of his son for the Christian maiden: Aucassin, likewise, is parted from his sweetheart: Guillaume de Palerne and Mélior are obliged to flee from the Italian Court, on account of the Emperor's insistence that the latter marry the son of the Greek Emperor, who is her equal: in L'Escoufle, Guillaume and Aélis stray from each other through the accidental robbery of the heroine's ring by a kite. Thereupon, the lovers suffer all the vicis-

situdes of a malignant Fate: they are kidnapped by pirates or merchants; they traverse oceans and penetrate into uninhabited wildernesses; they meet and are separated once more; they act over again the clandestine meeting of Caesar and Cleopatra; they are condemned to death, separately or together. Whatever trials they pass through, nevertheless, they are mindful of each other, and live but for the joy of being united. Finally by some kind dispensation of Providence, this is brought to pass: and the reader can heave a sigh of satisfaction and relief on finishing the story.

The typical Oriental novel marks a great advance over previous forms in that the adventures of the heroine are as interesting and as replete with incident as those of the hero. This fact seems to have escaped the attention of students. Yet, it is one of the most important additions to the art of story-telling. So long as the novel restricted itself to the vicissitudes of masculine characters, so long was it one-sided and unrepresentative of life. The epic lady of the castle, immured within the walls, fails to arouse genuine sympathy. Even in the romances, where she directs the action, holds the stirrup for the knight-errant, helps him off with his armor, leads his horse to the stable, sets the table for him, and is occasionally met on the highroad, needing assistance, she is a puppet. There is no glamor about her. It is only when, as in Adenès Li Rois' Berte aus grans piés, she becomes the plaything of Fortune, suffers, and exhibits real

emotion, that she becomes attractive. From the artistic point of view, also, her activity transforms the merit of the novel. It supplies the author with unending variety, with contrast, with pathos, with a more complete humanity. If we were to try to imagine Hamlet without Ophelia, Tom Jones without Sophia, Pendennis without Laura, David Coperfield without Agnes, Alice-for-Short without Alice, we should be better able to realize what the novel was like before the revolutionary initiative of the roman d'aventure and its congeners.

Another new note of the Oriental tales is their naïveté. The leading personages are children, not sinful men and women of the world. Their goal is marriage, not the culpable pleasures after marriage which has become a fixed tradition with the average French writer. Their illusions are still intact: their emotions are fresh and inspiring:

> "--ce dist Flores a Blanceflor/ baisiés moi, bele, par amor."/ Blanceflors respont enbaisant "je vous aim plus que riens vivant."
> --Tant doucement s'entresgardoient que c'est avis que ils rioient."1

The intriguing spirit of the adulterous Guenièvre, the sophisticated love-making of the widow Laudine in Yvain, offer nothing so cheerful as this. In an epoch when courtship had become a science, a rather disheartening, mechanical application of psychology, with little spontaneous pathos and little genuine feeling, a handmaid to feminine pride and masculine vanity, the breeze from the Orient wafted over the French novel the aroma of a sweeter existence.

1. Flore und Blanceflor - ed. by Immanuel Bekker - v. 601, ff. Berlin - bei G. Reimer - 1844.

> "The magic that is wanting to the clear and elegant narrative of Benoît and Chrestien will be found elsewhere:--it will be found in the most beautiful story of the Middle Ages, Aucassin and Nicolette, one of the few perfectly beautiful stories in the world---. Aucassin and Nicolette cannot be made into a representative medieval romance: there is nothing else like it; and the qualities that make it what it is are the opposite of the rhetorical self-possession, the correct and deliberate narrative of Chrestien and his school. It contains the quintessence of romantic imagination, but it is quite unlike the most fashionable and successful romances." 1

With much the same enthusiasm André Chénier, that most delicate poet of the French Revolution with the tragic fate of Sidney Carton, has said,

> "Il y a de la véritable passion dans Aucassin et Nicolette, et ce petit roman est de beaucoup le meilleur de tous ceux qui paraissent avoir une origine française--"

What the author of this perfect poem accomplished, that of Floire et Blancheflor, le Comte de Poitiers, Guillaume de Dole, strove for and brought about with varying degrees of success.

As in the antique and Breton romances, so in the romans d'aventure, the background is conventional in large measure. References to the well-known figures of the chansons de geste are frequent: the gods of Greece are not forgotten: allusions are made to the Breton cycle: comparisons with Alexander, Aeneas, the warriors of Thebes and Troy pullulate: the scene is located in Spain, Italy, Hungary, Normandy, the Orient: everywhere, there are castles, moats, market-places, hunting-grounds for falconry, mauseleums: the stuff out of which the plot is manufactured comes usually from the Latin, from epi-

1. Ker - Ep. & Rom.- p.327.

sodes in existing written stories, or from oral sources. Floire et Blancheflor owes the notion of unequal marriage to the tale of Psyche in Apuleius' Metamorphoses: of the Chastelaine de Vergi, Warnke observes:

> "In der That zeigt das Gedicht bei ganz abweichendem Schluss mehrere Aehnlichkeiten mit dem Stoffe der Lais"[1](Laüval):

Paul Meyer is inclined to believe that the Escoüfle had its origin in a popular conte or fabliau, and cites some verses from the Lai de l'Epervier in support of his idea.[2] The desire of the poet to establish a contact between his story and his audience is prominent. All this is to be expected. That tendency to transform everything into a description of medieval French customs and manners has as much room in the Oriental stories as in the others. But, in many instances, the romans d'aventure have, in this respect also, taken a great step in advance of their competitors. They demonstrate a considerable familiarity with the Oriental countries, the seat of conflict during the Crusades, the foreign land of which the French soldiers and travelers have the most intimate knowledge. A distinct attempt is made to help the reader to a visual picture of that which he may have seen himself. Local color is laid on thick in spots: and much of it has a basis in reality. The author of Floire et Blancheflor describes the life in an Eastern harem, mentions the eunuchs, speaks of the precious stones found in the river Euphrates, brings out many details

1. Warnke - Lais - p. CXVII.
2. Escoüfle - Michelaüt & Meyer - p. XXV.

which may be supposed characteristic of Babylon, where the heroine has been locked up in the tors as puceles belonging to the Amirail, and dilates on foreign spices and the like, which of necessity, had to superinduce an exotic state of mind:

"poiure canele et garingal
Encens girofle et citonal
Et des autres espisses assés
ja, qui flairent moult soués."[1]

We are not to imagine, however, that the writer obtained his information at first hand: for many facts lead to the conclusion formed by M. Reinhold that the Babylonian episode,- and particularly that of the harem,- was drawn from the Book of Esther in a Latin version.[2] Once acquainted with the mosaic-method of mediæval romancers, we can, in about nine cases out of ten, feel certain that they invented but a modicum of their machinery. Thus, the tombstone in Floire comes from Apollonius de Tyr, or from Chrétien's Cligès: the Tors as puceles may have been inspired by the Castle of the White Slaves in Yvain: and there can be no doubt that the detail,

"deseur siet par encantement
uns escarboncles qui resplent.
Assi i est par grant consel.
par nuit reluist comme solel."[3]

is a repetition of

"sus el l'orle ot un escarbocle,
ki par nuit getot tel clarté,
com se ce fust un jor d'esté."[4]

occurring previously in the Enéas. But these facts are insignificant beside the certainty that the poet tried to represent that which was not French by imagery in harmony with the sub-

1. Fl. und Blanc. - ed. Bekker,- v. 2029 ff
2. cf. Reinhold - Floire - p. 150.
4. Enéas - ed. Salverda de Graye - v. 4464 ff.
5. Fl. und Blance. - v. 1824 ff.

ject. Despite the manifold dependence of the romans d'aventure on the Breton and antique stories, they stand out sharply as a well-defined class, with a method and a general groundwork of their own. It was the combination of these two species of novel which resulted in the Spanish Amadís,- as may be admitted, even if Le Clerc's reference to the French Amadas is lightly considered by such Spanish critics as Menéndez Y Pelayo:[1] and it is the Amadís, one hardly needs to mention, which many regard as the first modern novel.

The principle governing most of the Oriental love-stories appears to have been employed early and to have subsisted as the recognized method for planning the action. The chansons de geste had been cast in a mould: the Breton romances had assumed a stereotyped shape: and the romans d'aventure followed suit. This is perfectly true today of the great mass of novels: one historical story is like another, and one tale of adventure like another. Floire et Blancheflor represents, in general outlines, the class in which it is included. The plot may be summed up as beginning with the separation of the two lovers, and as retarding their reunion as long as may be convenient to the author. A happy ending is assumed as one of the technical conditions: and that happy ending is usually marriage. Simple as the device may seem, it inaugurated a new era in the history of the novel, and served as a prelude to the more conscious unity of action taken over in the last half of the seventeenth century from the drama. That this motive of retardation proceeded from Greek or Byzantine imita-

1 cf. Le Clerc - Hist. litt. 14s. - p. 51 - v. II.

tion can be accepted as certain: and it was the same motive in Theagenes and Chariclea, Leucippe and Clitophon, Daphnis and Chloe, Ismenius and Ismene, which revived the art of story-telling a short while before the publication of the Astrée. But, though the course of the action is constantly interrupted the purpose which runs through the story cannot be turned aside. It is possible that this firmness of purpose was inherent in the original Oriental tales imitated by the French writers. Like the fables and apologues, the longer Asiatic fictions have the artistic merit of tending toward some definite end, and thus prolong in their novels,- called "dramas" by the Hellenistic romancers,- the unity of action preserved by the Greek tragedians and expounded by Aristotle. A comparison of Yvain and Floire et Blancheflor shows the divergence in methods of the two most popular schools of fiction in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The Chevalier au Lion may be divided into ten distinct episodes, each of which is occasioned by no compulsory force, and none of which has a necessary connection with the others. From the moment Cologrenanz tells of his mishap at the Fountain of Brocéliande until the rescue of Yvain, as he lies stark naked in a mad swoon, the action is a unit and revolves about the principal characters. From there on, however, the plot is broken and incoherent. One might suppose either that French story-tellers had only an imperfect notion of the value of unity, or else that they voluntarily slighted it for the sake of variety. Yvain's battle with the soldiers of "li cuens Aliers"; his rescue of the lion from the serpent;

his meeting with Lunete, who has been imprisoned in a chapel for alleged treachery; the assistance given by him to Gauvain's relatives, Harpins de la Montaingne; his combat with the two "fil au netun" in the castle of the Embroidering White Slaves; his duel with Gauvain:- all these episodes appear to have been tacked on to the initial romance for the purpose of bringing the length of the story up to the regular standard. The subtitle indicates the extent to which the real center of interest is shifted from the two lovers to the wonderfully human lion. The dissolution of the unity of interest is not limited to Yvain nor even to Chrétien's romances as a whole: it manifests itself in almost every long story outside of those touched by the spirit of Oriental narration or, like the ruder chansons de geste, crystallized about an occurrence admitting of no complexity. In Floire et Blanchefleur, the attention is riveted to the lovers from the start. The selling of Blancheflor, the report of her death, the madness of Floire, his wanderings in search of her, his entrance into the tors as puceles while hidden in a basket of flowers, the discovery of the lovers together, the sentencing of them to death, the reprieve by the softened emir, the betrothal, and the news of the death of Floire's father,- prevent the mind of the reader from straying long from the hero and the heroine. Such unity is best exemplified by the shorter romans d'aventure, yet, it is also marked in those of the extent of L'Escoufle,- which is half as long again as the average Breton romance and almost equals the Énéas in length.

Until the appearance of a distinctively modern literature, the romans d'aventure rivaled the epics and the Arthur-

ian romances in popularity. Down through the fifteenth century, Floire et Blanchefleur, Cléomadès, Amadas, La Comtesse d'Anjou, La Belle Hélène, Mélusine, were widely read. They made incursions into other classes, and modified them in important directions.

> "Au XIIe siècle, la Table Ronde et l'épopée nationale formaient, pour ainsi parler, deux mondes distincts et qui n'avaient rien de commun. Dès le XIIIe siècle le roman d'aventures a pénétré la chanson de geste; au XIVe siècle, cette pénétration est plus profonde encore et ne surprend personne."[1]

They likewise had a share in bringing into favor collections of stories centering about one person,-[2] a tendency in story-writing which reached its climax in the nouvelles of the sixteenth century. That they were well-known everywhere and among all classes, may be deduced from the adaptations of them and the references and allusions to them. Among others in France, the Provençal author of Flamenca was familiar with Floire et Blancheflor, as his romance indicates: the Fabliau des deux bordeors ribaus speaks of it: we find it mentioned in the Roman de Galeran and in André le Chapelain's De Amore: and comparisons and similes based on it are to be found by the score both in the North and in the South of France. Outside of France, these stories received the same consideration as that accorded to the Breton romances. There was an English version of the Floire et Blancheflor, for instance, by the middle of the thirteenth century: the Dutch poet, Diederic van Assenede wrote his ver-

1. Gautier - Ép. Fr. II# - p. 502.
2. cf. G. Paris - Esq. - p. 127.

sion Floris ende Blancefloer about 1250: in the Netherlands, also, a drama and a chap-book on the adventures of this young couple were published: in the fourteenth century, it took the form of Flores Saga ok Blankéflur in Norway, and thence, into Sweden. Perhaps the earliest adaptation was made in Germany, in the Flore und Blancheflur of Konrad Fleck. As was usual with French stories transplanted into Germany, Floire et Blancheflor underwent some radical changes, in order to appeal to the tastes of the German audience.

> "Ce n'est pas que le poète haut-allemand ait ajouté à la légende de nouveaux motifs empruntés ailleurs, ou se soit permis de modifier sensiblement ceux qu'il y a trouvés, comme le font par exemple Boccacce et le romancier espagnol: mais il a développé l'élément psychologique, multiplié les sentences philosophiques, délayé à l'infini les plaintes douloureuses, les pâmoisons et les gémissements des deux héros"[1]

What had been done with them in France was done elsewhere. They were transformed in accordance with the temperament of the people to whom they were addressed and the ruling mode of expression. At first written in verse, and employing the phraseology of the popular types of novel,- such as the classical allusions, the borrowing of suggestions from the Histoire d'Apollonius, the Roman des Sept Sages, Parténopeus de Blois, the Énéas, the romances of Chrétien, in Floire et Blanchefleur,- the romans d'aventure were dissolved into prose, often changed to suit the times, but sometimes left intact, as mere translations. For a hundred years after the invention of printing, they formed, along with the epics and the romances, the staple commodity of fiction for

1. Rienhold - Floire - p. 38.

distribution among the masses. Once in a while,- as in Condrette's rhymed version of Jean d'Arras' prose Mélusine,- the popular story, derived from oral tradition, and bearing all the traits of the roman d'aventure, was furbished up in the language preferred by the upper circles. For the most part, however, the popular version followed slavishly the earlier poetic forms. Among the favorite stories of the end of the fifteenth century were such romans d'aventure as La Belle Hélaine de Constantinople, Histoire du Chevalier Paris et de la belle Vienne, Pierre de Provence et la belle Maguelone, Le roman de Richard sans paour, Le Roi Flore et la belle Jehanne. By this time, influences from abroad were having a powerful effect on all branches of the French novel. Spain and Italy were becoming the leaders in fiction, having evolved, under the tutoring of the French novel, species marked by the full ripening of that which in France had never advanced beyond the stage of a suggestive immaturity. Aeneas Sylvius' Eurialus et Lucretia, Diego Fernández de San Pedro's La Cárcel de Amor, and numerous other sentimental works put into French, gave a sharp swing to the French novel in the direction of unmixed, emotional import. The enchantments, the extraordinary deeds of prowess by knight-errant, the close connection with the Orient, were abrogated, and with them, the medieval period in the development of the novel of sentiment.

Much of that unwieldy machinery, nevertheless, had been thrown into the lumber-pile at an early date, and a new mechanism substituted, which, though artificial enough, had the advantage of centering the attention on psychological features. The Roman de la Rose, by removing its actors several steps from

material life, brought its theme several steps nearer the life of the emotions. The distractions caused by the adventures of persons with real names were avoided through the diminution of the human element. As Thomas had stated, in his Tristan, that his principal concern was with lovers, and that he wrote for lovers, so Guillaume de Lorris had made plain that he was interested in only one phenomenon,- namely, the way in which the tender passion manifests itself:

"Ce est li Romanz de la Rose,
Ou l'art d'amors est toute enclose."[1]

It was his boast that he was undertaking something original, and that the "matière" with which he dealt was new. Assertions of this kind are common among medieval writers, and must be taken with a grain of salt. They are valuable only as an indication of the fondness for novelty among medieval readers, and the necessity under which authors felt bound to attempt that which had not yet been accomplished. The impression that those were days of stagnation and routine, either physically or intellectually, cannot be held after even a cursory study of the feverish spirit of adventure exhibited in the Crusades and the feudal relations; the turbulent political conditions manifested by the conflicts between the king and his barons, on the one side, and the "people" and the rest of society, on the other side; the ceaseless social unrest evidenced by the elevation of the status of woman and the wealth of the middle classes; the intense intellectual curiosity, groping after scientific knowledge, and clumsily proceeding toward the formulation of esthetic principles, demonstrated by the heterogeneous nature of the subject-matter of narration and the numerous subdivisions,-

1. R. de la Rose - v. 37-38.

romans, contes, dits, histoires, fabliau, lai,- into which story-telling was cast.

Neither the general purpose nor the particular method followed by Guillaume de Lorris was strikingly ~~im~~unprecedented. The theory of love was precisely the commonest literary pabulum of the end of the twelfth and the first half of the thirteenth century,- both before the composition of the Roman de la Rose (1237) and afterwards. To go back of the twelfth century, for an explanation of Guillaume's work might seem unnecessary, were it not that we have to do with an educated writer, whose command of old sources may have played a significant part in his story. At any rate, a long genealogy of the theory of love, may readily be constructed,- as has been done by Mr. Neilson in his investigation of the Court of Love. In Provence, it had left a deep imprint on the Roman de Flamenca. Leaving out of the question the romances of Chrétien, Thomas, Benoît, the love-theme in metaphysical shape had brought forth many works. Pamphilus, de Amore, a Latin poem of the twelfth century current in France, the Concile de Remiremont, the Altercatio Phyllidis et Florae, the Fabliau dou Dieu d'Amours, De Vénus la déesse d'Amor, Florance et Blancheflor, ou Le Jugement d'Amour, Chrétien's translation of Ovid's De Arte Amandi, Le Tournoiement d'Antéchrist by Huon de Méri, De Arte honeste Amandi by Andreas Capellanus, appeared in the vicinity of the Roman de la Rose, the two last mentioned having been published only a few years before Guillaume de Lorris presented his work. This, it is conceivable, he may have begun immediately after the reading

If Guillaume's manner of treating his subject could be designated as new, the subject itself certainly could not be so considered. An entire literature of the art of love preexisted.[1]

of the Tournoiement or André's code of love. In the words of M. Langlois,

> "La manière de traiter le sujet pouvait être nouvelle, mais le sujet ne l'était pas. Il existait déjà toute une littérature dont l'objet était la théorie de l'amour, littérature qu'il est nécessaire de connaître, si l'on veut bien comprendre le Roman de la Rose, parce que ce poème a subi l'influence, tantôt indirecte, tantôt immédiate, des oeuvres qui l'ont précédé dans le même genre."[1]

From these discussions of the theory of love, the Roman de la Rose was evolved by a natural process, depending but slightly on the volition of the poet. Summed up in a set of rules,- to which living personages like Marie de Champagne contributed by their decisions,- this theory had been put into a concrete form by Chrétien in his solution of the main problems through the medium of human actors. Lancelot, Guenèvre, Yvain, Érec, Cligès, stand in the same relation to the abstract formula as Segismundo, Basilio, Rosaura, to the moral idea enunciated in Calderón's La Vida es Sueño. What Guillaume de Lorris did was merely to construct a morality,- if the word may be used here,- on the abstract principles of the code of love. In another guise, he duplicated Chrétien's task. Probably feeling convinced that little glory could be gleaned in the wake of romances and the romans d'aventure, he decided to dress the same notions in other raiment. He chose the simplest and easiest of all costumes. Instead of bringing fictitious heroes,- who are nothing more than abstractions at best,- from Wales or Armorica, from the Orient, from England, from Hungary, Guil-

1. Langlois - Rose - pp. 1-2.

laume saved himself much trouble by selecting abstract names, personifying the qualities which he wished to represent, and made them realistic or allowed them to remain unembodied, as suited his fancy. The mere fact that he employs abstract names should not forcibly segregate his romance into an isolated class by itself. It is as life-like as any of the other stories with imaginary characters. Where is the difference between his Fontaine d'Amour and Chrétien's fountain of Broceliande; between his castle of love, and Chrétien's castle at Caradigan? The one was no more familiar to the French audience than the other, no truer, no whit more suggestive. If Laudine had been called Raison; Soredamor, Biauté; Kex, Male-Bouche; Guenièvre, Jalousie: Chrétien's tales would have meant exactly as much to his public. The figures in the Roman de la Rose have as many physical characteristics as any hero of romance: they are treated concretely: only their names are abstractions. Haïne is described much as Dickens describes Rosa Dartle or Uriah Heep: in an exaggerated manner, indeed, but with life-like details and the personal tic:

"Si n'estoit pas bien atornee,
Ains sembloit estre forsenee;
Rechignie avoit et froncié
Le vis et le nes secorcié,
Par grant hideur fu soutilliée,
Et si estoit entortillée
Hideusement d'une toaille."[1]

The distance between the Roman de la Rose and the romances dealing with unknown foreign knights and ladies is much shorter than is usually assumed. It may almost be measured by the difference in names alone. In truth, the Roman de la Rose

1. R. de la Rose - l. 145 ff.

simply continues the style, general method, and aim of romance: it is scarcely more sentimental than Chrétien's stories or the romans d'aventure: hardly freer from the influence of Ovid and the troubadours: and not at all more idealistic. Gaston Paris rightly combats the notion that it begins a new phase of literature:

> "On a cru longtemps,- et c'était une grave erreur,- que le Roman de la Rose ouvre la littérature française: il en ouvre en réalité une période, mais il en clôt une autre. Le rêve spontané, inconscient, presque enfantin du moyen âge est fini, ou ne reparaîtra plus que par fugitives intermittences: la littérature moderne, dont la pensée philosophique et la connaissance de l'antiquité sont les principes, est inaugurée."[1]

Possibly it would be even more exact to say that Guillaume de Lorris epitomizes the sentimental yearnings of aristocratic society just as they are on the point of retiring from the foreground of literature, where they had long been the leading dramatis personae: and that Jean Clopinel de Meun stands forth as the representative of democratic society, with its gain in wealth, learning, power. The forty years elapsing between the first and the second part saw no revolution in society. Without a Jean de Meun, the genius of the people would probably have received no adequate expression at that particular time. Even with the encouragement received from his example, the literature of the masses failed to arrogate to itself a position of independence. Until the age of that grand aristocrat, Louis XIV, literature was synonymous with court and castle. What was composed for the people had an ephemeral existence.

1. G. Paris - Esq. - p. 200-201.

It might have remained so until the French Revolution if men of energy and literary talent like Sorel, Molière, Scarron, La Bruyère, Regnard, Le Sage, men who had traveled and shaken off the provincial narrowness of Paris,- and there are few things so provincial as the straightened outlook of the inhabitant of Paris in the seventeenth century,- men who had come within the influence of foreign literatures, and particularly, of the Spanish, where the democratic novel was becoming a formidable rival of the aristocratic: it might have remained so, if these masterhands had not laid a solid foundation for its further development. The second part of the Roman de la Rose may be termed the third stage of democratic literature toward supremacy, the fabliaux and the Roman de Renart forming the other two. The first part marks the beginning of disintegration in the fundamental methods of aristocratic writing.

The favor granted to allegory has generally been indicative of weariness of ~~the~~ a preceding mode: writers have taken it up and readers accepted it for the same reason. It is the last resource of literary ability. It is recognized as artificial and strained, and produces a reaction in the direction of the actualities. Standing by itself, the Roman de la Rose might have had less effect on writing than the Faerie Queene, El Criticón, or the Pilgrim's Progress. It became, however, the most widely-read book in the Middle Ages for two reasons: one of which had to do with the form, established by Guillaume de Lorris: the other, with the content, due to the encyclopedic knowledge and common-sense of Jean de Meun. If

it were only possible to affirm that the Roman de la Rose is the parting of the ways for idealism and realism, aristocracy and democracy, how logical the history of a certain portion of literature might be rendered! But, alas, it was not that, any more than the Spanish Celestina, though cast in the combined mould of novel and drama, had any special bearing on the evolution of those two species. Yet, Guillaume de Lorris' share in the Roman de la Rose is extremely significant. It constitutes a more faithful index to the literary situation than Jean de Meun's greater originality. For, the first portion of the story is a direct outcome of existing conditions, even in technique. An acquaintance with the works about it prove that the manner of treatment was hardly more novel than the matter.

If allegory may be considered a legitimate literary form, then it was by far the most important form in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the most widely used, and the most frequently abused. No division of literature escaped the allegorical disguise. Of religious and moral allegories, it is unnecessary to say much. They are the favorite means for bringing truths before the people, and to attempt to name them in any complete manner would be futile. Among the Latin scholars, there raged a mania for seeing an allegory in the most obvious expressions:

> "La liste des allégories que les auteurs ecclésiastiques latins antérieurs au treizième siècle ont trouvées dans la Bible a été dressée dans la Patrologie latine de Migne; elle n'y comprend pas moins de cinquante colonnes."[1]

The authors of the Roman de Renart employed the device for pur-

1. Langlois - Rose - p. 51

poses of realistic satire. The fabliaux contain such allegories as the Dieu d'Amours. The débats are usually allegorical. The dits often partake of the same qualities. The bestiaries are written from the allegorical standpoint. These instances suggest that allegory is not a literary form, but an attitude of mind, as readily applicable to the novel, the drama, the lyric, as to painting and sculpture. In conformity with some unknown law, it appears to flourish most in periods of great literary activity, and is probably nearly related to what might be called allegory in expression,- préciosité, Gongorism, Marinism, Euphuism. It had a subsequent vogue in the time of Philip II of Spain, of Elizabeth, of Louis XIV. But its fullest manifestation occurred in the period in which the Roman de la Rose was produced: and this did not spring from the popularity of Prudentius' Psychomachia, as some critics seem to believe. Without doubt, this work of the fourth century,- inspired possibly by a passage in Tertullian's De Spectaculis[1],- was extensively read during the Middle Ages in France: but it had little to do with the enjoyment of allegory. On the contrary, it is probable that the general liking for allegorical productions was the indispensable factor in arousing an interest in the Psychomachia.

Notwithstanding Guillaume de Lorris' citation of the vision of Scipio in Macrobius as a guarantee for the truthfulness of his dream, we can set aside the Latin writers of an early age as inconsequential in their effect on the Roman de la Rose. The scrupulous mention of ancient sources is a conven-

1. cf. A.Puech - Prudence - Paris, 1888-pp. 245 ff.

tional trick, which today fails to arouse any awe. That Guillaume carried over the framework for his story from the fabliau Le Dieu d'Amours and the method from the Pamphilus seems evident from his répetition of situations and lines occurring in those works. The opening description in the Roman de la Rose follows that of the fabliau: the author represents himself as the lover, who having fallen asleep during a pleasant meditation on love, dreams that which is the subject of the narration. Excepting for the nature of the vision, the dream begins in a manner not unlike that in Robert de Boron's romance of the Holy Grail, or Raoul de Houdan's Voie d'Enfer, the latter of which is a forerunner of Dante. But these are not isolated examples of the employment of dreams as carriers of didactic or fantastic stories. The De Planctu Naturae , Altercatio Ganimedis et Naturae, Dialogus inter Aquam et Vinum, Dialogue entre la Folle et la Sage, Dit d'Ypocrisie by Rustebeuf, Mariage des VII Arts, are constructed on the same plan. The marvellous side of the romances of chivalry has been intensified and enclosed in a form devoid of criticism, since anything can take place in a dream. In fact, the Tournoiement d'Antéchrist unites the two tendencies of allegory and chivalry, by imitating the Voie d'Enfer, and mingling the personifications of vices and virtues with the heroes of the Round-Table. That proceedure had an exponent even in Chrétien: and several of the principal figures in the Roman de la Rose had been sketched in, though with admirable restraint, by the master. In Yvain, Amour locks the heart of the lover with a key: in Lancelot, Dame Raison exerts the same pressure on the mind of the

lover as in the Roman de la Rose: and in Cligès, Male-Bouche antedates Guillaume's extended portrayal. Personification, which, as in Greece, was the first step in the development of medieval allegory, abounds in the romances and the allied poetic narratives. In the prose works, it is rare. Alain de Lille, Gauthier de Châtillon, Guillaume le Clerc, Hugues de Saint-Victor, Chrétien, Raoul de Houdan, Huon de Méri were especially fond of it. Fortune and Love were, in imitation of Ovid, the standard figures, but under ecclesiastical influence, the number was vastly increased.

From abstractions to animate or inanimate objects which should hold the mirror to humanity was no long step. In Débat de Florence et Blanchefleur, the birds, assembled by the god of love, discuss with much animation the relative merits of knights and priests as lovers. No great stretch of the imagination is now needed to find the feminine soul personified in a flower: and that flower, the most aptly chosen. The idea was not the exclusive property of Guillaume de Lorris. The Dit de la Rose and the Carmen de Rosa had made the obvious comparison at some length. The title had already been employed in Guillaume de Dole, ou le Romanz de la Rose, though here the rose signified a birthmark borne by the slandered lady. In addition, the rose appears to have been the emblem of girlhood, and in the most varied writings helped out the imagination as a final descriptive stroke. It lent a touch of color and a tone of gracefulness to the chansons de geste:

"La rose semble, en mai, la matinee"(Aliscans, v. 3098):
"De joie en rit Aiglente de fin cuer et de vrai:
"Bele mere", fait ele", Dieu en gracierai
Quant je tele compaigne avoeques moi arai,
C'onques si douce chose ne vi ne n'acointai:
Ele est plus gracieuse ne soit la rose en mai?"
(Berte ans grans pies, v. 1403 ff.)

No other symbol of such general acceptance and of such high intrinsic worth could have been chosen for the heroine. Lope de Vega, in a different country and a different age, obeying the same law, named his favorite Estrella. Malherbe, however, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, assured himself of literary immortality by that splendid line,

"Et rose elle a vecu ce que vivent les roses,
L'espace d'un matin:"

Guillaume de Lorris, without many precedents to follow, showed practical good sense in acquiescing in the dictates of public sentiment. He might have chosen some other flower, as Eglantine, Violette, or some precious stone, of more pretentious melody: but it would have marred the freshness of the story. Whether or not he felt obliged to parallel the code of chivalry by avoiding a woman's name,- just as the troubadours spoke in riddles about their love-affairs,- is a debatable point. It is probable that the notion of composing an allegory came to him as the result of its popularity in other branches than the novel; that, as he himself admits, the desire to incorporate the theory of love in the form of fiction actuated him from the start; and that upon these two principles, the entire edifice was raised. Given the Rose as the cause of the action, it was essential that no infringement of verisimilitude should be occasioned by her

own efforts. The medieval audience could believe in talking birds, garrulous animals, effulgent carbuncles, humanized lions, rings of invisibility, fairies, sorcerers, enchanted fountains, living abstractions, but it could put no faith in moving, speaking roses.

Hence, the poet was compelled to draw up a large army of personifications, some of them,- Bel-Accueil, Franchise, Pitié, Peur, Honte, Raison,- standing forth as spokesmen for the Rose, and portraying its feelings. The result was a dramatic, psychological study, far in advance of anything accomplished by Chrétien or the romans d'aventure, and later stated in graphic form by Mlle. de Scudéry. If, instead of the Rose, Guillaume had conferred a name like Blancheflor or Énide on his heroine, and had made her commune within herself, in place of bringing Bel-Accueil or Raison on the scene, he would have established the psychological or sentimental novel as a fixed type five centuries before it was recognized as such. If, likewise, Jean de Meun,- who was

> "le Voltaire du moyen âge avec toutes les restrictions que comporte ce complément, et il eut, comme Voltaire, des Ennemis aussi passionnés que ses admirateurs"1,-

had transformed his personifications into human beings, merely by a change of names, he would before now have been reckoned the originator of the modern sociological novel, gaining the precedence over Rabelais. For Jean de Meun pictured the conditions of his epoch, satirizing them, and using Guillaume's structure simply as a guiding thread, to hold the interest.

1. G. Paris - Litt. fr. - p.166.

> "In der Zeitkritik, die sie übt, macht sie sowenig wie die Vernunft vor dem bestechlichen Richter (v. 5603 ff.), vor dem Priester Halt,---. Clopinel spricht sich gegen den Almosen beanspruchenden Bettlerorden (v. 11631 ff.) aus und nimmt Partei in dem noch nicht ausgetragenen, vom Rektor der Universität in Paris, Guillaume v. s. Amour (v. 11682 ff.) eröffneten Streit über die Rechte des Bettlerordens--und über das 1255 verbrannte Evangelium perdurabile (v. 12000 ff.)"[1]

Through the contrast afforded by the two authors, the Roman de la Rose became a book for everybody. Like the Don Quixote, it rivaled the Bible in universal appeal. It had that which could please both the idealist and the realist; the aristocrat and the bourgeois; the old-fashioned and the modern. Guillaume de Lorris was by nature a conservative, brought up on feudal ideas, and heartily believing in them: Jean de Meun was a radical, a skeptic, an adherent of the new order of things. The work of the latter is a commentary in the spirit of Sancho Panza on the high-flown theories of the former. Few literary productions have so epitomized the aspirations of an entire age.

If the Roman de la Rose could be definitely ranked as the first of the sentimental allegories, the further treatment of the novel in that shape might be derived from it. But we know that it was only one out of many: and that it has to take its place with many similar works as an influence on surrounding literature. The more important of these appear to have been Raoul de Houdan's Voie d'enfer and his Voie de Paradis and Huon de Méri's Tournoiement d'Antéchrist, which had enjoyed much success. Chrétien's romances and André le Chape-

1. Gustav Gröber-Grundriss der Rom.Phil. II Band-Strassburg, 1902 Trübner p. 738

De Arte honeste Amandi encouraged the use of personification and allegory. After the immense favor accorded to the Roman de la Rose, prolific imitation naturally set in. Thibaut's Romanz de la Poire employs the machinery of Guillaume: and the Echecs Amoureux, the Cour d'Amour by Mahiet le Poriier, Nicole de Margival's Panthère d'Amour,- set in motion by the bestiaries,- and Guillaume de Digulleville's trilogy, the Pèlerinage de la vie humaine, the Pèlerinage de l'âme, and the Pèlerinage Jhesuchrist, go back to the Roman de la Rose for their initial impulse. Nevertheless, the basic principle of Guillaume's narrative had a more profound effect than the mere mechanical devices. It summed up the tendencies which all forms of the sentimental novel had been trying to express, though succeeding imperfectly. After the addition of Jean de Meun's contribution, it became the most widely discussed French work both at home and abroad, arousing the admiration of Petrarch and testing the powers of Chaucer as a translator. In France, it was copied time and again: but had its epoch of brightest glory after the invention of printing. M. Reynier regards it as the most virile survivor of the medieval stories at the precise moment when the modern sentimental novel began to have an existence of its own.

It is altogether likely that the search for a pure type of sentimental fiction was most efficiently aided by the Roman de la Rose, which, in common with the romans d'aventures, laid stress on the notions of retardation and the forcible separation of lovers, and added what became the fundamental elements of the sentimental novel through the entire seventeenth century: confessions of love,

That it could hardly fail to exert a preponderating influence in French fiction down to the middle of the sixteenth century may be inferred from the rapid succession of editions issued by the printing presses but just established. The last of these forty nearly consecutive editions appeared in 1538, at the precise moment when, according to M. Reynier, the genuine sentimental novel began to appear.[1]

the intrusion of fathers or guardians, prayers, yielding followed by resistance, quarrels, reconciliations.

> "On sait quel fut le succès du Roman de la Rose à l'étranger comme en France, et combien ce succès fut durable. Dès son commencement, l'imprimerie le reproduit et on en rencontre près de quarante éditions consécutives, en comptant les réimpressions de la version donnée par Clément Marot en 1526. La dernière est de 1538. C'est justement la date où commence à paraître chez nous le roman sentimental. Ici l'influence a donc pu être directe, et nous verrons que, pour certaines oeuvres, elle est indiscutable."1

After three hundred years,- thanks largely to the fondness of Francois 1er for the medieval romances,- the Roman de la Rose continued to compete with contemporaneous literature. The court-poet of the day rejuvenated its style: and the chanoine Molinet

> "s'imposa la tâche encore plus difficile de le 'moraliser'",2

on casting it into prose. During the fourteenth century, it was kept constantly in mind by the lyric poets,- Guillaume de Machaut, Froissart, Eustache Deschamps,- thereby stepping out of its province as a novel and changing the character of another species,- as literary types are in the habit of doing, to the no small astonishment of critics with an inch-rule.

In England its effect on Chaucer was immeasurable. The English trouvère, besides turning it into the Romaunt of the Rose, made various details from it do him service in the Canterbury Tales, in his ballads, in his Parlement of Foules, in his Court of Love. If Chaucer is to be rated as the first

1. Reynier - Rom. S. - p. 10.
2. Le Clerc - Hist. Lit. 14s.-p. 224, v.I.

independent, conscious story-teller or novelist in England, the relation of the Roman de la Rose to the English novel must be of capital importance: for he owes to it both method and subject-matter.

> "Quand il renonce à cette poésie de cour si fausse, si maniérée, et qu'il écrit le Pèlerinage de Canterbury, drame vivant et populaire, on retrouve dans son oeuvre les traits saillants qui caractérisent la seconde partie du Roman de la Rose, de longues tirades contre les femmes et le ridicule jeté à pleines mains sur les ordres religieux."1

In his satire, it is true, he leans on Jean de Meun: but in his softer mood, in his moments of sunny youthfulness and delight in the variegated flowers and the warbling of birds, he repeats the troubadour-note in Guillaume de Lorris' verses. Of the popularity of the Roman de la Rose in Italy, Petrarch's testimony is eloquent: and that it was quickly known in the Germanic countries is evidenced by Heinrich Van Aken's translation in the Flemish, shortly after the publication of the entire poem.

What it accomplished in France, however, far outweighs its inspiration for foreign literatures. Guillaume de Lorris had been the first poet to state clearly his interest in the study of the emotions and to do without needless accessories. He had amalgamated the strongest sentimental methods of the romances and the Byzantine novels, taken the attention away from personalities, and turned the mind toward introspection. The single object of the young cavalier was to pluck the rose. Nothing else mattered. Evil counsellors might advise him to

1. Sandras - Chaucer - p. 35-36.

his detriment, or good angels exhort him to his benefit, or obstacles be placed before his every step: the rose, he must have, for he had been pierced by Cupid's dart, had contracted to be the vassal of Love, and had received his commandments from him. The whole action of the drama revolves about this one purpose, and results in a unity superior to that of the contemporaneous peripatetic romances and inferior only to that of the romans d'aventure. Moreover, there is in it a very decided attempt at consistent characterization. Each personification plays its part in a manner suitable for the duties pertaining to it. Jalousie, Male-Bouche, Bel-Accueil are distinct figures. The acts and motives of the one cannot be confused with the conduct of the others. The first constructs a tower curiously contrived and guarded for the imprisonment of Bel-Accueil: and is true to her character in everthing that she does. This is no less so of the other personified qualities. The resultant fidelity in the character-portrayal is incomparably more artistic than Chrétien's attempts. Gauvain, Yvain, Lancelot, Perceval, Cligès exhibit no habit of thought, deed, or expression peculiar to themselves. Placed in like situations, each behaves as all the rest would do. But Jalousie and Raison are grown-up. They react against excitements in accordance with their individual natures. That the danger of painting caricatures is inherent in such a method can be taken for certain: and writers of the caliber of Dickens have incurred it. Nevertheless, from an artistic point of view, that procedure has few superiors. The extravagances into which a few allow themselves to be drawn are not sufficient to invali-

date it. For it follows the unalterable esthetic law which no amount of theorizing can subvert, to the effect, namely, that art must be selective; that it must choose details in harmony with the subject, style, purpose of the work in hand. Guillaume de Lorris' example may have passed relatively unheeded outside of the allegory: but it was there, to influence any story-teller who should be in a receptive mood. He had already anticipated that mania of the seventeenth century for portraits. Besides giving a heart or a soul to a name, he had fitted it out with a sympathetic body. The day was far distant when the advantages of Guillaume's workmanship should be fully recognized: but Rabelais, D'Ørfé, and Mlle. de Scudéry knew them.

After Guillaume de Lorris, the further progress of the sentimental novel paralleled the career of the other forms of narration. The twelfth and thirteenth centuries had been an era of ferment, of imagination, of exploration. Great names and works of striking merit were common. Nothing was left undone in the field of story-telling. The subject-matter of narration covered all knowledge and admitted the utmost possible bye-play of fancy. The narrative forms, however, had become exceedingly limited, consisting mainly of the octosyllable of romance, whether in the longer fictions or in the fabliaux. Until the advent of printing, professional copyists met the demand for stories by working over old forms. The chansons de geste, romances, Oriental tales furnished them with inexhaustable material. At rare intervals, writers of talent, like Jean d'Arras, appeared. Yet, for the most part the fourteenth century and the first half of the fifteenth were devoid of power in the novel,

and especially in the sentimental novel. Unquestionably, the increase in the practical consideration of life had much to do with the weakening of romance. The aristocratic encouragement was failing. The educated classes had been graduated out of the disingenuousness of an earlier epoch. The charm of the simple narrative verse was ceasing to appeal. Prose was coming to be the common-sense medium of narration.

Nevertheless, where were the clever story-tellers of yesterday? Had their art become a lost art? Why had they vanished thus, as by magic? Why were there no Chrétiens, no Benoîts, no Guillaumes during the rest of the Middle Ages? The answer is at least twofold. The opportunities for narration were widening. The lyric was experiencing an aftermath of aristocratic popularity. Guillaume de Machault, Christine de Pisan, Alain Chartier, Froissart, who might have composed excellent novels, were engaged in lyrical poetry, just as, in the seventeenth century, Racine, Quinault, Regnard, who might have been fine lyric poets, poured their lyrical emotions into the drama. The short-story was developing into an art, largely through foreign tuition. The drama was striding to the fore, in the miracle-plays, the moralities, the farces, the soties. Potential novelists were being converted into active playwrights. The faculty of narration had not diminished, any more than matter diminishes. Only the form changed. Then, too, a more modern kind of story-telling was assuming a definite shape. The art of writing history was occupying the attention of men who might otherwise have been romancers. These facts, together with the natural reaction against the forces which had been dominant for a long

Louise Labé, Pernette du Guillet, Gabrielle de Bourbon, Marguerite d'Autriche, Marie Romieu, Clémence de Bourges, Madelaine Neveu, Catherine des Roches, Madeleine Deschamps, Henriette de Clèves, Jeanne Flore, Marguerite de Valois, Mlle Le Jars de Gournay,

time, explain sufficiently the paucity of first-class sentimental novels in the two centuries following the Roman de la Rose. It is incorrect to assume that the feeling for sentiment had died out. On the contrary, with the march of modern education, it must have been steadily increasing. Women of the quality of Christine de Pisan were vindicating their sex boldly and cleverly. The movement which made the seventeenth century a checker-board for brilliant ladies had already started. Marguerite de Navarre, Diane de Poitiers, Catherine de Médicis, the Duchesse de Retz, Mme. de Villeroy were here foreshadowed, to say nothing of the long line of notable women in the reign of Louis XIV. The sentimental theme was sure to flourish with such sponsors. In the interregum between the two periods of brilliance,- that is, between the thirteenth and the sixteenth centuries,- the upper circles either went back to the style of the troubadours for the expression of the emotions or were satisfied with the heritage of the past and the renovation of the old romances.

In the meantime, new sources of sentimental inspiration were welling up outside of France, ready to flow freely as soon as cognizance should be taken of them. The French novel could no longer suffice unto itself. Italian writers had outgrown the need of French assistance, and developed in their short-stories an artistic concentration of passion which was, in a sense, to be the salvation of the Elizabethan drama and novel and the indispensable mentor of French narration. The Spanish genius, with its ability to ~~glam~~ slum the lubricious, was to rectify the tendencies of the esprit gaulois. As if these streams of

influence were not sufficient to open the flood-gates of emotion, the Greek romances Theagenes and Chariclea, Daphnis and and Chloe, the Loves of Ismenius, Clitophon and Leucippe were to be discovered toward the middle of the sixteenth century and to arouse instant imitation. Moreover, the interest in Platonism was to determine the quality of much of the sentimental writing. Nor was the latter an accidental manifestation. The Italian discussions of the Platonic philosophy were familiar to Frenchmen, Ficino's expositions having been translated, and Landino's Disputationes Camaldulenses having been printed in Paris. Marguerite de Navarre had received many Platonizing Italians at her court, and had encouraged the doctrine by her own writings. Toward the middle of the century, the number of Platonic dissertations appearing in a single year was a substantial proof of the wide interest evoked, La Parfaicte Amye, by Antoine Héroet, La Diffinition et Perfection d'Amour, Le Sophologe d'Amour, appearing in 1542 alone. Because of the multitude and variety of foreign stories, and the familiarity of French authors with them, critics have been inclined to find in them the starting point of the French novel. But, aside from the fact that these foreign tales owed their existence to French example, we have to bear in mind that the medieval tradition never disappeared from the soil of France. The Roman de la Rose, as has already been indicated, was a living book down to the entrance of Italian and Spanish fiction. The romances of chivalry continued to circulate down to the very end of the sixteenth century, as Rigaud's Lancelot (1591) and the Recueil de Romans

There is no uncertainty, however, concerning the debt of the Amadís to the Breton romances, from which it borrowed specific episodes[1] in addition to the general style: and it is no less certain that the love depicted in the Astrée is only a modified form of the medieval system of gallantry.[2]

1. Bourciez, Moeurs, p. 61.

2. Crane, Héros, etc., p. 71.

de Chevalerie (1584) demonstrate. Original works were constructed on the model of the romances and the romans d'aventure, the sentimental phase, as was to be expected, coming uppermost. In his Adventureuses fortunes d'Ipsilis et d'Alixée, des Escuteaux combined modern gallantry with medieval feats of arms. In La Flavie de la Menor, d'Audiguier presented a combination of chivalry and pastoral. In Lysimont et Clitye (1608) the same contamination is evident. How much of the spirit of chivalry was due to the Spanish Amadís, and how much to indigenous romances, it is hard to determine. But to imagine that the genuine French stories had been consigned to oblivion would be as near the truth as to hazard the opinion that Tom Jones, Clarissa Harlowe, Roderick Random, Pride and Prejudice are unknown today. With Malory and Caxton worshiping them at the end of the fifteenth century: with Rabelais burlesquing them, Molière deriving some of his plots from them, La Fontaine receiving inspiration from them, Boileau slandering them: the testimony to their influence is strong. As well might we say that the French drama began with the Romantic school under an English and Spanish protectorate as to assert that the real French novel had no existence prior to the seventeenth century, or that the modern novel began then. The modern novel began with each most recent book, and has not ceased beginning yet. What other European countries contributed to the evolution of the French novel was, as has been pointed out before, merely a foreign interpretation of topics and of a style originally French.

The twelfth century had witnessed the interesting spectacle of an aristocratic literature moulded to please the tastes

of a group of highborn ladies. Under the guidance of the troubadours and Ovid, a code of love had been enacted. Metaphysical argumentation concerning the meaning and the conditions of the tender passions had multiplied. Préciosité, with all that the term includes of artificial gallantry and verbal conceipts, was comparatively rife. The Court of Marie de Champagne must have resembled that of Marguerite de Navarre and Henri IV, and the Hôtel de Rambouillet. Hence, there is an obvious similarity in the mode of expression of those periods. One circumstance, above all, tended to make them resemble one another. The society addressed in each case was aristocratic, and the writers had aristocratic affiliations, most of them,- such as Nicolas de Montreux, du Souhait, Joseph de la Mothe, Jacques de Vitelli,- having branched out into literature, not as a regular profession, but as a pastime, a side-issue, to relieve the tedium of law or the monotony of life in the provinces. Chrétien begins his Érec by calling attention to a maxim current among the people, and his attitude is that of a nobleman acknowledging some good in common folk, though in an apologetic tone, as if he had overstepped the bounds of propriety:

"Li vilains dit aũ son respit
Que tel chose a l'aũ aũ despit,
Qui moult vaut miaẍ que l'aũ ne cuide."
(v. 1-3).

The authors of sentimental novels in the latter portion of the sixteenth century invoke the attention of the belles âmes and the beaux courages. Both have the same class in mind.

But in other phases, also, the medieval epoch contained the germs of subsequent préciosité: and it is there,- not

abroad,- that the student of French extravagance must seek for beginnings. The battles fought by Italians and Spaniards about the bodies of Seneca, Lucan, Martial, Góngora and Marino, aided by the English partisans of Euphuism, have been so much powder wasted. Préciosité has always been a national French product. Whenever it flourished, it grew out of identical environments. The first requisite has been an assemblage of educated men and women, of exclusive leanings, paying and receiving gallant attentions. The Hôtel de Rambouillet has been maligned enough. It was not the birthplace of affectation: it was not its sepulchre. Among all the gatherings of men and women throughout the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth, préciosité was common. It had its seat in the provinces,- where Molière became acquainted with it,- as well as in Paris. The salons have always been the hotbeds of the evil. The desire to shine in conversation, the narrow range of intellectual topics, the overemphasis of society women corresponding to the use of strong epithets by many classes of men, compose the chief elements of préciosité. Unusual combinations of words and idioms, often taken from foreign sources, complete the process. It is to good conversation what "fine writing" is to good writing. We encounter a full-fledged préciosité, then, with all the earmarks long before the Précieuses Ridicules. From the standpoint of style, the Court of Henri IV was abreast of the Court of Louis XIV. M. Reynier has given plenty of examples to prove that the latter merely continued, or at best paralleled the usages of the former.[1] Where would the average critic locate

1. Reynier - Rom. Sent. - pp. 321-323.

excepting during a portion of the sixteenth century, when an artificial resurrection of medieval chivalry gave back to them some of the social functions belonging to them at an earlier period.[1] For, in truth, war has never interested women much, since it has always been an exclusively masculine game, and their chief connection with it has lain in the suffering entailed on them as helpless spectators.

1. cf. Bourciez, Moeurs, pp. 18ff.

the following phrases:

> "une façon farouchement douce," or "paisiblement fort:" "l'un la merveille des beautez, l'autre la beauté des merveilles:" "l'amour a filé les liens de ma liberté, afin que pris dans ces aggreables chainons je ne soupirasse que la gloire d'une si belle servitude:" "pour ne brusler mon papier à tant de diverses flammes, je tairay les siennes:" "un jeune bachelier aux Amours, qui se veut enregistrer au Greffe de Cupidon"?

Certainly, in the time of Voiture. Nevertheless, they are random excerpts from sentimental novels popular while Catherine de Vivonne was still a little child. They explain much that is forced in the Astrée. They indicate that Mlle. de Scudéry did not invent the pernicious traits of her novels.

In social surroundings of this sort, the sentimental theme necessarily overshadowed every other. Modern conditions of fighting had deadened the interest of women in war. They were no longer Queens of Love at the tournaments nor hapless damsels depending on knights-errant for relief. The blunderbuss and the cannon had taken all the romance out of battles. The craving for blood-and-thunder had to be satisfied by the Amadís, with its medieval equipment, or by poorly-manufactured Arthurian tales. The esthetics of shot and shell, powder and smoke had not yet been built up. War had become vulgar; the common people were bearing the brunt of the combat; it was becoming a business; the individual was being eliminated. What more natural, then, than that the golden moments of peace should be spent in dallying with the sentiments? In any event, France

1. Renier - Rom. 8.- pp. 321-325.

was progressing toward internal tranquility. Courts and private houses were exhibiting signs of luxury. Women were spending immense sums on personal adornments: and the men were not far behindhand. Business, finance, of course, were not fit subjects for fiction. The discussion of social amelioration would have signified a regard for the lower classes: and that was yet unthought-of. Really, nothing was left for aspiring romancers excepting the depiction of love. After the Astrée, indeed, the subject-matter became varied through the introduction of geographical curiosity and a bent toward historical and scientific truth: but to enter upon that development would be outside the province of this study. The extent to which the love-theme lorded it in the domain of fiction is shown in the titles of the novels then appearing: the Amours de Lintason et de Pallinoé, La Parfaicte Amye, the Désespéré Contentement d'Amour.

What is most remarkable in the sentimental recrudescence of the latter part of the sixteenth century is the new conception of love. Native French romance had perpetuated that tradition concerning affection between the sexes which is still predominant. The Breton stories had emphasized the attractions of guilty passion. In André le Chapelain's De Arte honeste Amandi, Marie de Champagne, on being elected the judge in an argument between a knight and a lady, had pronounced this decision:

> "Dicimus enim et stabilito tenore firmamus amorem non posse inter duos conjugales suas extendere vires."

Guenièvre embodied that doctrine: and she was the Queen of the

King of all chivalry. But in the sixteenth century, a purer type of love governed romance,- though perhaps not real life. An affectation of fefinement in thought accompanied the affectation of refinement in language. The sentimental novel was at last becoming idealistic! The upper crust of French society had literally been compelled to admit the new interpretation under penalty of remaining outside the pale of advanced civilization. The Renaissance had awakened a blind admiration for Platonic teachings: and prominent social and literary leaders, like Marguerite de Navarre had encouraged it in their works, if not in their acts. Women in general had comprehended the significance of these teachings for their standing in the world, and, perhaps, had a genuine relish for them. As in England,- and these were the days of Sidney's Arcadia and Lyly's Euphues,- the impetus had come from Italy. The Platonic associations took polite society by storm, and had one form of expression in the craze for pastoral life; especially for the pastoral life represented by Montemayor's Diana and Watteau's shepherds and shepherdesses. Ficino, Bembo, and Castiglione instructed the French courts. The latter's Cortegiano, translated in 1537, was used as a manual of etiquette, and undoubtedly exerted an incalculable influence over the manners of French men and women. Even Boccaccio, with his Platonic framework and his un-Platonic material,- with his strong proof of the fortitude of Platonic friends in the face of the greatest temptation which could be brought to bear on them,- aided in popularizing the refined notions of love. Firenzuola did this, likewise, in a

less indirect manner.

> "Statt der Schilderung der Pest gibt uns Firenzuola als Einleitung ein Gespräch über die platonische Liebe, das zu den Novellen, welche den Ruf haben die schlüpfrigsten des 16. Jahrhundert zu sein, einen gar sonderbaren Contrast bildet."1

Most of the Italian novelle- writers used the Platonic mantle to cloak the essential coarseness of their stories: and Marguerite de Navarre imitated them. Aside from their connection with Platonism, the Italian stories profoundly modified both the technique and the subject-matter of French novels in the sixteenth century. Their obsession by the love-theme was contagious: their fondness for brief narrative was largely responsible for the shortness of the genuine sentimental novel before the Astrée. The majority of these Italian writers were well-known by the deviseurs of Marguerite's Court, where the chief activity in sentimental tales went on: Masuccio, Poggio, Bracciolini, Grazzini, Alamanni, Salvucci, Other contacts helped spread the Italian views. At the court of François I, Italians were received with open arms. Cellini, Pietro Strozzi, Mirandola, Guido Guidi, Monsignor de'Rossi, Bandello, Andrea del Sarto resided there at one time or another. Italian professors called to Paris instilled Italian ideas into their students; among them, Bernardino Rinci, Agacio Guidacerio, Paolo Paradise, Francesco Vimercati. Bernardo Tasso, Tagliacarne, Ortensio Lando, and other learned men spent years in France. Perhaps more important still, the friendship between French and Italian women was close: Marguerite de Navarre took especial pleasure in keeping up her intercourse with noblewomen of the stamp of

1. Landau - It. Nov. - p. 76.

Vittoria Colonna. All over Europe, the star of woman was in the ascendant. Scarcely a throne can be mentioned that was not under petticoat government. Scarcely a country can be pointed out that was not under the esthetic domination of Italy.

As in the drama and the later novel, the French stories of the end of the sixteenth century derived much of their originality from Spain: and there are authorities who insist that the modern French novel absolutely and irrevocably dates from three or four Spanish books: from the Amadís, the Don Quixote, the Diana Enamorada, and the Lazarillo; the first, starting the heroic novel; the second, the burlesque novel; the third, the sentimental novel; the fourth, the picaresque and realistic novels. To the historian who still believes in the causal significance of a single fact, this ascription may be eminently satisfactory. Others will grant to the Spanish a large measure of influence, indeed, but only a measure. Even that honor will have to be qualified in the sentimental novel, the Spanish tales developed into characteristically local products, in accordance with their however: for, although the Spanish genius for reducing everything to national terms, they were so intimately bound up with Italian works that they served chiefly as a conductor of Italian initiative. About the time of Chaucer, Spain had had a jolly friar, Juan Ruiz, the author of the Libro de Buen Amor, interested in the same criticism of life as the Englishman: but he was little known outside of the Peninsula. In 1499, Fernando de Rojas had written his Celestina, containing the immortal loves of Calixto and Melibea, the Spanish Romeo and Juliet: but it is probable that he drew on Italian sources.

The majority of Spanish sentimental novels followed the same lead. Boccaccio's Fiammetta, Decamerone, Ameto, Filocolo were known to Diego de San Pedro, the author of La Cárcel de Amor (1492) and of Arnálte y Lucenda (1491), the latter of which had, up to the end of the sixteenth century, been reprinted seventeen times in French. The Spanish translation of Eneas Silvio's Eurialus et Lucretia, familiar to French readers; Peregrino y Ginebra by Hernando Díaz; Grisel y Mirabella and Grimálte y Gradissa by Juan de Flores; the Queja y Aviso contra Amor by Juan de Segura; Clariseo y Floriseo,- extracted from Theágenes and Chariclea and Ludovico Dolce's Ragionamenti Amorosi, Montemayor's Diana and Cervantes' Galatea owing much to Sannazaro's Arcadia: were all ~~Spanish~~ adaptations from the Italian. Most of them ran through many issues in France, and supplied the French novelists with one suggestion and another different from Italian contributions and decisive in their effect on French story. It might not be too much to say that the Spanish idea of love gave the tone to the French idea, which was to present the anomaly of chastity in French fiction during the greatest century of its literature. Between French and Italian sentiment, there was a natural affinity. It was depicted in both countries as rather cynical, rather superficial, rather sensual, though in the one it was light-hearted, in the other, eminently tragic. The Spanish view was purer, more exalted. In the theater of the Golden Period, it would be hard to single out half a dozen plays in which the emphasis was not on legitimate affection rather than on suggestive, material-

istic accessories. The high-spirit of Spaniards, the system of education for women, the conventional dignity supported by the religious obsession of Philip II, made for an elevated standard of public representation, whether on the stage or in books. There was exhibited toward woman a deference, a tenderness, without physical alloy, which seemed more genuine than the dangerous Platonism of Italians or the sardonic homage of medieval chivalry. The Spanish novel was preferentially virtuous: and the French was to become so,- for a space. The abnegation of the Princesse de Clèves was not a natural French symptom: and Bussy-Rabutin, a sane critic of literature though a biased judge of men's and women's motives, blamed Mme. de La Fayette for having written such a whopper. Her tastes and literary method, as it happened, had been formed on Spanish models. In the shifting of the center of interest from the adulterous woman to the pure-minded young girl, the Spanish novel was paramount.

> "Seule la passion coupable", says M. Reynier in his observations on L'Amant resuscité, "avait été jusque-là matière littéraire. Les amoureuses du Moyen Age étaient presque toutes des femmes mariées. La jeune fille n'apparaissait guère ni dans le roman courtois, ni dans les chansons d'amour, encore moins dans les fabliaux. Nous verrons au contraire que, dans le premier développement de notre roman sentimental, c'est sur elle que se portera l'intérêt. Il importe de noter que la première oeuvre française qui introduit comme personnage essentiel une chaste figure de jeune fille est manifestement influencée par l'Espagne."1

The titles of novels began to stress the altered standpoint.

1. Reynier - Rom. Sent. - p. 150-1.

In 1594, Nicolas de Montreux published his Chastes et delectables jardins d'amour, and in 1595, l'Oeuvre de Chastete. Céladon and Astrée were not lonesome as exemplars of the truth that virtue is its own,- and often, only - reward. They did not sigh alone. The whole world,- especially the women,- had turned good. True lovers could be met on any highway of Spain, Italy, France, England, Germany. Academies of them assembled everywhere. The originality of Spanish writers lay, not in the first or sole depiction of such a commendable state of civilization, but in the success with which they incorporated that Zeitgeist. Social conditions in Spain were more favorable than in other lands to a refined, frequently mystic, conception of love. Depending largely on Spanish consent, the name of Constancy became, in France, Every Young Man and Every Young Woman. Les Constantes et Fidelles Amours de Dalchmion et de Deflore, Le Triomphe de la Constance, l'Apologie de la Constance, Le Martyre d'Amour, les Amours de l'Amant Converty were offerings to the new divinity.

Out of the distant past, also, some incense was burned to the god of love. It seemed that writers sought, with a certain amount of selection, whatever could be worked over into a sentimental story. Greek novels, which had been ignored for centuries, were aroused for a second life. Here, too, the manifestation was universal. Zschorn translated Heliodorus' Ethiopic history in 1559. Stanislao Warschewiczki "Polono interprete", dedicated his translation

> "Heliodori aethiopicae historiae libri decem nunc primum e Graeco sermone in Latinum translati"

to Sigismund, king of Poland, in 1556. The Italian Giambattista Basile composed an epic Teøgene. Guarini took incidents from it for his Pastor Fido. Calderón, in Spain, wrote a drama, Teøgene y Cariclea. Pérez de Montalvo based on it his Hijos de la Fortuna: Cervantes, his Persiles y Sigismunda: Núñez de Reinoso, his Clareo y Florisea. Alexandre Hardy wrote a French play, Théøgènes et Chariclée. Racine, while at Port-Royal, used to spend stolen moments reading the forbidden book, and at one time, had the intention of dramatizing it. Belleforest translated Achilles Tatius' Clitophon and Leucippe, which many imitators took up some years later. Jacques Amyot had had much to do in awakening this popularity by 1549. Thereupon, shipwreck, separations, piracy, became common. Sir Philip Sidney felt the wave in England. The retarding moment and the happy ending of the romans d'aventure were having their day again. The Hellenistic facility in presenting a unified plot, was sharing the honor of fashioning the novel into a modern type with the Spanish refinement of love and the Italian intensity of passion and artistic superiority. It was competing with the romance of chivalry in the wealth of its machinery for carrying along the plot, and with the Roman de la Rose and other allegories in the devotion to psychological analysis of the emotions.

One can very readily understand how Huet came to regard these novels as the originators of the branch of literature with which we are concerned. They were in prose: they dealt with love: they were full of advantures: they preceded the Astrée by a short period, in so far as their French form has to be taken into account. However, they influenced only a

small circle of novels, and that, along with other sources. Roussel's Cleophas et Sephora, for instance, borrows not only from the Greek novels under discussion, but from the Odyssey, from Theocritus, from the Platonic disquisitions, from Tasso's Jerusalem. Adaptations of the Greek stories appeared year after year, but always with various other material interwoven into the texture. Herembert wrote the Advantureuses et fortunees amours de Pandion et d'Yonice: Nicolas de Montreux, the Amours de Cleandre et de Doriphille: Martin Fumée, a fictitious translation called Du vray et parfaict Amour---Contenant les amours honestes de Théogenes et Charide, de Phérécide et de Mélangenè, Traduit du Grec d'Athenagoras. In the Greek romances on which these works are founded, Koerting sees a close parallel with the French novel, which in his opinion, came into being about the time when Heliodorus and the Hellenistic writers were resurrected.

> "Der sophistische Liebesroman ist bekanntlich eines der spätesten Erzeugnisse des hellenischen Geistes; im Gegensatz zur griechischen Novelle - soweit man von einer solchen reden darf - ist erdicht volkstümlichen Ursprungs sondern wächst aus der gelehrten Schuldichtung der Alexandriner hervor und bietet somit eine merkwürdige Parallele zur Entstehung der französischen Romane, die auch der national Novellenlitteratur nichts zu schaffen haben und lediglich in der gelehrten Bildung der Renaissance wurzeln."[1]

The comparison is true enough. The French sentimental novel, like the Greek novel, is an aristocratic product. But it is odd to find that Koerting, usually so sensible, should stop at the Renaissance for the origins of the novel. By that time, the roman had almost become a fixed form, and was certainly

1. Koerting - Franz. Rom. - I, p. 24.

far removed from its genesis, both as to its name and as to its technique.

The influences which shaped the sentimental novel in its content caused its technique to assume an artistic importance in advance of all other species. It was practically the only form which seriously engaged the attention of writers after the Renaissance began to invade France: and it received the full force of the esthetic inundation. For the first time, perhaps, a theoretical discussion of the aims and methods of literature was entered upon. In the age of Chrétien and Benoît, literary beauties were commonly accidental. Good lines were few, and appear to have been either inevitable in their appositeness, or unconscious. Few authors made any nice selection of material, but set down almost anything that came to hand. The state of culture of the reading public was entirely favorable to such action. The story was the thing. With the better knowledge of Greek and Roman art, and the innumerable controversies to which it gave rise, mere narration made way before artistic narration. Writing became sophisticated where it had been childlike. The long tradition of the romans d'aventure and the Roman de la Rose had already taught the value of a certain amount of internal coherence in the plot. The young swain smitten with the charms of the high-born damsel, repulsed by her parents, sorrowing in silence, venturing to declare himself with trepidation, going into exile, accomplishing wonders, rescuing her; or the high-born scion of nobility passing through a similar experience for love of a lowly maiden: were the com-

monplaces of the Byzantine stories. The elements of contrast, surprise, unity, were obtained in this oppostion of characters.

But French romancers seem to have copied from the Orient without being aware of the merits of the method which they employed. The more modern romans d'aventure of the beginning of the seventeenth century reveal these defects, also. The unity of interest is broken up by the multiplicity of superhuman adventures, the variety of lands described,- Provence, Italy, France, Spain, Scotland, Hungary, the Orient,- and the haphazard manner in which history is ransacked for "filling." La Bergère de la Palestine (1601) and Les Amours de Lydian et de Floriande (1605), for example, traverse the world and history for easy details which may take the place of art. This process was fostered by the resumption of collections of stories, similar to those of the prose romances of the Round Table in France, in England, in Spain. The Italian and Spanish short-stories had tended to limit the novel to a single episode. The desire for something encyclopedic, finally terminating in works of three and four thousand pages, was in danger of reducing to a series of disconnected tales what was meant to serve as a novel. Thus, La Mariane du Filomène (1596) made one central action the nucleus for many unconnected episodes. De Nervèze, in his Amours Diverses, frankly assembled seven short-stories. The wavering between a tale and a genuine novel was noticeable. In the one, concentration of passion could be procured: but at the expense of sustained interest and variety. In the other, sustained interest and variety could be secured: but at the expense of intense emotion. The portrayal of real character

or the ample working out of a psychological or a sociological problem occurred to few writers as the sensible means for combining all the best qualities of a novel. Boccaccio and the Italian novelle-writers: Antoine de la Sale, Nicolas de Troyes, Marguerite de Navarre: drove novelists to the one extreme: The Roman de la Rose and the Spanish stories drove them to the other. As the Cárcel de Amor consisted of an allegorical prose-poem, a sentimental fiction, a romance of adventure and chivalry; as the Don Quixote contained something for the idealist in the Knight of the Sad Figure: for the realist in Sancho Panza: for the lover of poetry in the many lyrics: for the patron of the picaresque in the galley-slaves: for the reader of the pastoral in the history of Marcela; something, in fact, for everybody:- so the French sentimental novel was trying to broaden its scope, and finally succeeded in its desires in the Astrée and in Mlle. de Scudéry's works. Intercalated letters and poems became a stock device. Autobiographical monologues by the hero and the heroine, as in the Spanish Arnalte y Lucenda, heightened the personal interest.

All this machinery had to take the place of the knight-errantry, the mythology, the sorcery of the older romances: for that which savored of the remote past and of erudition had gone out of fashion. Men of the world were writing for people of "good society". Théodose Valentinian, in his Amant resuscité, had definitively cast aside the piling up of chivalrous deeds of prowess. Some twenty years later, however, Charles Sorel, in the Berger Extravagant, made sport of these very dialogues, verses, letters, messages, which had become a substitute

for them, largely through imitation of Aeneas Sylvius' Euryalus et Lucretia. Yet, the sixteenth century novelists were on the right track. They were bringing the interval composition nearer to real life. Their interminable conversations, with their exaggerated gallantry, were fixing the necessity of dialogue as a relief from plain narration and a valuable ally in exposition. Hearing the personages talk meant concurrently taking an interest in their vicissitudes. Jacques Corbin's Trophées d'Amour carried the semblance of reality to the point of inserting at the end of his book all the letters written to the heroine. Richardson's novels were already in posse.

Out of the jumble of helter-skelter methods was to come an admirable verisimilitude. The realistic novel of the higher orders was evolving more sincerely out of the late sentimental novel than it had been able to do in the Middle Ages. The life of the time of the writer was being represented as such, and not as Welsh life in the sixth century nor Trojan life eons before the birth of Christ. Antoine La Sale's Petit Jehan de Saintré (1459) had dispensed with the regular romantic background and satisfied itself with the scenery of real life, as had been the case also in his Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles, patterned after the Italian tales. Thus, the fabliaux had, in a roundabout way, through the intermediary of the Italian, aided stalwartly in dismounting the sentimental novel from its wooden horse and bringing it closer to the earth. The medieval chorus advising the reader that the incidents were vouched for by antiquity had lost its voice. Writers began to take pride in

strengthening the impression of actuality. They give assurances that these things have happened, ahd that they can tell when and where. As in the Mariane du Filomène, so in most of the stories written during and after the religious wars of Henri IV, reminiscences of that terrible period are frequent. The action is definitely localized. If D'Urfé describes places in the vicinity of his home at Le Forez, so the authors of Alisée et Diane (1602) and Le Triomphe de la Constance (1605) paint the environment of Tours and of Toulouse.

Thereafter, as even a cursory knowledge of the novels of the seventeenth century proves, the tradition of the exotic disintegrates bit by bit, until, in the Princesse de Clèves a commendable beginning toward the genuine historical novel has been made. The modern national French novel does not yet exist and will not exist until the nineteenth century: but it is rapidly assuming shape. ~~learning how to walk~~. At the sametime, it is developing character. D'Urfé, perhaps, was the first to portray individual character, to distinguish each person by special traits, behavior, habits of thought. Nevertheless, he was not without predecessors. As early as 1538, Hélisenne de Crenne, in her Angoysses douloureuses, had written an autobiographical novel as faithful in its truth to character as Clarissa Harlowe.

> "On ne peut donc refuser à cette première partie des Angoysses le mérite d'avoir assez heureusement associé l'imitation intelligente d'une oeuvre de grand art et une observation juste et sincère de la réalité. Elle a encore l'avantage d'être notre premier roman autobiographique, le premier livre français qui puisse s'appeler 'le Journal d'une femme.' Avec son action simple et commune, ses péripéties si ordinaires, elle est enfin la première de

> nos histoires où l'on voie reculer la fiction romanesque et passer au premier plan l'élément sentimental."1

All the forces of foreign and native literature had conspired to raise a solid pedestal for the sentimental novel by the end of the sixteenth century. Its subsequent evolution was to be less laborious, less fitful. It was the first type clearly to disengage itself from the welter of hybrid forms. As an aristocratic species, it had received the greatest encouragement throughout the ages. Of all the aristocratic types of narrative fiction, it alone survived. The story-telling of the higher classes had always tended toward it as its goal. The second of the two principal categories of the novel, namely, the bourgeois,-or the realistic, as some historians erroneously call it,- was still in an amorphous state at the publication of the Astrée. But its triumph was coming. Social, political, religious, economic conditions were rendering its advent inevitable. The democratic party, which had had to be content with a view of the audience from the rear of the stage, was elbowing its way into the limelight. Its love-story was also to be played: but it was to be no mere pantomime of its betters.

1. Reynier - Rom. S. - p. 118.

CHAPTER 4.

The Bourgeois Novel.

The aristocratic story had evolved the crowning principle of the novel by the beginning of the seventeenth century; namely, the depiction of sentiment, no matter what the content might be. It could then go no farther. With its money, its social standing, its intellectual superiority, the class for which and about which the novel was written, could contribute only one dramatic condition,- the conflict of emotions. Well-bred society had no public grievances, no unconventional mode of life, to present. The prospects for something fresh, striking, inspiriting were extremely slim. What though Gomberville, in Polexandre, was to add an exotic flavor by arousing interest in foreign geography? What though La Calprenède was to graft exuberant historical fancy on the sentimental-theme? The novel could offer little to the average man: and the average man, in France, was coming to mean the whole nation. Literary men themselves were beginning to get tired of its monotony. The only excuse which some had for writing novels lay in the popularity of the form. In an earlier period, they would have composed fabliaux, farces, satires, When, finally, it dawned on a few choice spirits that the longer type of narration could serve admirably for the portrayal of bourgeois life,- as, in the drama, the comedy was doing,- the suggestion came from abroad; principally, from Spain. The borrowing, however, was really in the nature of the levy of interest on foreign investments.

For awhile, French novelists were guided by the Spanish picaresque tales. At the same time, nevertheless, they were pouring the esprit gaulois and the facts of every-day life into a mould that was as much a parody of the native novel as an imitation of the Spanish. Their predecessors, the authors of the Roman de Renart, Jean de Meun, Rabelais, had on many occasions written the prelude for the modern bourgeois novel, both as to form and as to content. Given an age abounding in satiric, rebellious spirits such as characterized the seventeenth century, and it would be extraordinary if any form of literature,- much less, the tiresome aristocratic kind,- were to remain free from their travesties.

Still, the bourgeois novel failed to have a satisfactory existence until well into the seventeenth century, or even later. It was always arriving, but had not yet arrived by the date with which this study stops. That is no reason, though, why its history should not be sketched, or its unsuccessful efforts to establish itself, indicated.

If the novel of the people had taken shape before the aristocratic novel, it would have been almost impossible to explain the phenomenon. Everything was against it,- the genius of the masses as well as the economic dependence of writers. The reading-public among them was small: and while the courts held sway, few heroes of popular origin could expect to compete with the more dazzling array of kings and barons. Besides, the common man, with few exceptions, was believed incapable of heroism, and unsuitable for laudatory mention. The warrior,

the knight were the only personages worthy of song. Rarely did a vilain, as Rigaut in Garin, rise above his class. What happened to him must remain below the notice of dignified narration. How was the actual reading-public, largely centered in the castles, to tolerate any prominence on the part of the serfs, for example?

"Or si vos pri d'ore en avant,
Por Dieu, que que de moi aviegne
Que jamais a vo cort ne viegne
Nus sers por estre vos baillius.
Car hayrs hom est honis et vix,
Qui de soi fait nul vilain mestre.
Vilain! et conment porroit estre
Que vilaine fust gentix ne frans?"[1]

As for the merchants and the artisans, their labors could be commented on, only as they were reflected in the rich cities and the busy market-places.[2] Their lives were too dull, too commercial for epic or romantic representation.

Consequently, the bourgeois novel never obtained a foothold in the older kinds of narration. We might search the chansons de geste, the romances, the sentimental novel, for passages about the lower classes and references to them, and find a large amount of material: yet we might bring away the conviction that the democratic novel did not originate in any of them. Though fairly rich in bourgeois details, the aristocratic stories seem to have no intimation of a species devoted to the description of the trials and tribulations of Jean or Margot. Nevertheless, these very novels were responsible for the appearance of the genuine bourgeois novel, but at a

1. Escoufle - v. 1624 ff.
2. cf. Les Narbonnais, & Le Mariage Guillaume.

late period. As the last of the prominent species of the novel in assuming a definite shape, it assimilated the methods already worked out elsewhere. Baudoin de Sebourc, considered in a way as a novel about the people, appropriated the style of the chanson de geste: the Roman de Renart, after the clercs undertook to treat it as a consecutive work, became a parody, likewise of the epic: Jean de Meun's addition to the Roman de la Rose, full of the feelings of the masses, continued the plan introduced by Guillaume de Lorris and thereby connected the bourgeois novel with the chivalrous and the sentimental romance: and Rabelais, burlesquing both the romance and the epic, and employing the devices of the Italian writers of novelle, forged another link in the chain which held together the aristocratic and democratic forms of the novel. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, the bourgeois novel was still in a shapeless condition. It had not found itself. When Charles Sorel published his Francion and his Berger Extravagant, and Le Sage, his Gil Blas, the power of the older novels was as yet intact. Sorel, making sport of the Astrée, adapted the method of the sentimental novel to his own uses: and Le Sage, imitating the Spanish picaresque novel, was at no great distance from the romances of chivalry, against which the picaresque tales were a reaction.

Bourgeois narration, then, in so far as it developed into novel-form, was dependent on the romances of the upper classes. During the period with which we are busied, it struggled valiantly against the acceptance of the longer type of story. Until the formation of an educated, leisure, bourgeois class,

it stood by its own favorite species,- the short-story, with its elements of comedy and satire, its crude sensualism, and its practical fidelity to the common realities of life. In the guise of *fabliaux* and *contes*, it influenced strongly the English and Italian art of story-telling, which, in turn, penetrated the French sentimental novel and exerted a heavy pressure in the direction of dramatic unity and every-day treatment. Its supremacy was bound to come. Its ultimate arrival was surer than that of the French revolution. From the very start of connected story-writing in France, it marched along at the side of its more imposing rival,- always in the shadow, always making itself small, always keeping behind its capabilities, but finally encroaching on the aristocratic novel, arrogating to itself the right to deal with the sentiments in a dignified manner, and nearly obliterating its competitor. Until the eighteenth century, the *bona fide* novel,- that is the long narrative with certain principles of composition,- was practically nothing more than the aristocratic novel. After that the *bourgeois* type,- the novel of the people,- made the laws and enforced them.

From time to time, the *bourgeois* conception of life made incursions into the domain of epic and romance and seemed about to transform them. These efforts, however, were not followed up in any systematic manner: and the original species remained unchanged. The ordinary expression of *bourgeois* sentiment appeared in the form of raillery or burlesque, as if an excuse were needed for its existence: as if the writer felt

that the representation of a serious middle class would not be palatable to the audience whose good will it was his professional duty to foster. Wherever the bourgeois novel undertook to exhibit its strength, parody was its favorite weapon. This was a confession of weakness: yet a necessary one, like that of the jester who, failing to have his intellectual keenness recognized in any other shape, vented his ideas under cap and bells. In Spain, where the realistic novel antedated that of France, the picaresque story was as much a burlesque as the Don Quixote. Several of the chansons de geste exhibit that tendency. The Pèlerinage de Charlemagne à Jérusalem, a serio-comic epic, called the 'oldest specimen of the Parisian spirit'; Ardigier, having the coarseness of the fabliaux; Hugues Capet, with the grandson of a butcher as its hero, and its admiration for the mercantile corporations; Aperis, in which a humble charcoal-burner triumphs against the Norwegian invaders:- give a considerable space to the humbler elements of society. Almost always, however, the nether stratum is drawn in the broad lines of caricature. Rainoart, in Alischans, plays the part of the clown, though he is a powerful warrior; Ernaut de Girone, in Aymeri de Narbonne, mingles buffoonery along with his heroism. As for Bauduin de Sebourc, even when the author mocks the common people, the appeal in it to their likings and dislikings is irresistible. As in the Spanish Don Florindo, the consecrated framework is preserved: but that is all. Bauduin's sacrilegious conduct on more than one occasion, his polygamistic tendencies, his love of broad, practical joking, make us think of

a series of fabliaux in epic clothing. His very exaggerations, by means of which he credits Hector with having been fifteen feet tall and Ardeastus with having governed Arges one hundred and forty years, smack of the popular burlesque, and not of the genuine epic. If the author of Bauduin had had a "school" at his back,- for French literature has always been both an evolution and a revolution,- he might have advanced the progress of the bourgeois by several hundred years.

As in the epic, so in the romance, the bourgeois appears for fleeting moments. Chrétien, who looks on a dead courtier as more valuable than a live vilains, has gone to a great deal of trouble in narrating the adventures of the lady's-maid, in Yvain. Other humble characters, he mentions occasionally, as the serf Jean, in Cligès: but without any special interest. Lunette , he draws carefully and with evident relish, in a style suggestive of Marivaux.

> "Le rôle de Lunette auprès de sa dame est bien celui d'une 'suivante' qui reçoit toutes les confidences et donne tous les conseils en matière d'amour. Aussi est-ce un type féminin extrêmement curieux, unique non seulement dans l'oeuvre de Chrétien, mais dans toute la littérature contemporaine."1

On account of her good-heartedness and general resourcefulness, she forms a pleasant contrast to Margiste, the old harridan, and her daughter, Alistete, in Berte aus grans piés. She is the refreshing character in Yvain, not too much bound down by aristocratic conventionalities, as are the leading personages, nor immune from hardship,—because of the tyranny of her mistress. But Chrétien soon desisted from this bourgeois character-portrayal.

1. Borodine - Chrét. - p. 197.

Other romance writers, too, had something to say of the masses, but generally in a depreciative tone, and briefly, as if the dwelling on them defiled, like pitch. Some of them exhibited a knowledge of the fabliaux, regarding them as an inferior class of writing, suitable only for unsavory mention. In the Tristan, reference is made to the oldest fabliau, Richeut:

"Or me dites, reine Isolt,
Dès quant avés esté Richolt?"[1]

In the Roman d'Alexandre, the Macedonian conqueror has to listen to a lecture from Aristotle on the bad faith of the serfs.[2]

The Roman de Thèbes appears frequently to repeat homely proverbs picked up from among the poeple:

"Qui contre aguillon esquacire,
ij fois se point, oï l'ai dire."
(v. 7007-8)

Finally, an occasional poet did not disdain to transform a fabliau into a tale of chivalry: yet, it is significant to observe that a complete change was necessary. The fabliau, La Bourgeoise d'Orléans, was worked over by Ramon Vidal de Besaudun into a style that would be acceptable to his hearers:

"On ne conçoit guere ce conte transporté dans un milieu chevaleresque, courtois. a courue à diverse
C'est pourtant la fortune qu'il a reprises.
---Ramon Vidal de Besaudun a imaginé pour ce récit un cadre élégant: il le fait raconter par un jongleur dans une cour royale, en présence d'Alphonse, roi de Castille, et de la reine Éléonore, fille d'Éléonore d'Aquitaine. Ce public courtois et les goûts plus relevés de Ramon Vidal lui imposent d'ennoblir le fabliau. L'amant ne sera donc plus un clerc trop gras, mais le plus preux des chevaliers d'Aragon--. Le mari ne sera plus un bourgeois débonnaire, mais le suzerain de Bascol, n'Amfol de Bar-

1. ~~Meyer - Alex. - p. 162.~~
cf. Bédier, - Fab. - p. 266.
2. Meyer, - Alex. - p. 162

bastre."1

To the literature and the sentiments of the people, the aristocratic novel presented closed doors. A genuine monoply in the extended form of narration had been created: and that monopoly remained unassailable excepting in the case of a very few strong, independent, and sarcastic thinkers. It became almost a tradition that works of some length must seek the patronage of the leisure classes. It is probable, however, that the novel would not have had attractions for the bourgeois in the earlier portion of the Middle Ages because of educational and social conditions. As a form capable of development chiefly in its quality as a subject for reading, the novel required an audience which could pay the price and show the requisite patience. These characteristics were to be found rarely outside of the nobility and the wealthier bourgeois. To the latter, the aristocratic romances were accessible. The farmers, carpenters, blacksmiths, shop-clerks, servants had, in all likelihood, about as much opportunity for leisurely reading as the benighted miners in our coal-centers or the steel-workers in the mills of Pittsburgh. The eight-hour law did not exist. Even where there was spare time, the inclination toward spending it over a book,- assuming that literacy was much more common than we have reason to suppose it,- must have been weak. Prolonged reading is a habit: and, indeed, an extremely modern habit. Those of us who have had glimpses of medieval life elsewhere,- such as that of the Carolina mountaineer or the South American peasant,- can have a glimmering of the life of the French lab-

1. Bedier - Fab. - p. 261.

oring-man in the Middle Ages. To expect to encounter the full-fledged novel in his midst would be an absurdity.

That the French bourgeois possessed a type of narration of their own, nevertheless, is as certain as the existence of the romances and the chansons de geste. Story-telling has always flourished among the mob. In the fertile narrative period comprised between 1150 and 1300, the professional purveyor of tales held a position of considerable importance. Even foreign story-tellers were attracted to France, as, for example, the Breton harpers. When Renart, all dyed over, meets Isengrin, he states that he is from Bretagne, that he is a jongleur, and that his name is Galopin. Next, in an impudent mixture of French and Flemish, he runs over his repertory:

"Ge fot savoir bon lai breton
Et de Merlin et de Noton,
Del roi Artu et de Tristan,
Del chevrefoil, de saint Brandan.
--Et ses tu le lai dam Iset?
--Ya, ya; goditoet,
Ge fot saver, fet-il, trestoz".1

The French jongleur, too, was in the habit of varying his recital of epic and romance by a popular interlude, in the shape of fabliaux or lais, particularly, when he found himself in the market-place or the tavern. The curious fact is not that this happened in the period of which we are speaking,- for the wandering musician and narrator are a world-old institution,- but that oral tradition, folk-lore, suddenly elevated itself into a literary type. Marie de France, Pierre de Saint-Cloud,- one of the collaborators in the roman d'Alexandre,- Eustache d'Amiens, Jacques de Baisieux, Henri d'Andeli, Rutebeuf, persons of education and literary training, began to put into lasting form the

1. cf. Sudre - Renart - 252

stories which for hundreds of years had rested in the anonymous obscurity of word of mouth. They started into being the novel of the people, the short story, which was to be the favorite bourgeois type of narrative fiction until the political and educational emancipation of a comparatively recent day.

How shall we explain the rise of a species which offers so plain a contrast to the prevailing kind of narration? Shall we say with Brunetière:

> "La littérature des Fabliaux, populaire ou bourgeoise, était une réaction, contre la littérature féodale des Chansons de geste. Les romans de la Table-Ronde, aristocratiques, poétiques, et déjà précieux, sont à leur tour, une réaction contre la littérature des Fabliaux."[1]

The assumption here made that the fabliaux were forced to take cognizance of the chansons de geste, and that the romances paid attention to the growth of the fabliaux, is based on superficial reasoning. It is an instance of that narrow outlook in literary history and criticism which has, more than anything else, been responsible for the premature aging of much erudite work. No single type of story has ever appealed to all readers in any particular epoch: no reader has ever restricted his reading to only one special type of story. The development of a new branch need not indicate satiety in other directions, though it may often do so. If, like the burlesque writing of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the fabliaux had followed a form of literature fundamentally artificial and untrue, and had parodied it, we might correctly say that they were reactionary. We

1. Brunetière - Et. Crit. VI. p. 74.

know, however, that they were put on the same level with the chansons de geste and the romans de chevalerie. An important part of the curriculum for young noblewomen was the recitation of fabliaux and romances.[1] In the Enseignemens de Trébor, the father admonishes his son thus:

"Fiz, se tu sez contes conter,
Ou chansons de geste chanter
Ne te laisse pas trop proier."[2]

Both kinds of narration,- the long and the short,- were in vogue. Neither had, primarily, a political aim. Their chief purpose was to tell a story. The baron who heard a fabliau was not led to associate it with an epic: nor was the bourgeois induced by the one to think of the other. The fabliau did not supplant the chanson de geste, nor was it supplanted by the romance. The three forms flourished side by side, as representatives of three styles in fiction. The significant point is that the description of bourgeois life was permitted to become literature, to receive written expression. The jests of peasants, the servant-gossip retailed to every master during the day, the satire of priests, the thousand and one "best" stories of the village-tavern, were collected for the entertainment of both high and low. Trouvères wrote them, along with chansons de geste, and turned them over to jongleurs, who recited them.

The chronological history of the epics, romances, and fabliaux, proves conclusively that the latter did not set themselves in opposition to the others. The earliest extant fabliau

1. cf. Jourdain - Ed. des Fem. - p. 491-2
2. Ibid. - p. 494.

is Richeut, bearing the date 1159. The latest, composed by Jean de Condé, appeared about 1340. Now, before 1159, the chansons de geste were few in number, the vast majority coming in the second half of the twelfth century, and during the whole of the thirteenth. If the fabliaux had been an aristocratic product, appealing to persons of greater sensibility than those addressed by the chansons de geste, they might have constituted a very early reaction. Or, if people had had a chance to become tired of the longer narratives, they might have denoted a reaction. Or, if the chansons de geste had bored the masses, the fabliaux might have indicated a reaction. None of these conditions was fulfilled. Fabliau and epic were equally liked: and some writers, like Jean Bodel, wrote both, just as Thackeray wrote Henry Esmond and Mr. Yellowplush. Similarly, from the standpoint of time, it seems improbable that the romances reacted against the fabliaux. Chrétien, starting his literary career about 1160 or 1165, would have had few fabliaux to react against: and the classical romances antedated the popular tales.

But other considerations even more decisively induce the belief that there was no conscious opposition between the fabliaux and epic or romance. The first, to be sure, emphasized the occurrences of bourgeois life, and the second, aristocratic habits and manners. Yet, there was no law which forbade the fabliaux from adopting the elevation of their superiors. Primarily humorous stories in verse, founded on the daily experience of the common man, they often step aside, assume the

more aristocratic name of lai,- as in the Lai d'Aristote, Lai de l'Epervier, Lai du Cort Mantel,- acquire a more delicate mode of expression, and occasionally rise to heights of noble utterance not ~~unbecoming to~~ unworthy of the finest of the romances. The Chevalier au Chainse, Guillaume au Faucon, Le Vair Palefroi, included by M. Bédier among the genuine fabliaux, exhibit a nobility of thought and action worthy of the elegant lais of Marie de France. In Le Prêtre et le Chevalier, the portrait of Gilles, the chapelain's niece, is a replica of the aristocratic pictures in the romantic gallery. Though bound down, as a class, to present actuality, the fabliaux sometimes, as in the Lai d'Aristote, reach back into history, and adopt some of the themes of classical romance. Taking their particular aroma from the French soil in which they are rooted, they now and then have recourse to spices from the Orient. Trubert, regarded by some critics as a picaresque novel, but in reality a collection of fabliaux, is an imitation of Eastern tales. Audigier, like the Roman de Renart a series of fabliaux carried out to epic length, burlesqued the chansons de geste in a language full of crudities, and made use of the metre of Aiol, in spite of the universal employment of the octosyllable. Staying close to the ground, the fabliaux, nevertheless, on several occasions boldly stepped in where angels tread with fear. In La Cour de Paradis,-in which God, the Virgin, and the Saints dance,- in Saint Pierre et Le Jongleur, and others, the mocking spirit germane to the fabliaux, is at moments softened into something like reverence.

"Il y a peu de Fabliaux historiques; mais

"en revanche, il y en a un grand nombre de galants, d'Érotiques, de dévots et de pieux--."[1]

The doctrine of the inherent wickedness of woman is somewhat shaken by a tale such as Le Vair Palefroi, written

"Pour remembrer et pour retraire
Les biens qu'on puet de femme traire,
Et la douçor et la franchise-."

The notion that the bourgeois is the only fit subject for ridicule, or the clergy, for godless satire, has to be modified when it is observed that chevaliers and vilains must run the same gauntlet. This does not detract from the evident relish with which the female of the species is scored or the citizen placed in all sorts of situations reflecting on his intelligence and his practicality: but it need not imply that the higher classes were made fun of so as to satisfy the populace in the marketplace or the bourgeois in his home before whom the fabliaux were recited. If the sole audience had been of the very category subjected to ridicule, the personages could have remained as they actually appeared. It was no breach of courtesy to caricature the bourgeois in his own presence. Probably no portion of Molière's audience so much enjoyed and applauded the unlucky bourgeois types, as the very class whom they flayed. It has been so always.

Apparently the fabliaux are not homogeneous in content. Their only object is to tell a story: and to tell it in such a way as to reach the heart of the masses. They are the from consecrated to the depiction of common, every-day, bourgeois life,

1. Roquefort - Poés. fr. - p. 189.

short, to the point, concrete, popular in their realism,- just as the chansons de geste were devoted to warlike narrations, and the romances, to stories of chivalry and passion. They were probably as familiar to the nobles as to the crowd in the street. The author of Renart indicates this to the seigneurs whom he is addressing:

"Seigneur, oï avez maint conte
Que maint conterre vous raconte,
Comment Paris ravit Elaine,
Le mal qu'il en ot et la paine;
De Tristan, qui la Chievre fist,
Et fabliaus et chansons de geste."[1]

They varied in length, from eighteen to about twelve hundred verses: and in very rare instances, in metre also, though the octosyllable was, as in almost all narration outside the chansons de geste, the traditional measure. They constituted the novel of the people, and answered their needs. If they had combined various episodes into one long narration, they would have started the real, bourgeois novel in the twelfth century. Audigier, Trubert, and the Roman de Renart are isolated, yet valuable, indications of the goal toward which the narrative literature of the people was gravitating. It still lacked the novel-form, in the restricted sense of the term, but it possessed all the other necessary elements.

The rise of the fabliaux appears to have been due to much simpler causes than those alleged by the majority of critics. Social and political conditions must have had some share in it, since the bourgeois was in a position to have at his service corps of writers who supplied the natural demand for sub-

1. cf. Bédier - Fab. - pp. 339-40

jects near at home. But the external environment must have been in readiness twenty-five or fifty years before. The last half of the twelfth century saw no decisive change in the mode of life of the people, no one happening, such as the French Revolution, which would have reversed the attitude of nobles and commoners. The power of the bourgeois was steadily increasing, it is true: certain bourgeois families were dominating many of the cities, such as the houses of Arrode, Popin, Piz d'Oie, Passi, in Paris; of Colomb, at Bordeaux; of Auffrei, at La Rochelle, of Manduel, at Marseille; of Fergaut, at Rouen.[1] Bourgeois were acting in various judicial, legislative, administrative capacities as judges, counsellors, diplomats. The mercantile hanses, or district monopolies, were forming, and the spirit of commercial union was growing strong. Entire villages were rebelling against oppressive taxation, and becoming communes. These facts may account for the later rich development of the fabliaux, but not for their beginnings. Moreover, the fabliaux almost never take upon themselves the task of setting forth the material progress of the class in which they are interested. They merely describe the daily life of the bourgeoisie, such as it must have been from time immemorial, as something quite ordinary, natural, well-known to the writer. The authors of fabliaux were not philosophers, historians, nor politicians. Neither were they literary reformers. A few of them had put popular stories into written form, disposed of them to the jongleurs, found that there was a market for this kind of ware among both the masses and the nobles, and had thereafter taken care to sup-

1. cf. Luchaire - Hist. de F. III. - p. 397.

ply the demand. They were exploiting a field of narrative uncultivated by the chansons de geste, the lives of saints, the Breton romances, the Byzantine stories, the lais, the moralizing contes, the love-lyrics, the pseudo-chronicles. Of all the story-telling types, the fabliaux were the least affected by artistic theories. They maintained the uncomplicated principles of the universal oral anecdote: brevity, naturalness, appositeness. Description, the marvellous, sustained sentiment, were out of place in them, as they are today in the ordinary "story" of the smoking-room or the club. At rare intervals, a narrator with a high sense of the picturesque, inserted imaginative touches, as in Aloul, or in the Lai d'Aristote.

Like all types of narration in the Middle Ages, the fabliau developed into a definite form, and made use of stereotyped methods. The chanson de geste, after a while, was shaped in a recognized mould: the Breton romance was turned out much like a casting: the sentimental Byzantine tale assumed a special shape. This was true of the fabliau. It designated a story of ordinary life told in eight-syllabled lines, with a humorous and rather ironical purport. Other kinds of short-story existed at its side,- the conte, the fable, the dit,- but it became the humorous tale, par exellence, with no moralizing at the base of it, such as could be found in the dit or the fable. The original source of the narration mattered little: it might be a fable, a romance, a topic out of antiquity: but whatever was borrowed, was converted into a jocular treatment of daily commonplace. These simple regulations were more strictly followed in accordance with the growing clearness acquired

by the term. Until 1180, when the name occurs in Marie de France's Fables, undeniable fabliaux were called something else. After about 1340, the name disappeared along with the class which it defined. What, then, happened to the stories of the people? Did oral tradition suffer a reverse? Had the mine of humorous anecdote or folk-lore been exhausted? Had the last of the fabliaux- writers, Jean de Condé, taken the secret of composing them with him to the grave? This seems hardly likely. The spirit of the fabliaux never died. It exists today. The particular form, however, became extinct, giving way to the dramatic, as farces or soties, and the prose, as nouvelles. The name went with it. M. Bédier's supposition that

> "Les fabliaux étaient le produit de ce double agent: l'esprit bourgeois, l'esprit du jongleur; les jongleurs sont devenus # des gens de lettres, qui ne s'adressent plus jamais aux bourgeois; dès lors, les fabliaux meurent,"[1]

is true in part, and in part, false. The growth of a reading public was a death-blow to the fabliau, as a technical class. Surroundings which were inimical to jongleur-recitation required, perhaps, a different narrative treatment. The individual minstrels were becoming organized into companies: the small groups of bystanders, uncertain in number and unfixed in locality, were uniting and attending performances in definite places. The church was utilizing the talents of men who, at an earlier period, would have delivered fabliaux before the crowd in the market-place. Already, in the thirteenth century, Rustebeuf, besides composing fabliaux, had made use of a more dramatic

1. Bédier - Fab. - p. 383.

vehicle, in the Miracle de Théophile. Later, Eustaches Deschamps converted the fabliaux-novel, Trubert, into the farce, Maistre Trubert. The miracle-plays,--a more modern substitute for the rudimentary dramatic representation of the fabliaux,--absorbed much of the content and manner of the popular tales, and with only a slight and by no means essential religious flavor, with practically no relation to the church excepting, as often happened, in the way of criticism and satire, gave to the people that which the jongleurs had been in the habit of supplying. The jongleurs became associated into puys,--and it is significant to note that bourgeois poets, such as Pierre Moniot, Gillebert de Berneville, Jehan Bretel became an important element in them,--the puys developed into dramatic

troupes, and these companies specialized in the miracle-play and the farce. The fabliaux went out of fashion in a perfectly normal manner. With the extension of their scope, a new term arose. But they always had the same audience, composed chiefly of bourgeois, and in a minor degree, of the upper classes.

What the origin of the fabliaux was, has no particular value for this paper. Whether they owed their being to the influx of Oriental stories or to oral French tradition has no significance for us. We know that the material out of which they were made existed, and that a characteristic form was given them by French writers. We know that the jongleurs prefaced them by some such statement as this,

"J'oï conter l'autre semaine",

and that they distinctly give the impression of having taken them from popular lore. That is the interesting point. The everyday life of the people was beginning to invade literature. No rule was laid down to prevent variety in the internal mechanism of the type: the subject-matter might even be foreign; allusions might be made to aristocratic works, such as the Roman de Troie and the Breton romances;[1] the lyrical note might be struck, though sparingly. The individual author had a considerable freedom of movement. But whatever was undertaken, had to be written in a popular vein, with realistic touches, and an appeal to the risibilities. Laughter was their mainspring, as it is today of most classes of popular entertainment. Only the educated find real pleasure in tears. It is because of the laughter in them, because of the broad caricatures of the priesthood, because of their delight in barefaced knavery, because of their fondness

1. cf. Dernedde - Ep. Stof. - p. 114 ff & 95 ff.

for the crude situation picturing the prosperous, stupid bourgeois outwitted by his clever,sinful wife, that we can accept the fabliaux as the representative literature of the masses. All that they relate is not necessarily true, as applied to individuals. The people who listened and the people who wrote undoubtedly had great respect for some members of the church, and for some women. But the clergy, the rich bourgeois, and the fair sex became conventional butts for humor, much as the Irishman and the Jew and the negro, are today.

An important proof of the relation of the fabliaux to the masses is found in the lack of imitation of them in the more elevated types of fiction. Occasionally, a reference occurs, as in the Tristan: and Guillaume de Lorris placed several fabliaux under contribution for the construction of the Roman de la Rose: but this has happened rarely. Those who were writing a higher class of literature had no object in patterning after a lower order. The contrary is true of the longer stories manufactured primarily for bourgeois consumption. The spirit of the fabliaux is alive in them: and it is probably the popularity of the former which encouraged the more extended efforts. Audigier, Trubert, the Roman de Renart , employ the method of the fabliaux, and with Baudouin de Sebourc and a few other works, may be looked on as the originators of the so-called "realistic" novel. Although the fabliaux may not have been the starting-point for these stories; although they may all be different forms of the same sentiment, coming into existence simultaneously: there is reason for deriving from the fabliaux

much of the inspiration of one or two of them, and certainly of Renart. Several times, the authors of the animal story had recourse to specific fabliaux. In the branch called Renart Teinturier, the unseemly dispute between Hermeline and Hersent, who end by fighting like two fishwives, is a repetition of the theme of Richeut. Concerning the Renart-Hersent episode, which is compared with the fabliau in question, M. Sudre observes:

> "D'ailleurs rien n'aurait été plus naturel que cette influence d'un genre d'écrits sur l'autre. Le fabliau et le conte d'animaux se côtoient. L'un présente des hommes pris sur le vif, saisis dans leurs gestes habituels, l'autre des animaux qui ne sont souvent que des hommes travestis, dépeints dans les mêmes conditions; ils ont le même fond d'idées et le même procédé d'observation réaliste; ils ont aussi un but identique: par leurs incidents plaisants tissés sur une trame légère, ils veulent faire rire, égayer, sans instruire ni moraliser."1

The dialectical mixture of Flemish and French which Renart uses, appears to be identical with that employed in the fabliau, Les Deux Anglois. It would be an instructive piece of work to investigate the influence of the fabliaux on this and other popular narratives of the thirteenth century. The result might be the definite establishment of the fabliaux as the genuine, ultimate source of the "realistic" or democratic novel, just as the chansons de geste are the definite beginning of the aristocratic novel, and of the true novel in general. The procedure followed in exerting an effect on the democratic novel would be found to resemble singularly the course of the more elevated story. The connection between the fabliaux and the democratic novel cannot be represented by a straight line. In the fourteenth

1. Sudre - Renart - p. 152

and fifteenth centuries, the fabliaux migtated to Italy, England, and Spain, where the climate was more favorable for them, freer from the deadly, moralizing frenzy which had taken possession of the French narrative and dramatic arts and returned in the sixteenth century, with deeper color and richer song, to inspire a Marguerite de Navarre, a Rabelais.

The dissemination of the fabliaux in foreign lands and the adaptation of them may never be calculated with precision, since a confusing factor, in the guise of universal folklore, enters into the question. It has been the custom to derive a great deal of the foundation for the Italian novelle from the French tales: but here comes M. Bédier with the declaration that Boccaccio and his followers knew no more about the fabliaux than Ptolemy, of the existence of America, and that they merely extracted their material from oral tradition.[1] Gaston Paris, slightly more conservative, believes in the Italian imitation of the French, with the restriction that, as these stories circulated all over Europe, the writers may have gathered them independently in their own countries.[2] The presumption against the French sources is not, however, particularly strong. The Italian authors, such as Boccaccio, were near enough in time to the active period of the fabliaux to be suspected of acquaintance with them. Dante had been enthusiastic about the romances, and Petrarch, about the Roman de la Rose. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Italy was flooded with imitations of the chansons de geste. To attempt to make a folk-lorist of Boccac-

1. cf. Bédier - Fab. Introd. XXIII
2. cf G. Paris - Litt. fr. - p. 114.

cio savors of anachromism. That the jongleurs should have reduced to writing the stories of the people is a condition readily admitted. They wrote for the masses, mingled with them, and collected common anecdotes for use in their trade. But the author of the Decameron had no such affiliations. Moreover, the resemblance between the tales of the Decameron and the fabliaux is so constant and so striking that it constitutes the strongest kind of circumstantial evidence. Among others, Dr. Landau and Mr. A. C. Lee have shown this apparent connection. Some of the fabliaux which may well have been,- and probably were,- the originals of the Italian novelle may here be mentioned, for the sake of demonstrating that the borrowing was not casual: thus, the Dis dou vrai aniel enters into novel 3, of the first Day, of the Decameron: L'Evesque qui benit sa Maîtresse, into novel 4: Boivin de Provins into novel 5, of the second Day: L'Abesse qui fut grosse, into novel 7: the Roman de Trubert, into novel 2, of the third Day: Le Meunier d'Arleux, into novel 6: Li Vilain de Bailleul into novel 7: Guillaume au Faucon, into novel 9 of the fifth Day: the Chevalier qui recovra l'amor de sa dame, into novel 1 of the seventh Day: the Castioment d'un père à son fils, into novel 6: the Dit de la Nonnete, into novel 2 of the ninth Day:- and so on. Masuccio, Doni, Sacchetti, Straparola, Pecorone, are likewise indebted to the fabliaux, as Dr. Landau has pointed out. There is no reason why, on the one hand, the influence of the chansons de geste in the sixteenth century, for example, should be granted, and that of the fabliaux denied. The latter had been preserved

with as much care as the former. Similarly, Chaucer has utilized in his Canterbury Tales fabliaux, such as Jean de Boves' Gombert et les deux clercs, besides Breton lais and the Roman de la Rose. Indeed, according to M. Sandras,

> "Les travaux de Tyrwhitt, de Douce et de Thomas Wright en Angleterre, de Von der Hagen, de Liebrecht et de Keller en Allemagne, ceux de M. Victor le Clerc en France, ont fait connaître la plupart des originaux que l'auteur des Contes de Canterbury a eus entre les mains. Le résultat de ces investigations laborieuses a été de constater que le poëte anglais ne doit rien au Décameron, et qu'il a puisé, comme Boccace, à des sources françaises."[1]

The fabliaux were known and adapted in Germany, as in Hugo von Trimberg's Der Renner, of the end of the thirteenth century; and in Spain, as in the Libro de Buen Amor of the Spanish Chaucer, the Arcipreste de Hita.

The true character of the fabliaux may be comprehended more exactly, if they are set side by side with the lais,- a type identical in external construction, but totally different in subject and method. The titles themselves are illuminating. Over against the millers, clercs, butchers, valets, vilains, bourgeois of the one, we have the foreign names, full of Breton connotation, of the other: Guigemar, Lanval, Yonec, Laüstic, Eliduc. The lines between the various forms of narration appear to have been drawn very strictly in the Middle Ages. In a few instances,- but only in a few, as, for example, in the fabliau of the Vair Palefroi,- the narrative devoted to popular description partakes of the essence of the lai. Generally

1. cf. Sandras - Chaucer - p. 197.

the lai and the fabliau were kept distinct. They were written for two separate moods. The lais were offshoots of the romantic love-story, and the same aristocratic criticism of life. They repeated the enchantments, the elevated surroundings, the préciosité of the Breton romances. They transplanted Breton customs and manners into medieval France.[1] That extreme passion for realistic characterization so ingrained in the fabliaux, is lacking in the lais. Even from the points of view of origin and influence, these two species of short-story will be seen to remain apart. The authors of fabliaux appear to have been early collectors of folk-lore. The writers of lais drew largely on literary sources and romantic material not indigenous to France. The lais of Narcisse, Pyrame et Thisbé, Orphée were adapted from Ovid: Guigemar has some connection with the Byzantine novel, Parténopeus de Blois: Chievrefeuille may be an elaboration of the description of the magic herb, the dytan, with which Yapis, in the Énéas, cures himself, though the lai has more in common with the Roman de Tristan: and many lais were undoubtedly influenced by Geoffrey of Monmouth's history. On the other hand, they had a visible effect on the longer story of aristocratic bent. The Chastelaine de Vergi appears to have been based on Lanval: Gautier d'Arras' Ille et Galeron is a dilution of Eliduc: and several romans d'aventure are nothing more than extended lais. From this brief summary, it may be quite naturally deduced that the fabliaux had a competitor which forced them to limit their aspirations to democrat-

1. Cf. Warnke - Lais - pp. XXXIII-IV.

ic material and democratic appeal. More important is the certainty that no literary class excepting the fabliaux can claim the credit for having blazed the path for the realistic novel of every-day, average life. If two monuments were to be erected to the discoverers of the modern novel, one, an ornamented column, should be marked "chansons de geste": the other, a plain block of granite, should be marked fabliaux.

The earliest notable attempt to present a genuine novel of the people was made at the beginning of the thirteenth century, when several branches of the Renart story were combined so as to form a connected narrative. This amounted to the assemblage of a large number of fabliaux with Renart as the bond of union. The method employed is that of the chanson de geste, and is an anticipation of the subsequent borrowing of framework from the aristocratic novel for the fiction of the people. Some of the authors of the Renart branches, like Pierre de Saint-Cloud, were well-versed in the mechanism of epic and romance; and it is altogether reasonable to suppose that they transferred principles of the more complete novels to the fragmentary animal-epic, just as the dramatists of the seventeenth century,- La Calprenède, Scarron, Le Sage,- brought their dramatic training to bear on the development of the novels which they were fabricating. The example of Nivard, the Flemish author of Ysengrimus, who related animal-adventures in a connected manner, undoubtedly had some significance in the soldering together of the French tales. But, whatever the source of the form, there is no division of opinion concerning the substantial nature of the Roman de Renart. Each epi-

sode standing by itself is a fabliau. It is a gabet, a risée:

"Or me convient tel chose dire
Dont je vos puisse fere rire."[1]

The entire code of fabliau - writing is applied. In its coarseness, in its extraordinary realism, in its jovial satire, in its pessimism, in its caricature of the bourgeois and the vilain, in its practical joking, in its lack of instruction or moralizing, the Roman de Renart is at one with the fabliaux, and cannot be thought of independently from them. Gaston Paris has called attention to what seems a trenchant difference between the novel and the tales in question. His emphasis on the bitter hatred manifested toward the nobles, in Renart, is just: but the dissimilarity arises from intelligible causes. In the fabliaux, men are called by their names, by their social castes. In Renart, as in the Roman de la Rose, the allegorical apparatus,- for the former is as allegorical as the latter,- permits the keenest sarcasm without much danger to the poet. La Fontaine took advantage of the same device in his Fables. M. Sudre, on the contrary, fails to observe any satiric intention in Renart.[2] So many men, so many minds. Nevertheless, with the rôle given to Noble, the lion, and the increasing imitation of feudal relationships among the animals, it would have been almost impossible for the writer to avoid ironical suggestion. The later branches are admitted even by M. Sudre, to grow in venom: and that quality

1. Renart - IV, v. 1 ff.
2. cf. Sudre - Renart - p. 80.

receives ample play in the sequels, the Couronnement Renart, Renart le Nouvel, Renart le Contrefait. Aside from this inclination, the Renart is in perfect harmony with the fabliaux. An indication has already been offered of the influence of definite fabliaux on the animal-allegory.

It would be a serious mistake, nevertheless, to assign the creation of Renart wholly to the fabliaux. Like the internal structure of all the story-telling classes of the Middle Ages,- and, indeed, of any period,- the mechanism of Renart is composite. The individual authors had personal preferences, and these appear in the narrative. The foundation was fabliau; the ornamentation was variegated. M. Sudre compares it with one of the vast, medieval cathedrals, erected little by little, and bearing the particular imprint of each architect.[1] More than one civilization has left its mark on it. The original Asiatic cycle of the fox and the wolf has bean contaminated by the European cycle of the fox and the bear. The fables of Esop have been joined to the native oral traditions. The colorless outlines of the Greek fabulist have been filled in with vivid, concrete descriptions stirring the minds of the listeners by their reality, as in the branch dealing with the illness of the Lion. In harmony with the age, Renart is represented as a much-experienced personage, a traveler, a Jack-of-all-trades, a jongleur, a free-lance Crusader. He has educated himself, and knows several languages: has familiarized himself with classical learning, and can tell about the Trojan war and Greek and Roman legends. The writers have at their

1. cf. Sudre - Renart - p. 32

fingers' ends the conventional literary material, and are able to borrow from epic, romance, lais, dits, and what not. From Marie de France's Romulus, they have filched details for the Renart-Hersent episodes: from the numerous allegories, they have obtained the hint for the dream in the Renart-Chantecler incident. The Bestiaries have been forced to contribute to the tale of the Charretiers. Clerical influences, generally contained in imitations of the Latin Avianus and Phaedrus, are visible in such scenes as the cure performed by the wolf on the lion. In Branch XXII, Renart saves his skin again by having recourse to magic in supplying the king with a wife of inexhaustible wealth and incomparable beauty,- anticipating Calderón's Wonder-working Magician and Goethe's Mephistopheles,- and paralleling the conclusion of the chanson de geste, Guillaume d'Orange. Everywhere, the mosaic method of composition is in evidence. The conditions under which fiction was written encouraged such treatment. The anonymous authorship of the Renart made it doubly possible. Numberless writers added to the story: and among them, we know the names of a few only, such as Richard de Lison, Pierre de Saint-Cloud and the "prestre de la Croix en Brie." Before the appearance of the second part of the Roman de la Rose, the Renart furnished the most encyclopedic spectacle in popular story-telling. But howsoever diverse it may appear in its minutiae, it possesses the inestimable virtue of unity of appeal. It is the comedy in a hundred acts played before the crowd, in the language, thought, and gesticulations of the crowd. It is the romance of the com-

mon people: sufficiently removed from the facts of human life to have the attraction of the unusual, and close enough to average interests to grip the masses. In it, the fundamental difference between aristocratic and democratic literature is aptly exemplified. The aspirations fostered by education and by the luxuries of wealth tend to carry one farther and farther away from the plain realities of humdrum existence: and the aristocratic novel has always had recourse to illusory expedients for the satisfaction of such feelings. The novel of the "people", however, has had as its duty the nearest possible approximation to what can be seen, heard, felt, smelled, tasted. The five senses are the great realities: and never have they been considered more so than in the lower segment of medieval society in France. It is with the vocabulary of the five senses that the Renart has been manufactured. This alone is a guarantee of its popular character.

The final origin of the Roman de Renart is of no higher importance in a study of the evolution of the novel than that of the chansons de geste or the romances. Only when the stories of which it is composed have been cast into the shape of a continuous narrative, has it any value for us. As a primitive novel of the people, then, the Roman de Renart is only as old as the oldest branch in its texture. In other words, the versions employed by the German poet Heinrich der Glichezare,- who was writing about the year 1180,- probably initiated the possibility of a popular novel on Renart. The collector of folklore, of course, has a much wider vista than ours before him.

His labors must take him into all fields and all types of literature: for to him, the animal-story is science, whereas to us, it is art. That was the thesis maintained by Jakob Grimm and M. Sudre. Their effort has been to articulate fragmentary members, recently discovered, into the antique skeleton of oral tradition: to reconstruct a large tract of mass-psychology.

> "Comme les Jatakas, comme le Pantchatantra, comme les apologues ésopiques et phédriens, le Roman de Renart est à sa manier et dans sa plus grande partie un fragment detaché de l'immense édifice de la tradition orale et populaire. Ces compilations indiennes et gréco-latines nous donnent une image du folk-lore animale de l'antiquité, celle de nos poëtes nous donne l'image du folk-lore animal du moyen-âge."[1]

Once admitted in the twelfth century as a speciamen of narrative art, the Renart must thereafter be reckoned with in the history of the novel. Its merits as a story were early recognized, and have been acknowledged by the eloquent testimony of imitation through the centuries. M. Rostand's Chantecler is, in part, only a modern version of various branches of the Renart. The works to which it immediately gave rise in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries adopted its allegorical mould in behalf of ideas emanating from the people, just as Jean de Meun, with fine irony worked in the looming figure of the People in an unfinished aristocratic web. The Couronnement de Renart, Renart le Nouvel, Renart le Contrefait are not mere series of fabliaux: they have other objects than those of amusement. Jacquemard Gelée, the author of Renart le Nouvel, wishes to teach, by means of stereotyped allegorical figures, such as the six princesses, Colère, Envie, Luxure, Avarice, Gloutonnerie, Paresse, who attend on

1. Sudre - Renart - p. 18.

Renart. In Renart le Contrefait, along with the moralizing spirit and the reminiscences of higher types of fiction, such as the Breton stories, runs a turbulent current of encyclopedic information, evidently set in motion by the Roman de la Rose. The simple animal-anecdotes, accepted with some faith by the people, can no longer pass for such. The allegory has lost whatever sincerity it had, and is used merely as a shield by the weak,- the supporters of democratic notions,- against the strong.

As a story, the Roman de Renart has had many imitations in other literatures and has been the subject of countless allusions, but it has nowhere played so important a part in the development of the bourgeois novel as in France. Artistically, such adaptations as Heinrich der Glichezare's were superior to the French: for they preserved a true unity of interest and action as opposed to the scattered attention of the original, in which the title, Roman de Renart, often becomes a misnomer. Willelm Utenhove's Reinaert and the Low-German Reinke de Vos indicate the continued Germanic liking for the theme, and may be accounted for by the fact that the cycle was formed on the frontier of French and German countries. Many of the proper names of the French branches, indeed, are but alterations of the Teutonic Isengrim, Richild, Hersind, Raginhart. In Italy, selections of the Renart were known at an early period, and a Venetian imitation, called Raimondo e Lesengrino, has been preserved. Boccaccio, among others, appears to have been familiar with the French roman.

As might be expected, Chaucer could not have neglected such an attractive French fiction: and the fables recited in the Nonne Prestes Tale, along with allusions in other portions of his work, show the deep impression made on him by the Renart.

The continuations of the Roman de Renart departed from the initial conception of the story as a diversion, a pastime, and laid stress on the satiric, didactic possibilities. Somehow or other,--whether through clerical influence or the dissemination of learning,--the naïve treatment of literature was losing force toward the beginning of the fourteenth century. Purpose was manifesting itself in all literary forms. A serious period followed the childlike art of a hundred years before. Narrations representative of the life of the people began to agitate questions and display erudition. Authors were assuming the rôle of professors ex cathedra to the masses. Writings of the character of fabliaux were again circulating in the limbo of oral tradition, because they were reckoned unsuitable for literary reproduction. Reading was becoming more common: and writers were directly addressing their public,--in whom a moderate amount of education had to be presupposed,--instead of speaking to an unreflective audience through the jongleurs. These changes have to be taken into consideration in any judgment on Jean de Meun's share in the Roman de la Rose. Otherwise, the violent right-about-face from Guillaume de Lorris' sweet allegory cannot be understood. Why, Brunetière asks, did Jean not choose the Roman de Renart as the framework for his ideas? (1). He would have reached the

1. cf. Brunetière, Man., p. 25.

people much more readily, and received a more distinctly democratic approbation. But, that is exactly what Jean de Meun had no eagerness for. He wanted to impress, not the people, but the rulers. The wrongs against which he preached could be righted only by the higher orders of society. In order, therefore, to define the second part of the Roman de la Rose, it is necessary to regard it as a book about the multitude, not primarily for it. It is, nevertheless, a link in the chain of development of the bourgeois novel. The latter has always progressed by the employment of an elevated casing for its ideas. It might almost be said that the common people in the Middle Ages possessed no technical form in literature or art derived from other sources than the classes above them.

Jean de Meun's work, then, is the most significant example of a new attitude in popular fiction, namely that of a vindication of the intellectual abilities of the people. Raison becomes the prominent figure in the allegory. Satiric attack replaces acquiescent good humor: and this is to be characteristic of the novel in France until after the French revolution. The sociological novel is already in germ at the end of the thirteenth century. Voltaire has been anticipated by Jean Clopinel, the bourgeois poet, whom Gaston Paris calls the Voltaire of the Middle Ages. Similar conditions have evoked like results. Jean de Meun, living in an epoch of encyclopedic curiosity and democratic tendencies, has given expression to the same problems. He has popularized knowledge and provided the average man with letters patent as effective as nobility. Incidentally, he has furnished the democratic

Enclycopedic works like Le Livre de Sidrac, l'Image du Monde (1245), La Mappemonde, La Lumière des Laïques, La Petite Philosophie, Brunetto Latini's Trésor testify to this state.[1]

novel with a basis as solid and universal as the sentimental theme of aristocratic narrative. For hundreds of years after the roman de la Rose, knowledge, reasoning, were to constitute the principal elements of the bourgeois novel: in Rabelais, in Charles Sorel, in Cyrano de Bergerac, in Le Sage, in Voltaire, in Rousseau. The love-affairs of the down-trodden were, until recently, to be regarded as beneath notice: and genuine bourgeois, like Jean de Meun himself, were to dismiss them as insignificant. The Renaissance was having its dawn at the threshold of the fourteenth century. A rationalistic wave was sweeping over France. A literature of thought was supplanting the literature of the emotions.

> "C'est sous l'impulsion de cette renaissance et de ces tendances régénératrices qu'ont été écrits en langue vulgaire--un grand mombre d'encyclopédies, telles que le Livre de Sidrac; l'Imâge du Monde (1245), de Gautier de Metz; la Mappemonde, d'après Solin, par Pierre; la Lumière des Laïques, par Pierre de Peckham; la Petite Philosophie; --le Trésor de Brunetto Latino (v. 1265). Les auteurs de ces ouvrages ont voulu communiquer aux laïques une partie de la science des clercs; c'est aussi le but que Jean de Meun s'est propose--."1

In other words, the novel was becoming, in the hands of bourgeois writers, a means to an end, and not an end in itself. The tradition established at that time was completely at variance with the object of the aristocratic novel in employing subject-matter obtained from antiquity, Bretagne, the Orient, history, the Bestiaires. Facts became important, not as decorative stuff, but as information. If Jean de Meun had utilized some other form than the novel, he would have become renowned as a philosopher, a scientist, a theologian, a sociologist, a

a political economist. But the type chosen by him was the novel as the best didactic instrument of a popular character. He thereby enriched that species and pointed it in a new direction. His addition to Guillaume de Lorris' aristocratic, sentimental novel is one of the most remarkable pieces of practical satire in the history of literature: and there can be no question as to his complete consciousness of intent in his performance. The inversion of characters and the abrupt shifting of interest from the nobility to the middle classes can leave no doubt on this score. What he was not aware of was that he had helped to make of the Roman de la Rose a novel out of its time. The combination of sentiment, purpose, and bourgeois portrayal, which is the essence of the most modern novel, was not repeated in Europe in any adequate form until the publication of Don Quixote.

In that innovation lay the originality of Jean de Meun. Taking up the thread of Guillaume de Lorris' argument where it had been dropped forty years before, Jean continued the allegory to the very last, allowing Amant to pluck the Rose, and to awaken from his dream. The elevated sentimentality of the earlier poet had been brought down to earth: the idealization of woman had altered into a cynical unbelief in the sex in the spirit of the fabliaux and the Roman de Renart: the aloofness from temporal disturbances had disappeared: an acrid criticism of present social evils had been substituted for it, such as the attacks leveled against the priesthood and mercenary judges. But these mutations were natural in the work of

a man of the end of the thirteenth century, who, besides being a bourgeois, had the instincts of his class. If he had been a Keats, though the son of a hostler, he might have refined the delicacy of even a Guillaume de Lorris: He was, however, Jean de Meun, with his training and his leanings. His method of compostion deserves yet less credit. Like most other writers of his age and day, he amalgamated into a semblance of personal manufacture thousands of verses and ideas culled from heterogeneous sources: from the Bible, Homer, Plato, Aristotle, Ptolemy, Cicero, Sallust, Ovid, Lucain, St. Augustine, Boetius, Abelard, Raoul de Houdan, Guillaume de Saint-Amour, numberless trouvères. M. Langlois has traced back to their sources 12,000 lines out of the 17,500 of which Jean de Menn's section of the romance is composed.[1] Today, we should call such procedure bare-faced plagiarism, but it passed current then. If we remember that Molière felt no shame in taking his "good" where he found it, and that Victor Hugo copied his Aymerillot from an obscure romance, Le Château de Daunemarie,[2] written in his own time, we may be willing to excuse Jean de Meun for what had been customary. In spite of all this, he must remain one of the greatest representatives of medieval literature. He is perhaps, the most noteworthy literary individual, not only in the novel, but in the whole range of artistic writing down to 1500, after Chrétien de Troies. Because of his contribution, the Roman de la Rose has been preserved in over two hundred manuscripts, scattered all over Europe; it was trans-

1. cf. Langlois - Rose - pp. 102-3.
2. cf. " " - p. 173.

lated into Flemish by Heinrich Van Aken and into English by Chaucer; it gave rise to a swarm of imitations; and was modernized by Marot. M. Langlois has investigated carefully its origin and sources: a valuable pendant could be presented in a thorough study of its influence. Its effect on the novel, if not so marked as its power in the general field of poetry, has probably been more profound than has heretofore been suspected.

Between Jean de Meun and Rabelais, the bourgeois novel made little progress. The writers were either dèvoting themselves to the traditional chansons de geste and romances or, in the service of the church, constructing miracle-plays or moralities, in the first of which much popular sentiment found voice. The Roman de Renart inspired some imitation, such as Renart le Contrefait, (/1320). The Roman de la Rose gave rise about the middle of the fourteenth century, to moralizing, allegorical creations, such as Guillaume de Deguilleville's Pèlerinage de la Vie humaine, Pèlerinage de l'Ame, Pèlerinage de Jésus-Christ. Occasionally, as in Antoine de la Sale's Petit Jehan de Saintrè, actual, contemporary events were being transferred to the novel. The Italian novelle were arousing attention, and were to reach their climax in Rabelais and Marguerite de Navarre. Some of the chansons de geste,- Hugues Capet, Baùduin de Sebourc,- were looking toward a democratic acceptation: they were infiltrating popular notions into the heroic mass. Copyists were smelting the verse-epics and romances into rude prose for dissemination among the people.

However much of the burlesque spirit there is in his works, we know that they were written as novels. To stigmatize them as unclassifiable writings, as Koerting does, is to evade an important issue, for they must be classified in some group.

Something new, of literary value, in the way of bourgeois fiction, seems to have been almost unthought of. The Renaissance was a powerful factor in delaying the fruition of the novel of the lower classes. People with any talent whatsoever enrolled themselves among the humanists. Those who wrote for the crowd were elbowed back into that obscurity which had preceded the fabliaux. When finally Rabelais appeared, the necessity of jumbling together humanism and other tendencies was practically unavoidable. What Jean de Meun had done largely of his own free-will, Rabelais did under compulsion. Few literary historians have been able to agree on the position of Rabelais' work as a piece of fiction. Koerting has denied it any consideration at all in the development of the novel.

> "Es geschiet Rabelais kein Unrecht, wenn er hier mit Stillschweigen übergangen wird. 'Gargantua und Pantagruel', unserer Meinung nach überhaupt ein unklassifizierbares Werk, is kein eigentlicher Roman und daher auch für die Geschichte des Romans fast ohne die Spur eines Einflusses geblieben."1

Dr. Voretzsch believes the contrary:

> "Er (Rabelais) ist der eigentliche schöpfer des modernen romans, er zuerst hat moderne ideen und probleme in seinem roman dargestellt und erörtert."2

Both these German critics have in mind an exceedingly narrow definition of the novel, and a distorted notion of Rabelais' relation to what preceded him and what came after. We know that Me. Alcofribas was an ardent admirer of the soties and farces: that he has employed phrases and situations out of the farce of the Pot au Lait, La Farce de tout message, La Farce de Colin,

1. Koerting - Franz. Rom. - I, p. 130.
2. Voretzsch - Altf. Lit. - p. 497.
~~3. Mätzig - Rabelais - pp. 29 ff.~~

La Farce de Patelin.[1] That famous "retournons à nos moutons", which we have appropriated from Rabelais, he himself had selected from among the many good things offered to him by Patelin. Consequently, it would be quite within reason to judge him a farceur on a huge scale: to deem Gargantua and Pantagruel two long, narrative farces. That Homeric laughter heard in these early comedies, that exuberance of coarse humor, that insatiable love of buffoonery, we certainly encounter in Rabelais. From one end to the other, his story is a gigantic burlesque. God, Lucifer, Hell, Adam and Eve, the Holy Grail, Noah's Ark,- everything is made the target for boisterous jesting,- from Potiphar, who acts as the "maistre queux des cuisines de Pharaon" to Lucifer afflicted with the colic. Yet, Rabelais' effort is not farce. In content, it goes much farther. In style and underlying principle, it is a genuine novel. It is, moreover, a novel through the sources which inspired the author. Above all, it is a bourgeois novel.

Some evidence has already been presented in this paper to show that the story of the people was almost servilely dependent on aristocratic romance for its machinery, its technique. The entire history of the bourgeois novel is an account of reaction against the narratives of the nobility, usually in the guise of burlesque: a reaction sometimes hostile, sometimes merely in the nature of contrast. Audigier parodied the chansons de geste: the Roman de Renart, in its connected shape, was obedient to the same impulse: Jean de Meun perverted the serious aims of romance. Rabelais burlesqued the prose adulterations of

1. ~~See note 5, p. 363.~~ Mätzig - Rabelais - pp. 29 ff.

epic and romance, and, like Jean de Meun, caused his caricatures to serve a useful purpose. But he made an important step in advance of his precursor: he became a more modern novelist in his employment of prose. In the line of descent, he belongs to the main branch of novel-writing: for he chose the prose derivations from the original chansons de geste. His form, then, he owes to the crude novels in prose: and the suggestion for Gargantua and Pantagruel came from them. As Mr. Arthur Tilley indicates, the Lyons publisher, Claude Nourry, employed Rabelais to edit a chap-book, concerning the popular giant Gargantua, in accordance with the methods of the diluted chansons and romances, such as Ogier, Fierabras, Mélusine, Les Quatre Fils Aymon.

> "It was apparently while he was engaged upon this task that it occurred to him to use the popular story as a starting point for an original work dealing with the history of Pantagruel, the son of Gargantua."1

Now, Léon Gautier has categorically denied Rabelais' connection with the chansons de geste, and added that

> "Rabelais n'a pas daigné attaquer ces romans qu'il connaissait à peine."2

This may be true in so far as the chansons de geste are concerned, though Rabelais appears to have been acquainted with some of them, as the Fierabras,[3] and to have imitated passages similar to the prologue of the prose Girart de Roussillon the swing of

1. cf. Arthur Tilley - François Rabelais - pp. 125-126 - J. B. Lippincott Co. - Philadelphia - 1907.
2. Gautier - Ep. fr. - II - p. 639.
3. cf. Baumann - Burl. in Rab. - pp. 46 ff.

which is strikingly like that of Pantagruel. It cannot be denied, however, that Rabelais had entered upon a systematic burlesque of the prose romances of chivalry, imitating their language and setting many of the old heroes before us in ludicrous situations: Gargantua detained in Fairyland by the Fée Morgane; Lancelot and the Knights of the Round-Table in menial duties in the Lower Regions. The Grandes et inestimables Chroniques de Gargantua, which was the first sketch of the later Gargantua, Rabelais frankly treated as a continuation of the Breton romances, with Merlin as the creator of Gargamelle and Grant-Gousier, the parents of Gargantua, and afterwards, as the guide, philosopher, and friend of the giant himself. But the Breton romances served him as a vehicle only. He had no desire to perpetuate a fondness for them; he must have found the popular stories silly and antiquated. They were popular, nevertheless: and Rabelais could write in a highly popular vein. With his natural skill in burlesque exaggeration, the form must have seemed especially contrived for him. He had the good sense to take what was at hand. By means of it, he not only marked out a new path for the novel, but helped to seal the fate of the romances of chivalry.

> "Il [Les grandes et inestimables Chroniques] peut être regardé comme le dernier roman de la Table-Ronde, et faire, à certains égards, le pendant du chef d'oeuvre comique de Cervantes, qu'il a d'ailleurs précédé de près d'un demi-siècle, et probablement inspiré."[1]

In Pantagruel, the aristocratic and the democratic novels appear to be at the parting of the way. Yet, Rabelais failed to an-

1. Villemarqué - Myrd. - p. 375 ff.

nounce any program: and the world went on as before. As a mile-stone, however, in the progress of the bourgeois novel, the Pantagruel occupies a prominent place.

The surprising change in Rabelais' work is to be found in its journalistic character. Other bourgeois stories had jotted down facts of every-day life, and discussed a few of the burning questions of the day: but incidentally and in a fitful manner. Rabelais, as a man of the hour and a democrat at heart, threw into fiction the interests of the average man. Though a humanist, he made sport of the Humanities as a typical bourgeois might have done. His burlesque of the Gods sitting on Olympus, of the birth of Pallas, the myth of Deukalion, the Trojan war, the Greek philosophers, including Aristotle, the adventure of Hero and Leander, is composed in the skeptical spirit of the bourgeoisie. His irreverent jesting about God and the "chambre de ses menus plaisirs" might have aroused roars of laughter among his plebeian contemporaries. Panurge's ideas of the pleasures he was to enjoy in Paradise are those that any man of the people must have cherished: and his fears about marriage are equally bourgeois: wholly in the tradition of the fabliaux and Jean de Meun. In spite of the fact that he was a church-man, Rabelais lashed the clergy with bourgeois heartiness and opposed to the "venite, adoremus", Frère Jean's "venite, apotemus". However, some of these phases may have had as much flavor for the higher classes as for the lower, even though they were presented from the point of view of the commoner. In other directions, the proximity to the people is more plainly marked. The use of dialect, probably borrowed from the farces, crops out

in Rabelais.

> "Dabei beschränkt sich Rabelais nicht nur auf den Dialekt seiner Heimat, die angrenzenden Dialekte werden ebenso herausgezogen,"1

as in "par cap de bioys", "que may de pippe bous tresbyre." He employs with predilection the terms of ordinary, daily life, common oaths, the language of bakers, grocers, cattle-dealers, drapers. He takes delight in glorifying the joys of tippling: and mentions, with a smacking of the lips, the froumaiges de Brye, jambons de Magence, saulcisses de Bigorre. He is rich in proverbs: and according to Le Roux de Lincy, more than three hundred popular sayings have been collected from his works. Besides, he exhibits a keen interest in the educational, political, social, literary problems of the day: and his ground is always that of the citizen; not of the privileged orders. The hide-bound procedure of the law, for example, called forth from him much stinging satire, and was partly due to his father's experience in legal delays. To his convictions concerning education, he has allotted a considerable space in the Gargantua. Nor has he disdained to comment on his fellow-artists. He has imitated Cretin, Mellin de Saint-Gelais, Marot, Villon, and has left biographical details of the latter. His burlesque allusions to men like the poet, Jean le Maire, and to books, such as the Luminaire apothecarium (1492) heighten the feeling of actuality: when he speaks of cities and towns, he describes those well-known to him: when he depicts costumes, he transcribes the fashions of the first half of the sixteenth century: when he tells of buildings,- notably the abbey of Thélème,- he offers a

1. Mettig - Rab. - p. 6.

treatise on contemporary architecture. Whatever he selects has some relation to the present, to France. It is as if he had determined to play the part of a newspaper: and to assure himself of an indulgent public by centering his reports and interviews about a hero of romance.

Looked at from any angle, Gargantua and Pantagruel have to be recognized as novels: and of a good kind, at that. They are not unworthy of being compared with Gulliver's Travels. Indeed, if we were to apply to them the modern canons of the novel-writing art, we should discover that they meet them at almost every point,- excepting that they lack the heroine, who, as yet, has not been made absolutely indispensable. They have a hero: they have action: they have background: they have a plot, though a loose one: they have an unusually dramatic expression. In short, they are a piece taken out of life, with a few fantastic embellishments. That Rabelais intended to write a novel, can scarcely be doubted. In addition to the chansons de geste and the romances, which he followed in general method, he was familiar with almost every form of fiction current in his period. That he even knew the ancient fabliaux, Roquefort has indicated:

> "Il suffit de parcourir le nouveau Recueil de Fabliaux pour reconnoître que Rabelais doit ses longues et fréquentes tirades sur les papelards, sur membrer, démembrer, remembrer, aux fabliaux de Sainte-Léocade, de Charlot-le-Juif et de Cocaigne."[1]

He is one of the earliest to mention Heliodorus, over whose work Pantagruel fell asleep. As for the Italian novelle-writers, Rabelais knew them by heart, as also his own countrymen who were following their lead. From some of the French collections, as

1. Roquefort - Poésie fr. - p. 191.

the Grand Parangon, he appropriated the short-stories which illustrate his theme or enliven his action.[1] From Poggio, from Calcagnini, and from others, he took such famous anecdotes as that of Hans Carvel's ring. The actuality of most of these influences, besides his own interest in contemporary events and his fondness for the farces, tended to make of him a modern, realistic novelist.

Given so many fruitful innovations on the part of Rabelais, to what can we attribute his failure to affect the subsequent development of the novel in any measurable degree? For it is certain that he left but a slight impression on it. Dramatists have turned his inventions into plays, as Molière, in Le Médecin malgré lui and Le Mariage forcé: poets, like La Fontaine, have elaborated his suggestions. Nobody appears to have had the insight to recognize the seed for a mighty branch of the novel. The very individuality of the author repelled imitation. The uncouth mixture of sense and nonsense, the preposterous, fantastic lines of the plot, the pot-pourri of jargon, gibberish, Latin, Greek, and French concealed the kernel, which was sweet. Undoubtedly, those who had the notion of writing novels as novels saw nothing worth copying in Pantagruel. Other causes, however, were of broader import in limiting the indebtedness to Rabelais. No matter how excellent a bourgeois novel might have been written then, it is probable that it would have started no "school". Too much competition would have stifled it. It is to be remembered that literary types gather strength or dwindle, not solely because the partic-

1. cf. Toldo - Nov. fr. - p. 90.

discussion concerning a theory of the novel failed to exhibit itself until the appearance of Giraldi's essay on the Romanzi, declared by him to be the first criticism on the type.[1.]

ular spirit necessary to them is the note of the age, or misses being it, but because definite writers of genius or of social rank cultivate or neglect them. While Rabelais was inditing his romance, Marguerite de Navarre, Nicolas de Troyes, Bonaventure des Périers were popularizing the Italian short-story in the Heptaméron, the Grand Parangon, the Joyeux Devis: they were returning to the people a great many of the old stories related as fabliaux. The farce and the sotie were enjoying a healthy vogue, and were holding the mirror to the masses. Young writers, who might have been story-tellers, were enrolling under the banners of the Lyonnaise school or of the Pléiade. The classical billows were sweeping everything before them. Poetry was the order of the day. Translation was offering as satisfactory rewards as original endeavor. Henri Estienne and Jacques Amyot were transcribing from the Greek. The Greek romances,- Theagenes and Chariclea and the rest,- were being turned into French. Nicolas de Herberay and others were naturalizing the Spanish Amadis and its progeny. The legitimate drama was coming to the fore with Jodelle, Grévin, Garnier. The Zenith of the Renaissance was inimical to the indigenous, and even to the novel as a whole. No talented writer between Rabelais and d'Urfé laid hand on the novel in any of its manifestations. The authority of the ancients was overwhelming. The principles of novel-writing were as yet unknown; and perhaps few men suspected that this type would ever receive any animated discussion. The lyric and the drama engaged the wits of persons inclined toward literature. Until after the quarrel of the Ancients and the Moderns, the bourgeois novel had small chance of obtaining

a hearing. The victory of the Moderns was the triumph of the people. Le Sage, writing fifty or seventy-five years before, probably would not have composed Gil Blas; or if he had composed it, he would in all likelihood have fashioned it into a parody of the Astrée or the Grand Cyrus. Rabelais, a martyr to the tastes of his epoch, fabricated a hybrid extravaganza, when he should have been establishing the modern, realistic, bourgeois novel: the novel of observation, of character, of everyday life. Nevertheless, Pantagruel is much nearer the goal than any long story which had preceded it.

Until the predominance of the Spanish novel in the seventeenth century, with its avowed opposition to the aristocratic fiction, in the Don Quixote and the picaresque tales, the stories of the people,- above all, those addressed to the throng,- had remained faithful to the short narrative. With the exception of the Roman de la Rose and Pantagruel, scarcely a popular story can be mentioned which was not a loosely bound assemblage of anecdotes: and even the Pantagruel is nothing more than that. The adaptation of Italian novelle prolonged the tradition of the fabliaux, and offered to the Amadis and the Astrée the same sort of contrast noticeable in the thirteenth century between the democratic tales and the aristocratic romances. One important difference obtained, however. The nouvelles, such as the Contes Amoureux by Jeanne Flore, the Grand Parangon, the Joyeux Devis, the Heptaméron, were written under court-influence: yet, beyond the neo-Platonism which some of them profess, they represent the common people. One of the ladies in the Heptaméron may declare, when she hears of a terrible punishment inflicted

on a bourgeois lover, that it was well-done, and that she had rather

> "voir toute ma vie les os de tous mes serviteurs en mon cabinet, que de mourir pour eux:"1

but such observations cannot disguise the true character of these Italianate tales. The ordinary man and the ordinary woman are the heroes. The localization is in present time. The language is the simple speech of very day. There is, in general, an evident attempt to set forth the incidents in the most realistic manner possible. The priests and the women come in for the heaviest onslaught of satire, as well in the Comptes du Monde Adventureux, by Saint-Denis, as in Marguerite's collection. Almost unconsciously, the writers belonging to high society have accepted bourgeois folk-lore, and subjected it to the processes of an unusually artistic technique. The fact that their topics originated in the underworld did not deter them. The material had gone through the hands of acknowledged masters in story-telling,- Boccaccio, Poggio, Massuccio, Morlini,- and needed no apology. The line between what had formerly been considered elevated and what had been stamped as low was quickly being wiped out. The day was announced when authors of all classes were to find in the common experiences of the common people a richer store than had been discovered anywhere in the world of fiction. The Spanish fondness for narratives dealing with the masses lent a powerful impulse to the democratic movement supported by the Italians, Marguerite, Rabelais. Toward the end of the sixteenth century, the Spanish novel gave the French new ideas about that type of literature. It quickened the listless French

1. cf. Toldo - Nov.fr. - p. 58.

story. Its effect on the bourgeois novel after the Astrée was incalculable. But already, in the last decades of the sixteenth century, it was becoming well-known. The Lazarillo de Tormes was translated in 1561: the Guzmán de Alfarache, in 1600. The Celestina had become popular since about the first quarter of the century. The conscious bourgeois novel, written as such, owed its beginnings principally to Spain. Its early history is an ineffectual "recherche de lui-même."

Part III.

The Evolution of Principles of Technique in the French Novel.

In basic principle, the novel kept moving, from its inception, in the direction of every-day reality. The chanson de geste, whether or not it stood for occurrences in the past, lost, bit by bit, its antiquated, martial aspect, its pristine simplicity, its crude emotions. Bauduin de Sebourc became a study in contemporary customs and manners: Bertrand Duguesclin developed into a treatise on contemporary history, having as its hero the powerful connétable who fell in battle in 1380. The ancient and the Breton romances were, almost from the first, delineations of the period in which they were written. The sentimental novel, likewise, aspired toward the actual. The fabliaux and other bourgeois stories were rooted in the life about them. The novel appears, even in its beginnings, to have epitomized the sociological elements of the age in which it was composed, though a rather childish fondness for disguising the truth actuated it. The appreciation of simple reality, in the novel, as elsewhere, went begging. Sentiment, romance, the warlike spirit began, not at zero in the scale of every-day fact, but fifty degrees above it. Later, it came nearer and nearer zero as its starting-point. So, too, the subject-matter, elevated among the superhuman and the supernatural, finally descended to the probable. An identical lowering of tone characterized the language of the novel and all the technical accessories. The evolution progressed from the heterogeneous to the homogeneous, from fantasy to verisimilitude, from ridiculous anachronism to historical truth, from disjunction to unity of interest, from unmotivated action to a fairly careful psychological causation.

During the course of this development, constant experiments were tried, now toward simplicity and reality, now away from them. The balance, however, remained steadily on the credit side of truth, and kept growing. The onward march of science, of knowledge: the advance in literary art, in historical investigation, in psychological study, forced the novel along the paths of progress. This was as true of its technique as of its content.

Perhaps the most definitely settled principle in the modern novel is that which requires prose as its vehicle. Critics like Koerting and Voretzsch, who have denied the existence of the novel as a distinct type of literature until its appearance in prose either in the Astrée or in the Pantagruel, have discarded the long story in verse simply because of the difference in the carriers. They can have no other reason for so doing, since in all remaining respects, the medieval narratives contain the indispensable essentials laid down, for example, in such recent definitions as that of Sir James Murray, who explains the novel as "a fictitious prose narrative or tale of considerable length (---usually one long enough to fill one or more volumes), in which characters and actions representative of the real life of past or present times are portrayed in a plot of more or less complexity."[1] The chansons de geste are narratives: they are fictitious: they set forth characters of the past: they portray them in plots of some complexity: they fill one or more volumes. The romances, the Byzantine stories, and even the Roman de Renart do likewise. Certainly, to expect of them an absolute identity

1. Murray--Historical Dictionary.

and as far back as the seventeenth century, Chapelain and d'Aubignac spoke of dramas in verse as absurdities.[2]

2. cf. Arnaud, D'Aubignac, pp. 275 and 346.

of method with the modern novel would be unreasonable in the extreme. In their broad outlines, nevertheless, they are genuine novels. Throw them into prose, and every one of them will fit into some class of twentieth century novel. The reader of the prose Lancelot, Berte, Anseis de Carthage, Vivien l'Aumachour de Montbrant may realize that he is perusing works that stammer, that have the weaknesses of children, that belong to a primitive epoch, but he will have no doubt of the type of literature before him. Let us admit, then, that the prose remodelings of the chansons de geste and the romances are novels in the modern meaning of the term. What is to be decided about the verse-forms? Shall we classify them as romances? But, nobody has ever placed the epics in this category: nobody could think of the Renart as appertaining to such a division. Shall we call them just "poetry"? But they are not that, either. They do not attempt to charm the senses by their rhythm, their imagery, their cadence, their application of music to the spoken symbols of thought. Shall we speak of them as "novels in verse"? In that case, they fall within the scope of our investigation: and it would be as unjust to drive them beyond the pale as to excommunicate the drama in verse from the province of legitimate drama at a time when the prose-form is almost supreme. Verse in the novel and the drama is an accident, not a fundamental. In the former, the story,--an extended fiction,--is the thing: and that is what segregates it from poetry, as such. The recitation of the chansons de geste made the metrical system a convenience, if not a necessity. The subsequent species, obeying traditional usage and, perhaps, the positive inclination of the public, employed the verse-structure. When, through

several causes, verse went out of style in the long narrative, the novel came forth in prose. It was no abrupt change, nor due to any pressure from the outside. The prose-Lancelot goes back to about the year 1210: and "--la matière en est extraite, pour partie, de poèmes antérieures--"[1]. This prose, as has been stated, is what Dante admired,--this "quidquid vulgare prosaicum",--and the use of which he imitated in his Convito and his Vita Nuova. It was this prose which Brunetto Latini introduced as a model of description in his rhetoric. It was this prose, too, from which Malory's Morte DArthur, the Spanish Amadís, and the Italian imitations in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were derived. If historians of the novel desire to start with a prose-version, they should go back to the Lancelot, to the Saint Graal, to the adaptations of the epics and romances in the fifteenth century. If they wish to make the earliest novels their point of departure, especially in discovering the origins of the prose-form, they must resort to the narratives in verse. Léon Gautier has emphatically stamped the prose chansons de geste as a tangible outgrowth of the verse-chansons:

> "Entre les derniers romans en vers et les premiers en prose la transition est des plus simples. Les vers ont non-seulement précédé la prose, mais ils l'ont engendrée. Ceci a produit cela." (2)

The work performed by Gautier in demonstrating the exact sources of the chansons in prose ought to be duplicated in the other branches of the novel. There is no reason for supposing that the procedure in them was of any other sort.

We must, in consequence, accept verse as the

1. G. Paris, Esq., p. 118.
2. Gautier, Ep. fr., II, pp. 544-5.

We should cease thinking of it as poetry. There is scarcely a line in Paul et Virginie or Atala , written in prose though they are, which is not more truly poetical than the verse of the chansons de geste or the romances.

primitive medium of the novel, without feeling any prejudice against it. As the technical possession of a professional class, within whose hands the writing of narratives remained, it had the effect of restricting free initiative. This condition also accounts for the general lack of variety in the measures employed by the trouvères. The first requisite for the novelist was the ability to handle the metre: the second, capacity in story-telling. As there was a clear division between the epics and the romances in fundamental aim, so there was in their language-structure. The chansons de geste had two characteristic modes of expression: the assonanced laisses and the rhymed couplets in decasyllables or Alexandrines. The ten-syllabled line with assonance is the more ancient, and became the epic measure, par excellence. Out of a hundred chansons, forty-seven,--and those among the most popular,--were composed in this style. Such are the Roland, Jourdain de Blaives, La Chevalerie d'Ogier. The amount of art necessary for the production of the epic strophe cannot have been very great. It must have seemed the nearest approach to the speech of every day. With the progress in literary workmanship, the rhymed couplet crept into the body of the chanson, and diversified the monotone of assonance by the interposition of occasional rhymes, as may be seen in certain versions of Amis et Amiles, Beuves d'Hanstonne, La Mort d'Aimeri de Narbonne. In the end, rhyme dominated, though some authors maintained their loyalty to the original form, in order to acquire thereby a tone of antiquity and added dignity. The change from assonance to rhyme was not sudden. It was brought about through the influence of no one man or group of men, but obeyed the natural law of development in art. An easy technique

in his observations on the mechanical, manufactured quality of most of the epics and on the docile submission of writers of some originality to the authority and example of their elders or predecessors.[2]

yielded to that which was more difficult. Adenés li Rois, not satisfied with the mere use of rhyme in his Berte, introduced the arrangement of stanzas in masculine and feminine order. The attempt of the epic-writers of the decadence to render their works more attractive by means of mechanical devices is noticeable. Once in a while, a line of six syllables,--in Amis et Amiles, for instance,--terminated a strophe. Once in a while, other minor alterations were made. A writer having the talent of Adenés might deserve credit for planning his work in an orderly manner, for endowing it with clearness, for tricking it out with artificial decoration, for polishing his verse, so as to cause it to flow smoothly,[1] but the conventions of epic writing acted as a powerful restraint on stylistic novelties. Because of them, the chanson neglected prose until the other narrative types had already adopted it. M. Jeanroy has offered a reasonable explanation for what must today seem stagnation in technique:

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> "Deux raisons se réunissaient alors pour assurer une part immense au métier: d'abord beaucoup de gens, s'adonnant à la poésie plus par nécessité que par goût, n'étaient point de grands artistes, mais des ouvriers consciencieux et adroits qui fabriquaient des chansons de gestes ou d'amour comme d'autres confectionnaient des braies ou des chausses. Mais ceux-là mêmes qui avaient quelque originalité y renonçaient volontiers, parce qu'ils croyaient mieux faire de suivre la tradition; le moyen âge, avec sa docilité un peu enfantine, a eu la superstition de l'autorité--." (2).

Above all, the epic trouvères regarded themselves as a guild, and visibly held themselves bound down by the rules of their trade. Hence, we find that the octosyllable, which was the instrument of all other narrative species, never obtained

1. cf. Scheler, Enf. Ogier Pref. VII.
2. Jeanroy, Lyriq., pp. 303-4.

a foothold in the chansons de geste. Albéric's Alexandre, the fragment called La Mort du Roi Gormond, and ~~Le~~ Lion de Bourges, it is true, have that measure: but they are not genuine epic stories. Lion de Bourges is really a romance of chivalry: Alexandre belongs among the antique romances: and there is no certainty as to the significance of Gormond.

Aside from the chansons de geste, the rhymed octosyllabic couplet was in universal favor. It spoke to the people in the fabliaux and the Roman de Renart: it flattered the ear of the aristocrat in the lais, the Breton romances, Troie, Énéas, the Roman de la Rose, Floire et Blanchefleur. Originally taken over from clerical sources, it developed into the commonest metrical vehicle, invaded the drama, and, like the Spanish octosyllable, seemed destined to become the definitive narrative mode in verse. The Renaissance, with its surer sense of dignity, proscribed it and reinstated the Alexandrine, which had obtained its name from Lambert le Tort's poem.

An examination of the three kinds of verse thus far discussed reveals the fact that the transition to prose was most easy and natural, and that it was sure to be accomplished. With the exception of Chrétien, few genuine poets handled the narrative rhyme. The main purpose was to relate the story in a simple, straightforward manner. Miltonic, impassioned language was out of the question. Owning to but a slight use of metaphor,--which is the soul of poetry,--rising to no heights of musical suggestion, speaking with words in their normal order, medieval narrative verse could only hope to attain, as its ultimate goal, fluency and sprightli-

ness, or gravity and strength. Chrétien, who is generally recognized as the narrator most frequently and most steadily inspired by the Muse, furnishes rare instances of the employment of metaphor:[1] his similes,--liberality is like a rose, a burning heart is like a live ember, the ring of invisibility is like the bark of a tree,[2]-- are often ingenious, but seldom mighty: his numerous personifications are a sign of weakness rather than of strength, and when a striking figure occurs, as in

"Ha! Perceval, fortune est cauve
Derriere et devant chevelue", (3)

the thought has come from somebody else: his plays on words,--as on the name Soredamor,--and his employment of the proverb-style have nothing intrinsically poetical in them. If this is the best which medieval narrative poetry can furnish, how ineffectual must the unleavened mass be! Nothing but tradition can explain the persistence of verse: for certainly, the gain in artificial elevation and aloofness could not compensate for the greater amplitude and freedom of prose. The sole poetic expression seems to have been limited to the Provençal lyric note, as in Chrétien's lilting descriptions of Nature, or in Adenés li Rois':

"Droit ens ou tans k'yver convient cesser,
Que arbrissel prennent à boutonner
Et herbeletes commencent à lever--." (4).

We do not need to harbor any doubt concerning the uselessness of much of this narrative verse. Critics of our own period may be too far away, too thoroughly penetrated with modern sounds to be able to appreciate the more delicate beauties of the earlier poetry: but credence may be given to the contemporaries of the rhymed epics and romances. Before the wholesale

1. cf. Emecke, Chrest/., p. 129.
2. cf. Cligès, v. 208 ff: Yvain, 1377-80; 1027-9.
3. Perceval, v. 6024-5.
4. Enf. Ogier, v. 36 ff.

transference of the chansons de geste and the Breton tales into prose, Creton, a writer of the fourteenth century, who had undertaken a versified account of the events attending the death of Richard II, of England, suddenly stopped in his poetical labor, struck by the idea that he could express himself more forcefully and more satisfactorily in the language of the average man, and continued in prose his story of the terrible interview between the last of the house of York and the first of the house of Lancaster.[1] In 1448, an adapter of a chanson de geste gave as a reason for the employment of prose,

> "pource que au jourd'huy les grans princes et autres seigneurs appetent plus la prose que la ryme, et pour le langaige qui est plus entier." (2).

Chronicles, such as that of Turpin and of Villehardouin, were directing narration into the common-sense channel of prose as early as the beginning of the thirteenth century. As soon as the reading-public became large, the verse-narratives had to recede: the necessity for their existence passed away with the retirement of the jongleurs. Once installed as a prose-form, the romances and chansons de geste had a very active influence in the development of that medium, and were, perhaps, chiefly responsible for the growth of an adequate prose-style.[3]

The prose-novel, then, not only followed the verse-novel, but literally evolved from it. The French term for the type, "roman", changed in its attributes and came to mean a long story written in prose. Subsequent improvements in style resulted from the general progress in writing, and

1. cf. Le Clerc, Hist. Litt. 14 s., I, p. 490.
2. Gautier, Ép. fr., II, pp. 556-7.
3. cf. Earle, Eng. Prose, pp. 422-3.

not from the efforts of the romancers. The crude entanglement of involved phrases and *que* and *qui* clauses was gradually pruned, because people were learning how to use the vernacular. The disastrous attempt to imitate Latin style,--visible down to the time of Rabelais,--fell before the artistic excellence of the Italian *novelle*. The plan whereby the story took the shape of a series of conversations,--as in the *Heptaméron*,--adopted Guazzo's rules for polite discourse and the recommendations of Castiglione in *Il Cortegiano*, and in the last decade of the sixteenth century, mimicked the gallantry of the salons, kept bringing the novel closer to ordinary parlance. But a prose dedicated solely to the uses of the novel never existed. Whatever advance manifested itself came both from within and from without. Those authors, like D'Urfé, who were known chiefly through their novels, made the latter the instrument for a better style in the works of their successors. In the age of Louis XIV, however, Pascal, La Rochefoucauld, Mme. de Sévigné were the foremost causes in the superior handling of prose, whether in the novel or elsewhere. Until their example was followed,--and we must not forget the debt to Molière's nervous energy in *Don Juan* and his other prose-plays,--the style of the novel was medieval, antiquated.

As the novel developed away from the primitive *chansons de geste*, its technique became more complex. The interest of the reading-public had to be aroused and sustained by various mechanical devices. Practically the only two methods employed in the earliest epics were enumeration and a rough sort of dialog, often taking the form of *gabs*, or boasts and counter-boasts. Description was brief, and of such a nature as to make the action clearer. There was no dallying

about the qualities of objects or places, since the main desire of the trouvère or jongleur was to set forth what was doing. The enumeration consisted in the counting of wounds or dead men, in the cataloguing of worthies, in the retailing of wrongs occasioned by traitors or of deeds of prowess performed by the heroes. The gabs or speeches were delivered in the councils of the barons or addressed to the foe on the field of battle. At intervals, an apostrophe would be uttered, as Roland's to his sword, Durendal, or Guillaume's to his wife,

"Biau sire dex, de ma vie pensez!
Dame Guibors, ja mes ne me verrez." (1).

When the romances had imposed themselves on readers, the chansons de geste borrowed their devices and commenced to lose their special epic character. The influence of the Breton and Byzantine fictions was deeply felt in the province of literary workmanship. Artists were replacing craftsmen: motion, color, esthetic association, intellectual ingenuity, the conscious use of contrast were anticipating weariness on the part of the reader and holding his attention in the moments when it was likely to flag. By addressing themselves to individuals, the novelists had to be sure of supplying each with something suitable to his tastes. The unity of mob-spirit, which contributed in a certain measure to the standardized tone of the chansons de geste, could no longer be relied on.

The salient point of difference between the technique of the romance and that of the epic lies in the general flowering of description. The stereotyped epithet has disappeared. Instead of hammering in the impression of size, valor, cowardice, by constant repetition, the romance-writers went out of their way not to employ the same expression twice.

1. Aliscans, v. 502 ff.

What was compressed in the chansons was diluted in the other types, and also, of course, in the more recent epics. The formula, "Clere est la moit e la lune luisant" of the Roland, and similar introductions were dissolved into their details. Analysis was substituted for synthesis: and in that process a fundamental revolution in literary art had occurred. The Provençal lyric was one of the most weighty factors in the alteration of literary method. A tribute to Nature became one of the mannerisms of the novel. It is found so generally as to seem a premeditated opposition to the harsh battle-array of the chansons de geste. It glorified spring and the softer side of man's environment.[1] Not only Chrétien, the authors of romances of adventure,[2] and those of the more sentimental epic yielded to its sway, but also works of an increasing realism, such as Li Bastars de Buillon, the sequel to Bauduin de Sebourc, in which

"A l'entrée de mai, chelle douche saison
Que florissent chil pré, chantent chil oiseillon,
Qu'amant se resjoïssent en leur condition,
Car li temps renouvelle, dont dame et danseillon
Reprendent en leurs coers grant consolation," (3)

the King Bauduin went to the Temple of Solomon. An examination of story-writing after the year 1150 would demonstrate that the adoration of Nature was converted into a system, a conventional form. Even the Roman de Renart could not elude the fashion, or else parodied it, thus giving the strongest evidence concerning its prevalence:

"Seigneurs, ce fu en cel termine
Que li douz temps d'esté decline
Et yvers revient en saison,
E Renars fu en sa maison." (4).

But the fondness for description did not stop there. It dealt with every aspect of life, though it was weakest in bringing

1. cf. Cligès, v. 6351, ff.
2. " Escoufle, v. 4386, ff.
3. Bast. de Buillon, v. 1, ff.
4. Renart, Branche III, v. 1ff.

out the striking peculiarities of personal appearance. In delineating allegorical figures, however, as in the Énéas and the Roman de la Rose, authors took care to differentiate them from one another, perhaps because they received them ready-made from the Latin poets. The example set by Benoît in his series of Greek and Trojan portraits was not followed out by others: and in Benoît's own work, it lacked restraint and too much resembled a catalog of ships. This same disinclination to lay stress on the external qualities of the actors has been observed in Marie's lais,[1] and may be regarded as inherent in the aristocratic novel down to the seventeenth century. The chief preoccupation is the probing of the sentiments: the heroes and heroines of romance are necessarily handsome and beautiful. Nothing new in this respect would have been accomplished in the time of Louis XIV, if the popularity of novels had not largely been dependent on the presentation of real persons under fictitious names, and if the fad for portrait-painting, especially in words, had not been indulged in with the thought of posterity in mind. But, as has been indicated, it was in the description of costume, buildings, market-places, tombs, that the romancers excelled. The bourgeois novel had a greater interest in material idiosyncrasies, and based on them their most successful strokes, portraying Renart, in his bodily misfortunes, and Pantagruel or Brother Jean, in good luck or bad luck, in the broad lines of caricature, yet, as individuals. Indeed, much of the humor of the bourgeois novel arises from this very individualization: and it is worth while noting that the more elevated species of

1. cf. Schiött - Lais - p. 45.

and in no respect, perhaps, is French romance more absolutely at variance with the tone of native Welsh narrative than in this very absence of the comic or the humorously grotesque.[1]

1. cf. various episodes in Guest's Mabinogion, particularly the incident of the Badger-game.

story is sadly lacking in the quality of humor. Only rarely can that saving grace be encountered in the serious romance, as in Cligès' administration of a ducking to the nephew of the duc de Sessoingne. If, however, human physiognomy is not a favorite study of romance, its concomittants are. In no period of French literature has the representation of contemporary existence had such a splendid execution: and it is in the twelfth century that we must locate the definite origin of the novel of customs and manners. In the Enéas, in Benoît, in Chrétien, in Gautier d'Arras, in Floire et Blanchefleur, in Aucassin et Nicolette, in L'Escoufle, in the Roman de la Rose, we learn how people ate, what they drank, where they slept, what they said, what they thought, what their superstitions were, what wise sayings they manufactured, what clothes they wore, what gems they prized, how they were buried, how they looked upon the law, what carvings and pictures they admired, what spices pleased their palates. History must rely on these romances for the greatest number of common sociological facts: that is what historians like M. Luchaire have realized. Evidently, the French nobility of the Middle Ages was proud of its judgment in dress, and vainglorious about its magnificent streets and gorgeous palaces. The writers, catering to this frame of mind, may be said to have drawn plans of castle-yards, and to have handed down vivid fashion plates.

"I. mout riche bliaut de Sire,
Forré de vair, orlé d'ermine
Li a porté une meschine
A tot une blanche chemise.
Au rider ot grant paine mise
Une pucele mout cortoise.
Ele ot parpans plus d'une toise,

Et si estoit mout deliie.
Cele la vest qui n'iert pas lie,
Et puis le bon bliaut tot frois.
I. cercelet petit d'orfrois
Ot en son chief en liu de gimple;
Mout ot le regart doug, et simple."[1]

Nevertheless, it must be remarked that the aristocratic novel furnishes only one side of the medallion. We may hear of their spices and their fruits: but those were the tidbits of the wealthy, and possibly beyond the reach of the poor. We do not hear of the cheap fish, or the grease, or the ordinary bread, or the ox-goads, or the lumbering carts until we step into the *fabliaux*, *Renart*, *Pantagruel*. Quite naturally, the romances shunned these commonplaces, excepting when they wished occasionally to show their scorn of the people. By taking the two exhibits together, however, we can obtain a wonderfully clear and lively picture of the times, of which there is no premonition in the original *chansons de geste*. The amount of space given to his description, if joined to the allowance made to the theme of Nature, will be found to cover a very considerable portion of the average medieval story. According to M. Wilmotte, the *Énéas*, through its descriptive ability, announced the dawn of a new art; and its date of composition became the most important in the entire history of the French novel.[2] In reality, it is hardly necessary to pin the advance down to any particular book. The courts of Aliénor, Marie de Champagne, Aélis de Blois would have forced both the lyric and the painting of externals on their *protégés*. The presence of a reading-public would have compelled variety in any writer: and a large amount of description would have had to supply the tones, the gestures, the byplays of the *jongleurs*. It is almost needless to say that

1. [illegible] - v. 3290 ff.

the aristocratic novel continued to offer a picture of the society for ~~whom~~ which it was written, and for that society exclusively, until the day when the distinction between aristocratic and democratic practically disappeared,- namely, after the French Revolution. Possibly the Romantic School, with its firm principle of contrast, was the first to throw the high and the low, the noble and the grotesque, into one narration. Today, the description of the belongings of the Select Few is decidedly on the wane. It has become a mere ornamentation in the history of the proletariat,- whose vicissitudes alone have the proper elements of strong, dramatic interest. It is hard to believe in the sorrows of the rich, or to show much enthusiastic interest in the adventures of those who can afford to penetrate the jungle with all the comforts of home at their beck and call.

A corollary to the variety introduced into the novel by the enlargement of descriptive material is the variety obtained by the multiplication of narrative devices and artifices. The chanson de geste can be outlined as an alternation of the exposition of fighting in the third person and the expression of threats in the first. The romances filled in the outline with pictures and a more sophisticated rhetoric. The writers are convinced of the artistic improvement which they have achieved. Chrétien, who has seen various stories mangled in the telling, has decided to hand down to future generations a narrative that will last:

> "Des or comencerai l'estoire
> Qui toz jorz mes iert a memoire
> Tant con durra crestiantez;
> De ce s'est Crestiens vantez."[1]

1. Érec - v. 23 ff

--"Jo aim, nel puis avant neier.--
"Donc a nom Turnus tes amis?"
--Nenil, dame, gel vos plevis.--
"Et coment donc?--Il a nom E--,"
donc sospira, puis redist: "ne--",
d'iluec a piece noma: "as--", l
tot en trenblant le dist en bas.

play the same little games. What is more valuable as an indication of progress in technique is the short phrases into which dialog has been partitioned. The monolog has developed into the medium for lovers' complaints, but when several persons have met, they have entered into real conversation, with attempts at reproducing the lightness of contemporary speech. The artificial orations of the chansons de geste are avoided, and préciosité has come upon the scene, not waiting for either Marino or Góngora. Wherever possible, variety is introduced. In the Roman de Troie, the messengers, instead of repeating the expressions of the original speaker, deliver the substance in their own words. In order to gain a more realistic liveliness, Chrétien allows Calogrenanz, in the Yvain, to relate what happened to him at the fountain, though the poet

It is the regular procedure of the romancers. They value their own intellectual capacity and their literary merits, and constantly interrupt the thread of their argument in order to notify the reader of their guidance of the tale. The romances are no longer anonymous, as were the epics. Undoubtedly, this personal pride had much to do with fostering innovations, some of which were childish, but ingenious. How clever the author of the Énéas must have thought himself in perpetrating this bauble:

> --"Je aim, nel' puis or mais noier.
> -- Dont n'a nom Turnus tes amis?
> -- Neïl, Dame, je vous plevis.
> -- Et comment dont? - Il a non: E,
> Dont sospira, puis redist: NE.
> D'iloc à piece noma: AS,
> Tot en tramblant le dist et bas."[1]

Thomas, Chrétien, and the rest might have begun the romance more objectively. If he had done so, he would have missed a valuable opportunity for describing the interior of a medieval castle in its moments of leisure, and lost a highly dramatic effect. Frequently, by allowing his characters to talk, Chrétien has caused them to portray themselves, and has thus availed himself of a profitable adjunct to dry description. As in Benoît's delineation of the character of Polyxena and Briseïda, he has adapted his language, in a not unsuccessful manner, to character, and clearly distinguished Énide from Ganièvre by their conversation. Moved by a similar impulse for variety, the author of one of the narratives concerning Alexandre has appended several letters to the body of the story: one, from Alexandre to the inhabitants of Tyre and another from Darius to the Conqueror.[2]

1. Énéas - v. 8550.
2. cf. Meyer - Alex. - p. 34.

Most of these devices were carried over into the Roman de Renart, and were added to by the employment of dialect for humorous purposes.

We are in the habit of regarding stylistic progress as the result of the Renaissance. It is evident, however, that medieval writing was steadily advancing in technical excellence, and that it would inevitably have risen to greater heights of its own accord. It is a question if the imitation of the Romans did not injure rather than help French prose style. M. Faguet, in an article on La Bruyère, designates the style coupé as the natural French mode of expression and the best adapted to the traditional French inclination toward analytic thought. A study of some of the prose-romances, such as Gautier Map's adaptation of the Lancelot, corroborates this affirmation. Moreover, it may be doubted if any other type of literature contributed as much as the romances to the modernizing and perfection of French prose. The only two forms which could have done this were the novels and the chronicles: and the former were by far the more numerous and the more influential. Similarly, through the verse-romances, the internal workmanship of the modern novel ~~were~~ was rendered possible. The custom of interpolating poetry in a prose-story has fallen into a condition of innocuous desuetude: but that was one of the sparkling adornments of the novel of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Not even Rabelais was impervious to the fashion. We should hardly expect to find such poems and songs in the verse-narratives: yet they are there. Apparently, Guillaume de Dôle

presented the first example of the device. It was taken up quickly, however, and diversified the plot of Gerbert's Roman de la Violette, Adenés' Cléomadès, Girart's Méliacin. In 1627, Charles Sorel made fun of the fad in his Berger Extravagant and declared that readers skip the verses along with other mannerisms, but he testifies to their prevalence. Some of the other artifices of which he makes sport are the conversations, dialogs, and letters. His protest had little effect. Mlle. de Scudéry converted them into important elements of her system of manufacturing novels. The Spanish and Italian masters whom the seventeenth-century writers copied,- themselves deriving their inspiration from the French romances of chivalry,- lent their weight to the fashion. The employment of letters, of which we have seen a beginning in one of the Alexandre-stories, was skilfully treated by Aeneas Sylvius in his Euralus et Lucretia, and was imitated all over Europe,- by Rabelais, by Diego de San Pedro in his Arnalte y Lucenda, and later, in the work which is often spoken of as the first modern English novel, namely, Richardson's Clarissa Harlowe. The epistolary method imposed a belief in the truth of the narration, and could well supply the place of the old formulas wherein antiquity or hearsay were the sponsors for the veracity of the trouvères. Besides, for a long space, letters served as the most appropriate medium for the confession of love, and almost elbowed viva-voce dialog out of the way. M. Reynier quotes from Tallemant's Historiettes, to demonstrate that letter-writing was no superficial device in the novel, but answered a social demand, and probably intensified

that popularity of letter-writing which makes the correspondence of the seventeenth century so readable. According to Tallemant, Mme. Pilon, on advising some friends not to write letters,

"Au moins, n'escrivez point,"-

received this reply:

"Voire!--ne point escrire, c'est faire l'amour en chambrière."[1]

When lovers were apart, the most natural thing in the world for them to do was to pen an epistle or a sonnet, as, in England, Euphues to his Philantus, and Rosader to his Rosalynde. Where the tendency originated, it might be difficult to assert with any positiveness. It is evidently an evolution, in part, of the messages in the medieval romances and the Provençal addresses by the poets to their mistresses. As a stable principle of novel-writing, it owed its power chiefly to the Italians, and then, to the Spaniards. A similar accessory in the way of variety consisted in the posing of sentimental problems, such as the "question d'amour" in Juan de Flores' Juicio de Amor, and Boccaccio's thirteen questions in his Filocolo: but it was nothing especially new, and had been utilized by Chrétien and the numerous writers on the Court of Love in the thirteenth century. All these artifices in the later novel were anticipated in medieval romance: and in them, as in the development of prose and of subject-matter, there was no dissolution of continuity. Imperceptibly, the machinery of the aristocratic novel grew until it became too cumbersome. The bourgeois narrative, parodying, burlesquing, openly ridiculing it, or oppos-

1. cf. Reynier - Rom. Sent. - p. 315.

ing it by examples of simplicity and common-sense,- in Renart, Pantagruel, the Berger Extravagant, Gil Blas,- finally rid the novel of much of its artificial, complex technique. Even the admirable Princesse de Clèves was not entirely free from the novel-writing prejudices of her age. Its monologs, letters, the dramatic portrait-scene, are not quite as natural as one might wish. It is certain that before the publication of the Astrée, the main body of the novel,- the aristocratic,- was desperately trying to find adequate utterance, but had succeeded only in getting farther and farther away from it. The conviction that the ultimate victory of the novel could be secured by no other means than adherence to truth and reality: that the mechanical novel could not endure: that the principle of cause and effect must prevail: - This conviction was lacking, not only in the Middle Ages, but for hundreds of years afterwards. Scientific progress, with its emphasis on the truth, had to point the way, valiantly assisted by the increasing predominance of the democratic standpoint, with its insistence on the representation of the realities of life.

Given perfection in externals, the novel would still have fallen short of its aim. It would have been as a hollow shell, unimpeachable in form, but empty. It is conceivable that a chanson de geste in prose might be written, with all the latest improvements in literary art, and nevertheless fail to be a true novel, in the modern sense of the term. Of course, if its admission were contested in a court of law, it might compel recognition on a technicality: for, considering the novel superficially, any long work of a fictitious nature must be ac-

cepted as belonging to the species. A higher court would, however, doom it: the court of public opinion, which would refuse to read it. Imagine a chanson de geste, devoted in three fourths of its length to a catalog of men hewed down and gabs exchanged: characterized by an absence of plot, unmotivated action, and an absolute indifference to historical verisimiltude. Would such a book obtain a hearing from an intelligent modern audience? It might circulate in the bibliothèque bleue among the backwoods peasants far removed from the modern world in education and ideas; but nowhere else. On the other hand, excellent novels may be composed on Roland, Ogier, Fierabras, Doon. They will have to be constructed, though, in a particular way and on certain principles. They will have to make plausible the ability of a single man to stand off an entire army; to tear up pine-trees; to apply in vain the mighty arms, which cut through so much armor, in an effort to shatter a sword against a rock. They will have to explain Ganelon's treachery in a reasonable manner. They will have to give some space to the feminine influence. The foregoing does not mean that the chansons de geste were not good novels in their day. It means that the basis of novel-writing has changed greatly. That change, however, was gradual.

Perhaps the most significant alteration in the essentials of novel-writing has been the shifting of the center of interest from the outer to the inner life of man. Time was when the characters of the story were mere fighting-machines. The heart and the mind had their seat in the point of the lance of the edge of the sword. The chansons de geste were original-

ly built up on warlike practice. That such a theme could maintain itself long, was not to be expected. The problem of the novel is such that human aspects must be rendered prominent: and this can here be accomplished most appropriately through the exhibition of thought and feeling. The lyric may offer an impression of a brook or a mountain, relying on its imagery and its harmonious combination of sounds. The drama may concentrate its endeavors on action, with the assurance that much of the motivation will result from the physical maneuvres of the actors, from their facial expression, from their pauses and abruptnesses. The novel lacks such aids. It must tell what other types leave to suggestion: and therein lies one of the factors in its differentiation from the other literary species. Unconsciously, the early writers recognized this necessity, and gave it rather careful attention. Epics like Doon de la Roche, of the twelfth century, and Berte or Bovon de Comarcis, of the thirteenth, filled in the blanks left vacant in the original chansons de geste. The psychological novel was beginning. In the futherance of it, the romances and the sentimental narratives contributed most effectively. It would be difficult to conduct a love-story without transforming it into a psychological study. The climax of the tendency was reached in the Roman de la Rose, in which one set of intellectual and sentimental qualities was placed over against another. But, long before, the gropings toward psychological analysis had started into motion. In every case, the desire to paint convincing characters was uppermost. The heroes of the chansons de geste lacked individuality. One was like another. Only by postulating individual training and nat-

ural traits inherent in the various personages, could anything like truth of personality be developed. That was the great work of the group of poets encouraged by Aliénor and her daughters. The discussion of the art of love led to the formulation of a problem and its working out in a romance. 'Let us assume', Chrétien must have said to himself, 'that a knight like Lancelot has irrevocably fallen in love. He is a man of extreme impetuosity, of reckless daring, of wild moods. How will he behave when dominated by an overwhelming passion, even if the object of that passion be not entirely worthy?' - The Roman de la Charrette is the answer. It is possible that Chrétien may have wished to hint that Lancelot's rebellion against the practical realities was in part due to his peculiar bringing-up by a fairy, the Lady of the Lake, just as Perceval's opposition to the charms of love may have followed largely from the exalted teachings of the five knights, who appear to him to be angels. At any rate, Lancelot, true to his character, lets himself be dragged to the depths of degradation by his violent and blind passion: Perceval, guided by an unearthly vision, moulded by an elevated education, sacrifices everything to the Call which is upon him. However much we may be inclined to belittle Chrétien's skill as a novelist from the modern point of view, there can be no doubt of his engrossing interest in the effect of outward action on the mind of his hero, and of the resultant intellectual and sentimental reaction. It is true that no one of his characters progresses appreciably: Érec, Cligès, Yvain, Lancelot preserve their traits intact throughout the story. The problem which Chrétien has selected for illustration does not admit of swerv-

ing to the right or the left. Yet, taken in its entirety, his work indicates a serious endeavor to explore the hidden recesses of the mind. His art is reflective. It is not content with the mere statement of fact.

> "Sei es nun, dasz er selbst mit reflektierenden Bemerkungen eingreift, sei es dasz er seinen Helden Reflexionen in den Mund legt: wir sehen ihn stets die eigene Individualität hervorkehren. Chrestien ist ein durchaus subjektiver Dichter."1

When Lancelot finds it incumbent on him either to obey or to disobey Ganièvre's behest, he does not arrive at a decision at once. Love and Reason ponder on the situation: the cart passes by, but in the meantime, Love has won the battle. This dramatization of the two opposing forces,- Impulse and Discretion, Individual longing and Social Restraints,- is the earliest form of psychological analysis in the novel, and epitomizes the method of the Roman de la Rose. It appears in the deliberations of Énéas and Lavinie, of Aélis in the Escoufle: it is the forerunner of the lengthy monologs in Aucassin et Nicolette, Berte, Floire et Blanchefleur: it is the starting point for the letters, verses, lamentations of the later sentimental novel. The author has not yet become the secretary of his personnages: he does not dare to supply, in his own name, the data requisite for a thorough comprehension of their actions. Hence, the almost morbid introspection of the heroes and heroines of romance: hence, the ineffective characterization. The most powerful secret in story-telling remained hidden from medieval writers: namely, the attitude of the creator to his work, as all-seeing and all-knowing. The utmost that the romancer could present

1. Emecke - Chrestien - p. 89.

was a drama of three or four figures, involving an extremely limited mental or emotional activity, since the possible combinations were few. The ability to handle a small world of people was wanting. This condition was probably due to a lack of broad sympathy and the total exclusion from romance of all excepting the knight and the lady. The merchant, the pedagog, the priest, the doctor, the servant had no seat at the Round Table or in the hall. The author had only one class before his eyes. The rest of the universe was a blank to him. It is no wonder, then, that the romance became chiefly a representation of the customs and manners and the sentimental psychology of the aristocratic circles. It was that condition which aided most in the development of description and mental study. Until the novel accepted the more democratic lessons of the Spaniards and the Italians, it tended in the direction of atrophy of action and restlessness of technique. Mechanical variety had to atone for originality of thought. When the "psychology" of the early novel is mentioned, it should be accompanied with some important restrictions. The specialization in mental phenomena of a certain sort is undeniable: but that does not carry with it an unerring instinct for psychological truth. Thomas, the author of the Tristan, was further advanced in the niceties of sentimental consequences than almost anybody who followed him, down to the Astrée. In a minor degree, he had the great gift of Shakespeare, in whose intuition of character nobody is likely to improve much. Tristan and Iseult, therefore, stand out from the usual figures of medieval romance, because of the personal qualities of the writer. Thus, toward

the period when the novel began to exist the strongest characterization was presented. It may be assumed that any real progress in character-portrayal,- when not a purely personal affair,- would depend on progress in psychological investigation and discussion concerning the most suitable methods for exhibiting it. The Middle Ages knew only the science of the heart. The science of the heart and the mind together is of recent elaboration. Today, almost any writer may set forth a character of some complexity by following a few rules. The striving for warlike effect, for the exposition of the marvelous and the sentimental has been replaced chiefly by the desire to represent individuals in a realistic manner. The novel did not give rise to this tendency. As always, it has derived its inspiration from what was in vogue. So long as it was in the hands of comparatively few men, belonging to a narrow circle, and appealing to a homogenous audience of elevated tastes, the psychology of the novel continued to be partial and restrained. The individuals portrayed by Benoît,[1] by Chrétien, by Gautier d'Arras, are all of one color. When, finally, it became possible for anybody to become an author,- namely, after printing had firmly established itself,- the psychological side of the novel broadened out immeasurably. It was inevitable that the life represented should be fuller and more variegated: it began to stand for a larger reading-public, a more diversified class of writers, and a greater multiplicity of intellectual and sentimental experiences. Another potent influence in the development of an interest in the individual was the spirit of the Renaissance, taking hold of almost everybody who wrote. Adequate charac-

1. cf. Witte - Benoît - p. 98-9

terization failed to appear, however, before Rabelais, in the bourgeois novel, and the Astrée, in the aristocratic branch,- two of the longest works dealing with the same group of people.

> "D'Urfé," says M. Reynier, "a été le premier à composer réellement des caractères. Il excelle à différencier les unes des autres toutes ses figures d'amoureux; en chacune d'elles il indique victorieusement le trait qui lui constitue une physionomie originale." 1

The creator of Pantagruel and Gargantua had, nevertheless, preceded him.

In general, it may be said that the medieval novel kept fumbling on the outskirts of psychological delineation, just as it kept reaching out toward the vigorous reality of everyday life. It failed to come to a conclusion concerning either of these aspects until forced to do so by the invasion of Italina and Spanish narratives. The artistic superiority of the Italian novelle-writers and the inherent bent of the Spaniards toward realistic representation guided the French novel into more fruitful paths after it had reached an impasse. But it must not be forgotten that the French story was already tending in that direction, and that it would have reached the goal, though perhaps a generation or so later.

One of the most direct evidences of the immaturity of medieval psychology may be found in the total lack of historical appreciation as applied to individuals. This is true of all but one species,- of the chansons de geste, the romances, the sentimental novel. It is not so true of the bourgeois story, simply because that type dealt almost exclusively with

1. Reynier - Rom. Sent. - p. 347.

contemporary Frenchmen. In the chansons de geste, Guillaume d'Orange, Gui de Bourgogne, Ogier, Fierabras, though represented as belonging to different epochs and having dissimilar problems to resolve, maintain that stock temperament which M. Lanson has so well described. Marsile, the pagan king in the Roland and Cornumarant, of the Enfances Godefroi, have no individuality beyond that which the French trouvères decided that their enemies should have. Any notion of the genuine mode of thought or feeling peculiar to a foreign race was as rare as the idea that Frenchmen of widely separated periods must of necessity indulge in different viewpoints. The romances were no better off. King Arthur and his Knights, who should have spoken a cruder and more primitive language than even Charlemagne, Olivier, or Raoul de Cambrai, expressed themselves in the courtier style of the twelfth century. Dido and Laudine and Berte seem to have been brought up in the same school. In the earlier sentimental novels, like Floire et Blanchefleur, Spanish kings and Babylonian emirs might pass for twin brothers. Whenever personages out of the past were depicted, they were converted into French barons or vassals. Historical sympathy is one of the most recent additions to our system of esthetics, and is an outgrowth of tireless historical investigation, plus the ardent cult of Truth. As a commentary on early character-drawing, this attitude is of considerable importance. It indicates how superficial it must have been, even at the best. With few exceptions, the majority of the medieval writers were satisfied if they could strike half a dozen notes of humanity in the course of an entire narration. The ambition to afford

the reader the utmost possible pleasure and emotion was not fostered in the novelists. The readers did not demand it. The intense art of the Italians began to affect the quality of written sentiment only a little while before the Astrée appeared. The ability to picture a foreign type of mind or a distant age first made itself visible in Le Sage's brilliant description of a vagabond in the Spanish Golden Age. The great plagiarist, whose Gil Blas is a mosaic from Spanish picaresque novels, whose Diable Boiteux is taken from the Diablo Cojuelo, whose Turcaret is nothing more than a rejuvenation of Regnard's Le Joueur and a few of Molière's characters, had the happy faculty of stepping without favor or prejudice into new environments; of sinking himself in new personalities.

In so far, then, as the French novel dealt with people of the time of the writer, it was moderately successful in its portrayal of character. In so far as it treated foreign themes, it was unsuccessful. An identical verdict may be rendered with regard to its attempt to present the objective facts of history. Everything is perverted to agree with medieval conventions. Charlemagne, who suffered defeat at the hands of the Basques in the foothills of the Pyrenees, is shown at close quarters with the Sarracens. Never having been in Jerusalem, he is introduced as a pilgrim to the Holy Land. Historical facts may underlie each of the epics: but they were perverted by the trouvères, partly because of ignorance, partly because of local necessity, such as induced them to connect some of their heroes with powerful families of the day, partly because of the effort to fabricate an artificial relationship among all the

epic characters, for purposes of continuity.[1] The desire to arouse the attention of hearers led writers to exaggerate details which contained nothing essentially unhistorical. For the same reason that warriors fought as no human warriors ever could have fought, receiving wounds from which no man could have recovered unless he carried with him Don Quixote's magic balsam, and maintaining places which whole armies could not have held,- for the same reason, the size of armies was multiplied in such a way as to have called into action the entire male population of the world. As M. Jeanroy observes, those were the days when

> "les armées nombreuses étaient presque inconnues, où les batailles étaient souvent réduites à des bousculades occasionnant plus de contusions que de blessures -."[2]

The absence of a critical public opinion with regard to history permitted such extravagances as fill the chansons de geste. It permitted gross geographical and chronological inaccuracies, and that narrowness of the imagination which could see only medieval customs, manners, characters, social and political and religious institutions in the past, no matter how remote. It would be a work of supererogation to spend more space on this phase of the novel of the Middle Ages. Many monographs have followed it up, and have been unanimous in their opinions. History was fancy, whether in the novel or in works of an ostensibly scientific character. Chronicles, indeed, set forth many truthful facts, but without that psychological insight which alone makes the facts intelligible. It may be affirmed, therefore, that practically no historical French novel existed

2. Jeanroy - Lyric. - pp. 10-11
1. Heinemann — Esp. Ver. — p. 11.

until Gil Blas, and that no considerable number of them can be encountered before the nineteenth century,- before Victor Hugo, de Vigny, Dumas. That species did not develop, because the age was not ready for it. The reason is plain. The novel has almost never instituted a new line of thought. It has received its inspiration from existing lines of endeavor. It has gone hand in hand with progress in sentiment and intellect. Consequently, it has steadfastly been a reflection of the interests prevailing in the period of its composition. Whatever objection there may be against the use of the term "evolution" as applied to the novel, in one respect, at least, the word must be allowed: that is to say, if society or civilization can be said to evolve, the novel can be said to evolve with it. This fundamental principle has kept it realistic from its very beginnings: and it would not be impossible to support the thesis that the origins of the realistic novel must be sought in every form adopted by it, even back to the chansons de geste. Intrinsically, they represent contemporary life. The attitude of the author, however,- and this must occupy an extremely important position in any work of classification,- made the realism involuntary, excepting in the bourgeois stories, few of which offered any pretense at getting out of the present. Only at a late date, did the chansons de geste and the romances join contemporary depiction with contemporary subjects, as in the Combat des Trente, of the fourteenth century, and La Geste des Bourgignons, of the fifteenth. By the end of the sixteenth century, the medieval repertory had almost disappeared. Novelists abstained from treating of Alexander, Hector, Charlemagne,

King Arthur. A few of the medieval narratives continued to be printed,

> "Mais les rédactions en sont de plus en plus reserrées: le Lancelot donné par Benoist Rigaud, à Lyon, en 1591, tient en 166 pages in 8°. On a même commencé à ramasser en un seul volume la matière de plusieurs histoires. Quoique rendues aussi plus abordables, ces inventions fabuleuses n'attirent plus autant qu'autrefois: elles font surtout la joie des écoliers.-- Les gens du monde commencent à trouver qu'il y a là trop de choses hors de raison.'"[1]

Stories begin to appear for what they really are; namely, a picture of the present. Authors take pride in pointing out that their novels are based on real occurrences of recent date. They accumulate feferences to the events of the religious wars under Henri IV. They attack social questions, and employ as dramatic contrast the conflict involved in the love of two young persons of different religious training, or that of a young girl rebelling against parental authority. They localize their scenes with precision. Thus, Le Martyre d'Amour (1603) furnishes a good description of modern Venice: La Mariane du Filomène (1596), of Paris: Alisée et Diane (1602), of Tours: Le Triomphe de la Constance (1605), of Toulouse.[2] D'Urfé, following the current, presents the topography of Forez, and declares that his stories are true. It might seem that Mlle. de Scudéry's employment of names like Cyrus, Ibrahim, indicated a reversion to medieval methods. There is a vast distance, however, between her Grand Cyrus and Lambert's Alexandre. The latter was

1. Reynier - Rom. Sent. - pp. 176-7.
2. cf. Reynier - Rom. Sent. p. 275.

written in all sincerity as a history of Alexander the Great. The former was not meant by the author, nor understood by her readers, to depict the life of the authentic Cyrus. Like most novels of the first half of the seventeenth century, it was a roman à clef, and, under a slight allegorical form, described living personages and actual conditions in France. If the romans à clef had frankly used French names, they would long ago have been recognized as the aristocratic branch of the realistic novel in the seventeenth century. The historical novel, as a type, was not yet possible. Veracity of background characterized only the bourgeois stories and the few epics, romances, and sentimental narratives located in the present.

In addition, a line seems to have been drawn between professed fiction and professed fact. Those who wrote chronicles felt that they belonged to a special division of literature. Froissart, who wrote both histories and a Breton romance in verse, Méliador, kept separate each element of his dual role. Of course, a large number of the early chronicles might be classed with the novels, and, as a matter of fact, some of them were called romans. But the intention of the chronicler was different from that of the novelist, and his deficiencies are due to the immaturity of critical judgment in point of historical values. Up to the fifteenth century, the differentiation between history and the novel had been faint. The methods of both had been similar. "La reine Aélis, femme d'Henri 1er d'Angleterre -- devenue veuve, elle fit composer par un certain David une histoire de son mari, en forme de chanson de geste."[1] Philippe de Novare wrote, in the thirteenth century, the first French mémoire, partly in the style of the romances, and with many hints taken out of the

1. G. Paris - Esq. - p. 139.

Roman de Renart. The Récits d'un Ménestrel de Reims might easily be mistaken for a romance: Wace's Brut and the Roman de Rou are likewise romanced history. A similar vagueness of differentiation is noticeable in Spanish literature. Even in the fifteenth century, works like Pedro del Corral's Crónica de don Rodrigo were variously judged as histories and as romances of chivalry. At times, the only method of distinguishing the one from the other has lain in the intention of the author, either expressed or assumed. During the fifteenth century, however, the French chronicle or history became a well-recognized species. Historical incidents were told in them, and remained outside the province of the novel. Indeed, for a time it appeared that the chronicle was going to usurp the place of the fictitious narrative,- which it actually did in a large measure. The romances written or printed were the working over of the verse-stories.

> "The first volume printed in Paris was Les Grandes Chroniques de France, which was issued in 1477, by Pâquier Bonhomme--."[1]

The fondness for history caused publishers to apply the name to collections made over from the romances, as was done by Caxton in the first book printed in French, namely, the Recueil des Histoires de Troyes. It was during the latter part of the fifteenth century that Commynes, perhaps the earliest genuine French historian, was composing his Mémoires. All around him, men of originality were busy at the same task, who, in another period, might have written novels. From the beginning of printing down to 1500, according to Brunet, at least forty separate

1. Putnam - Books, etc. II. p. 8.

histories had been put through the press.[1] The delay in the evolution of the historical novel may, then, be regarded as perfectly logical and natural. The two types, having competed in the earlier period of French literature, gradually drew apart, each dealing with a special phase of life. By the publication of the Astrée, they were still clearly-defined species, and novelists were chary of encroaching on the territory of the historian.

The preceding discussion has had for its object the demonstration of continuity in the development of novelistic technique. There was no abrupt break. The novel remained modern at every stage. Few improvements were made in ideas, in language, and in literary progress which it did not adopt. Even the Renaissance changed it but slightly. With comedy,- though more persistently than comedy,- it drew its inspiration from the present. As opposed to comedy, it owed its form entirely to modern initiative, since it had nothing to copy from in classical antiquity. Nevertheless, for one important element of technique it was indirectly indebted to the revival of Greek and Roman art. That element, unity,- whether of action or of interest, whether of character or of incident,- became conspicuous only as the result of incessant discussion concerning Aristotle's poetics and the Three Unities of the drama in the seventeenth century. The Princesse de Clèves seems to have been plotted as a regular drama. It was presented as a prose narrative merely after the addition of a background, to take the place of stage-decoration. Briefing it will show that it closely follows the dramatic principles outlined in the pref-

1. Brunet — Fr. litt. — p. 247.

aces of Corneille and Racine. Succeeding novels emphasized the value of unity: and it is probable that without it, the novel would run the risk of losing prestige as a type of conscious art. For, it is necessary that the artist shall always have an aim: that his work shall be judged according to his success or failure in accomplishing what he has set out to do. It is well enough to apply the impressionistic test: to criticise literature from the point of view of its effect on the reader. But such a test fails to grade the writer: it fails to show in how far he, as an individual, in his individual environment, was superior or deficient. The novel, as a work of art, had only an incomplete existence before the Astrée or the Princesse de Clèves. Occasional writers,- Thomas, in the twelfth century; the authors of Aucassin et Nicolette and Floire et Blanchefleur; Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun; to some extent, the author of the Chanson de Roland,- turned out artistic productions. It will be found that their artistic excellence has been largely contingent on their sense of unity. The general conviction as to the prime importance of unity of conception and workmanship was lacking until the enforcement of the doctrine in other branches of art. After the recognition of that great classical principle, the novel could not afford to pursue its antiquated methods.

The older chansons de geste appear to have the notion of unity of action. Roland, Aliscans, and most of the others, limit themselves to one or two or three incidents, and center the action about them. But this unity is adventitious, unconscious, chiefly due to a deceptive style of narration, and

~~and~~ easily and almost inevitably broken. As Gautier remarks,

> "Il est facile de raconter en cinq minutes tout le sujet de la chanson de Roland: mais nos poëtes, hélas! durent bientôt se marteler la tête pour inventer de nouveaux personnages et surtout de nouveaux épisodes--."[1]

Yet, the Roland itself, after recounting the fate of the hero, adds several epilogs,- Charlemagne's vengeance on the Saracens, the punishment of Ganelon,- which spoil the epic as a work of art. As the song of Roland, the story should have stopped at his death. It is probable that the real cause of the apparent unity of the first chansons should be sought in the audience. So long as they were recited, they had to limit themselves to a single theme. As soon as they were read or addressed to a cultured circle, they relaxed their original simplicity. If we recollect that a very large portion of each chanson consists of repetition and that each laisse summarizes what has gone before, we may realize how rudimentary the plan of the trouvères must have been. Written in unconventionalized language, with the addition of only that which was new in thought or imagery, the chansons would have been very little longer than the ordinary fabliau. Their true character became visible after the stereotyped epic style had fallen into decadence. They became collections of episodes, and rarely offered such examples as Florence de Rome, in which the center of interest is always the heroine; in which the unity of action is genuine and not dependent on factitious amplifications, on the lists of combatants and the enumeration of blows. How far the authors strayed from a central thought may be gathered in an examination of

1. L. Gautier - Ép. fr I, p. 374.

Bauduin de Sebourc:

> ""De l'extrême Orient il nous transporte soudain dans une ville de la Frise ou sur la route de Paris. Puis il nous ramène brusquement au fond de l'Inde.--Tout à l'heure c'était (i. e., the hero) Bauduin de Sebourc: un peu plus loin, ce sera son bâtard."1

With regard to that other unity, namely, of character,- for the unity of time has never received much prominence outside of the drama, where stage-conditions might be thought to make it expedient,- the chansons de geste seem likewise to have reached a high state of artistic perfection. Examination, nevertheless, proves it artificial. One baron is like another, Roland is always Roland, the years mark no alteration in Charlemagne, not because the trouvères were skilful in assigning the proper expression to each character, but because they employed a stereotyped mould. By unity of character is here meant the logic of personality, by virtue of which deeds and thoughts square with the notion, presented or understood, of the intellectual and emotional individuality of the figures delineated. In the later chansons de geste, which are epic in name only, truth of character is preserved with some conscious art. Berte and Gaydon are not the result of mere stenciling.

In so far as the unity of action is concerned, the romances are even wider of the goal than the epics. Variety is their aim: and the "easiest way" is by the addition of new incidents. Accretions to the plot rather than evolution of the plot is the guiding principle. The presentation of new wonders is relied on to maintain the reader's interest. Cligès,

1. L. Gautier - Ép. fr. II - p. 435-6.

which Mr. Ker says

> "may claim to be among the earliest of modern novels,"[1]

fails deplorably in dramatic unity. It consists of two stories, poorly correlated, each of which receives an extremely inartistic development. The first part tells of the adventures of Cligès' father, Alexandre, at the court of King Arthur; his love for Gauvain's sister, Soredamor; their marriage; their ascent to the throne; their death; and the assumption of power by Alexandre's brother, Alis, who was to rule in the stead of Cligès, provided he remained unmarried. It is a complete story, and takes up about a third of the entire work. There seems to have been no other cause for this extraneous chronicle than the caprice of the author, since the relation of Cligès to his uncle's wife, after Alis had broken his promise, could have been described in a few lines. The rest of the narrative depends for its success on strong improbabilities: the drinking by Fenice of a potion which preserves her virginity intact from the desires of her husband; the building of a mausoleum for the heroine; the arrival of three doctors from Salerno, who beat Fenice, pour hot lead through her hands, and are about to burn her, in order to prove that she is alive; the discovery of the two naked lovers by a hunter Bertran; their flight to Arthur's court; and the opportune death of Alis. Cligès is a series of violent situations. It might easily have been converted into a powerful, dramatic portrayal: but Chrétien was in search of novelties. In a similar manner, the Roman de

1. Ker - Ep. & Rom.- p. 357.

Troie, Alexandre, Éracle, and the Breton romances in general, appear to avoid both unity of action and unity of interest. Individual writers may approximate them more or less: yet, when they do so, they depart from the recognized method of romance. M. Sandras has fittingly described their attitude:

> "Dans les ouvrages classiques, la règle que l'écrivain s'impose, c'est l'unité; au moyen-âge, ce qui préoccupe avant tout l'artiste, le poète, c'est la variété. La muse de Chaucer, comme celle des trouvères, faisant, à la première haie en fleurs, ne songe plus au but du voyage."[1]

We must not regard this as an involuntary deviation. Chrétien and his followers were no more childlike than George Meredith or Flaubert. They represented one school of medieval novelists, whose theory of composition was based on a consistent variety in language, in rhetorical devices, in "theatrical" effects, in plot.

On the other hand, the romancers made distinct progress in unity of characterization. This is partly due to their preponderating interest in sentimental or psychological phenomena. It is due mainly, however, to a fundamental disagreement with the epic school concerning man's power of initiative. That same opposition in the seventeenth century differentiated the drama of Corneille from that of Racine: and it would not be unfair to speak of the former as the epic-dramatist; the latter, as the dramatist of romance. The one believed in the free-action of man, in his ability to control his feelings, and to make things happen: the other believed in a sort of senti-

1. Sandras - Chaucer - p. 117.

mental Fatality, against which man's struggles were in vain. The interest of the one was in action: in the other, of reaction. Consequently, the epic bothered comparatively little about the delineation of character: whereas, that was the mainspring of romance. The stereotyped heroes of the chansons de geste have been supplanted by indivduals,- individuals, it is true, without much physical personality, but in an advanced state of sentimental independence. To be sure, there was no philosophizing by the trouvères as to the distinction here suggested, but it existed. The latest epics exhibit it as well as the romances of chivalry. Lancelot and Perceval are hardly to be confused. Laudine and Énide are women of different age, temper, social condition. Everybody has a particular way of responding to the same influence. Love softens Énide and forces her into self-sacrifice: it renders Guenièvre capricious: it makes Yvain uxorious: it find Perceval steeled against it. Briseïda and Polyxena, Dido and Lavinie, Berte and Constance are individuals. The care formerly used in detailing the externals of combat has been transferred to the minutiae of the heart. The medieval study of man as an emotional being, though often rather mechanical and hardly ever very deep, has almost involuntarily given literature a large number of personalities. The attempt to illustrate sentimental problems, such as those of André le Chapelain, has brought out character. In the Middle Ages, the interest was still closely centered about general propositions. The allegories strengthened that leaning. After a while, however, character was to become important for its own sake. In order that this should come about,

it was necessary that the belief in the value of the individual human being should become prevalent. That time did not arrive in France until long after it had appeared in both Spain and England.

The combination of unity of action and truth of character ought rather to be expected in the sentimental novel than elsewhere: and it is there, indeed, that we find it. The causes responsible for it are many and varied. In the first place, the sentimental novel, as it improved with time, occupied itself more and more with the analysis of the heart. The peripatetic nature of the epics and romances lost its charm. The novel tended toward the stationary, with conversation as a substitute for action. In the second place, the sentimental novel, as a living type, fell largely in the period of the Renaissance, when unity stood out as the great desideratum in all the arts. Again, the novel is seen to respond to the currents in action everywhere else. The Oriental narratives, rediscovered in the sixteenth century, contributed by their emphasis of the retarding moment, to the preservation of a center of interest. The common device of separating the lovers by violence,- as is done even in the oldest French versions, such as Aucassin et Nicolette and Floire et Blanchefleur,- and of bringing them gradually to the consummation of their desires, seems to be peculiar to the Oriental stories, and to coincide nearly with the Greek conception of the drama. A critical instant, similar to the dramatic climax, appears to have been chosen by the author, in the form of minunderstandings, slander, lost or falsified letters, the raging of the Elements.1 The preparations for this moment and the unfolding after it has

1. cf. Koerting - Franz. Rom. - I, p. 31.

it neither allegory nor useless digression, neither complexity of chivalrous episodes nor verbose descriptions of combat. The interest lies entirely in the sentimental action.[1]

occurred constitutes the whole effort of the Greek rhetoricians, who, it may be supposed, were still guided by the traditional idea of Greek unity. The French sentimental novel of the sixteenth century, under the strong influence of Heliodorus and Longus, could very well adopt this method, since it meant no break with the modern forces then transforming its structure. The Spanish novel, while about to invade France with its more involved works,- Amadís, Don Quixote, Diana, Enamorada,- and to encourage complexity, was best known at the end of the sixteenth century by the shorter sentimental stories, unified in action and single in theme. As M. Reynier says of Arnotte et Lucenda, put into French by Des Essarts, the translator of the Amadís, there is in them

> "ni tableau allégorique, ni digression inutile (comme la Défense des Dames); un seul épisode chevaleresque, et très court: le combat en champ clos. L'intérêt est concentré sur l'action sentimentale."[1]

Thus the Spanish, and also, as the result of direct imitation by French writers,- the Italian novelle aided in turning the French novel toward technical unity and the study of everyday character. But it was undoubtedly the drama of the seventeenth century which definitely settled in the novel the necessity of unity of action and psychological consistency. These two principles of the first magnitude in technique received general recognition only after the labors of Corneille, Racine, Molière, and the scores of other dramatists had placed them among the laws of the writing of fiction. The novel, in working out its salvation, once more borrowed from its competitors.

To the principles of technique outlined in the pre-

1. Reynier- Rom. Sent. - p. 66.

ceding paragraphs,- the employment of prose, the approximation to historical and psychological truth, the development of description as an aid to the mind's eye, the expression of individual character, the attention to artistic unity,- the bourgeois novel had little to contribute. Its methods of workmanship it derived from the aristocratic narratives. There were, to be sure, certain valuable qualities which it was injecting in to the novel: humor, raciness, satire, contemporary problems, the realism adapted to the great majority. But, in general, it was the last to assert its independence, whether in content or in manner. The history of the novel down to the Astrée is essentially that of a narrative literature addressed to the upper circles of society or written about them.

LIFE.

I was born in London, England, December 22, 1878. I received my public-school education in Somerville and Quincy, Massachusetts, and was graduated from the Quincy High School in 1896. I took my A. B. at Harvard in 1900. During the second semester of 1899-1900, and during the year 1900-1901, I served as instructor in Modern Languages at the University of North Carolina. While there, I did work toward the degree of A. M. under Professors Toy and Hume. I spent the year 1901-1902 in Paris, attending at the Sorbonne the lectures of Messieurs Faguet, Larroumet, and Gazier. The degree of A. M. was conferred on me by the University of North Carolina in 1902. From 1903 to 1908, I was principal of the Central High School, at San Juan, and superintendent of schools, in Porto Rico. Since 1909, I have been instructor in Romance Languages at the University of Missouri. My work for the degree of Ph. D. has been done here under Professors Murray, Belden, and Fairchild.

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