

*In Commemoration of the 400th
Anniversary of John Calvin's
death, May 27, 1564.*

MARGUERITE D'ANGOULÊME
AND THE FRENCH LUTHERANS

A STUDY IN PRE-CALVIN REFORMATION IN FRANCE: I

DANIEL WALTHER

Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan

History (which to Paul Valéry is the most dangerous product that the chemistry of the intellect has created) must not be subservient to a national cause.¹ Great minds endeavor to understand and unite the various trends of history and literature in surrounding nations—Goethe spoke of *Weltliteratur*—but in the latter nineteenth century a chauvinistic nationalism permeated even scholarship. The more one became independent of foreign ideas and alien influences, the more one thought to be original and creative. The Germany of Fichte sought to discover and defend the national heritage in Germany, and there was a corresponding attitude in the France of Duruy and Augustin Thierry. This nationalistic tendency, fifty years ago, is apparent also among historians of the French Reformation, who endeavored to establish: a) that French Protestantism is autochthonous and organically French, and, b) that the French Reformation came before the German Reformation.

Differing Opinions Among Historians

Before 1850, French historians willingly gave Germany credit for the Reformation, as it appeared in the studies of Michelet, who wrote that the “conscience of the times was in Germany”² and whose lyrical eulogies of Luther are well known. The same is true of Mignet, Nisard and Merle d’Aubigné, whose history of the Reformation began to appear in 1835.

¹ See a letter by A. Renaudet to L. Febvre, Feb. 2, 1903, *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* (1952), p. XII, n. 1.

² *Revue des Deux-Mondes* (Paris, 1832), pp. 555-562.

Merle d'Aubigne's history of the time of Calvin was written later.³

The originality and priority of the French Reformation were discussed as early as 1859 by Orentin Douen: "In 1512, five years before Luther, one could see the first rays of the sun of the Reformation."⁴ Buisson stated that "the French Reformation had its origin in France . . . It was born before him (Luther); it asserted itself without him."⁵ Doumergue, with his usual impetuosity, said that Lefèvre was the "créateur du premier en date des protestantismes."⁶

The baffling, and sometimes amusing, debate continued. In 1912 Vaissière wrote that the reformed doctrines in the Lutheran tradition "were repulsive to the French soul and genius."⁷ In 1913, Viénot retorted: "The farce has lasted long enough. There is no Reformation independent from Luther or prior to it."⁸ In 1914, Reynaud disagreed: "Lutheranism had its cradle in St. Germain-des-Prés and not in Wittenberg."⁹ In 1916, Romier wrote: "There is no historical movement that is more national or localized than French Protestantism."¹⁰ And there are those who contradict themselves, like Brunetière who wrote in 1898, "The Reformation is essentially German, that is, antipathetic to French genius,"¹¹

³ Jean Henri Merle d'Aubigné, *La Réforme du seizième siècle* (Paris, 1835-53); *La Réformation en Europe au temps de Calvin* (Paris, 1863-78).

⁴ *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme français*, VIII (1859), 389, hereafter referred to as *BSHPF*.

⁵ Ferdinand Buisson, *Histoire Générale*, ed. E. Lavissee and A. Rambaud (Paris, 1893-1901), IV, 474.

⁶ Emile Doumergue, *Jean Calvin; les hommes et les choses de son temps* (Lausanne, 1899-1927), I, 542 ff.

⁷ Pierre de Vaissière, *Récits du temps des troubles* (Paris, 1912), p. 16.

⁸ *BSHPF*, LXII (1913), 97-108.

⁹ P. Reynaud, *Histoire générale de l'influence française en Allemagne* (Paris, 1914), *passim*.

¹⁰ *BSHPF*, LXV (1916), 343; also: Jacques Pannier, "Les origines françaises du Protestantisme français," *BSHPF* LXXVII (1928).

¹¹ F. Brunetière, *Histoire de la littérature française*, I (Paris, 1898), 198.

but two years later, in 1900, said: "There was a Reformation that was purely French, whose origin owes nothing, or very little, to the German Reformation."¹² Lucien Febvre, who examines the entire debate, considers the question "not well taken," and he suggests a solution of his own: to trace the French origins back beyond Luther to Raymond Lull, Richard St. Victor, and the "Windeshémiens," as well as the *Hermetic Books*.¹³

The French spirit of the Renaissance-Reformation movement must not be sought exclusively in Calvin's *Institutes*, but also in the attitude of the Sorbonne, the sermons of pre-Calvin Evangelicals such as Caroli, Mazurier, and Roussel, the activism of G. Farel, the mysticism of G. Briçonnet, the commentaries of Lefèvre, as well as in the religious aspirations fashionable in the circle of Marguerite d'Angoulême, sister of Francis I.

Some have questioned whether one can consider France a Christian country at all. Aulard wondered whether Catholic Christianity, even in its Gallican form, ever dwelt in the soul of the French.¹⁴ Erasmus considered France a land of vain and useless speculations. There was always a tendency in France toward censorious satire, a jeering, rationalistic incredulity which found expression even in the grotesque statues and the grimacing faces on the very portals of cathedrals. If Aulard questioned whether France was a Christian country, it was because old pagan customs basically prevailed, with only a thin veneer of Christian ceremonialism. Henri Hauser similarly thought that the French peasant has remained attached to his local superstitions with deep roots in the paganism of ancient Gaul.¹⁵ The effort at de-Christianization

¹² Brunetière, "Oeuvre littéraire de Calvin," *Revue des Deux-Mondes* (October, 1900), p. 899.

¹³ Lucien Febvre, "Une question mal posée; les origines de la Réforme française," *Revue Historique*, CLXI (1929), 65.

¹⁴ François V. A. Aulard, *Christianity and the French Revolution* (London, 1927), p. 33.

¹⁵ Henri Hauser, *Etudes sur la Réforme française* (Paris, 1909), p. 98.

and incredulity is not a phenomenon of the eighteenth century alone, but we see it appear during the French Reformation, notably in Etienne Dolet,¹⁶ influenced by the Averrhoists of Padua, Rabelais, and the impious *Cymbalum Mundi* by Bonaventure Despériers,¹⁷ who was in the service of Marguerite and was protected by her with the same tolerance as was formerly Lefèvre and, later, the Spiritual Libertines.

Lefèvre d'Étaples (Faber Stapulensis)

The debate as to the priority of French Protestantism is largely based on Lefèvre d'Étaples who published in 1509 a Commentary on the Psalms, the *Psalterium Quincuplex* (1509), which Luther used,¹⁸ and in 1512 a *Commentary on Romans*. Was Lefèvre a Protestant? A Lutheran? He was no more a Reformer in the active sense than he was a Protestant in the Lutheran sense, even though his ideas were eventually considered subversive. He suggested a mystical attainment by purgation, illumination, inner perfection, and salvation by love as well as by faith; he was never excommunicated.

Lefèvre was interested in the solution of the problem of

¹⁶ Etienne Dolet, *Le second enfer* (Lyon, 1544), dedicated to Marguerite: "c'est toy, en qui mon espoir total gist," verse 77; Henri Hauser, *Modernité du XVI^e siècle* (Paris, 1930); Lucien Febvre, "Dolet propagateur de l'Évangile," *Bibl. d'Human. et Renaiss.*, VI (1945), 98-170; Marc Chassigne, *Etienne Dolet. Portraits et documents inédits* (Paris, 1930), p. 348.

¹⁷ Ernst Walser, *Gesammelte Studien zur Geistesgeschichte der Renaissance* (Basel, 1932), see chapter on B. Despériers' *Cymbalum mundi*.

¹⁸ Of Luther's course on *Psalms* (c. Aug. 16, 1513 to Oct. 21, 1515) there exists, besides two leaves of his manuscript, a copy of Lefèvre's Commentary with Luther's marginal notes. H. Boehmer, *Road to the Reformation* (Philadelphia, 1946), pp. 109, 121, 123; U. Saarnivaara, *Luther Discovers the Gospel* (St. Louis, 1951), pp. 60-62. Lefèvre's exegetical work was far from perfect; wrote Luther: "Even Lefèvre, a man otherwise spiritual and sincere, lacks this proper understanding of the Scriptures when he interprets them, although he has it abundantly in his own life and in exhorting others." M. Luther, Letter to Spalatin, October 19, 1516; Luther, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. E. L. Enders (Halle, 1896-1902), I, 64.

salvation, though with him it did not take the subjectively dramatic proportions that it did with Luther. Lefèvre is often considered basically orthodox because he tried to devise a prudent compromise between faith and works. One characteristic of French pre-Protestantism is that it did not exclude the practice of works. For instance, Lefèvre's disciple, G. Roussel, in an unpublished pamphlet, the *Forme de visite de diocèse*, wrote: "The gospel and the law, faith and works, grace and penance, are real and consonant with true harmony. One cannot be without the other."¹⁹ Another characteristic of the France of Lefèvre is that the notion of papal authority played a relatively minor part. A subject of Francis I did not consider the Pope in the same light as did a subject of Henry VIII or a Saxon or a Hessian. Wrote G. Farel: "Papa aut nullus, aut modicus hic est."²⁰ When G. Briçonnet, Bishop of Meaux, condemned the Lutheran ideas, he did not mention the papal issue, nor did Clichtove in his *Antilutherus*.²¹ Luther, who did not consider Lefèvre as an ally, had nevertheless the fondest esteem for him and preferred him to Erasmus, for he wrote to Spalatin: "Lefèvre is very sincere and religious, while Erasmus lacks that understanding for the interpretation of sacred letters";²² and to Johann Lang: "I fear that Erasmus does not sufficiently put in evidence Christ and the grace of God, and in this he is more ignorant than Stapulensis."²³ In the margin of the 1516 edition of Erasmus' Greek New Testament, Luther wrote about Erasmus: "*Du bist nicht fromm.*"²⁴

¹⁹ Gérard Roussel, *Familière exposition du symbole*, dedicated to the King of Navarre, in Charles G. A. Schmidt, *Gérard Roussel* (Strasbourg, 1845), p. 129.

²⁰ Farel to Zwingli, June 9, 1527, A.-L. Herminjard, *Correspondance des Réformateurs dans les Pays de Langue Française* (Genève, 1871-1897), II, 20.

²¹ Josse Clichtove, *Anti-Lutherus, Tres libros coplectés . . . Coloniae*, (1525).

²² October 19, 1516, Herminjard, *op. cit.*, I, 26.

²³ March 1, 1517, Herminjard, *op. cit.*, I, 26, 27.

²⁴ Karl Heinrich Graf, *Essai sur la vie et les écrits de Lefèvre d'Étaples*

Lefèvre d'Étaples (1455-1536) was one of the Sorbonne's most respected teachers at a time when the Sorbonne was the particular target of Rabelais' biting sarcasm. Very soon Lefèvre turned to the Bible, the voice of God (Calvin's *Deus ipse loquens*). "Such a bright light," Lefèvre writes, "overtook me that human doctrines seemed to me like darkness in comparison with divine studies, which seemed to me to exude a fragrance whose sweetness was unmatched here on earth."²⁵ It is a mistake to insist that he was timid, in comparing him to the violence of Farel or the impetuosity of Luther. Modest, to be sure self-effacing,²⁶ he had no use for those who sought erudition for itself and he looked askance on those who wanted to be "more elegant than the Holy Ghost."²⁷ In his commentary on the Psalms, the *Psalterium Quincuplex*, he intended a textual criticism though he was not naturally endowed with a critical mind (he believed in the authenticity of Paul's letters to Seneca).²⁸

His approach, however, denoted a new accent: God can be understood exclusively in love and reached only in humility. In the *Expositio Continua* (Ps. VI) he wrote: "Give me eternal

(Strasbourg, 1842); Jean Barnaud, *Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples* (Châlons, 1900); Karl Spiess, *Der Gottesbegriff des Faber Stapulensis* (Marburg, 1930); Fritz Hahn, "Faber Stapulensis und Luther," *ZKG*, LVII (1938), 356-432.

²⁵ Lefèvre to Briçonnet, December 15, 1512. In the Preface of his *Psalterium Quincuplex* he wrote: "... une lumière si vivante a frappé mes regards, que les doctrines humaines m'ont semblé des ténèbres en comparaison des études divines, tandis que celles-ci m'ont paru exhaler un parfum dont rien sur la terre n'égalé la douceur." Herminjard, *op. cit.*, I, 4, n. 2.

²⁶ Too much cowardice was feared to be in France, and Lefèvre was not considered one to infuse courage: "Faber nihil habet animi... Dicunt certi: nondum est tempus, nondum venit hora. Et hic tamen non habemus diem neque horam... Rogate igitur Dominum pro Gallia ut ipsa tandem sit digna verbo," Pierre Toussaint to Oecolampadius, July 26, 1528, Herminjard, *op. cit.*, I, 447; *Revue d'Histoire Moderne*, XII (1909), 258-278.

²⁷ "Veult aucun estre plus élégant que le saint esperit," June 8, 1523, "Epistre Exhortatoire," Herminjard, *op. cit.*, I, 136.

²⁸ *BSHPF*, LXIX (1920), 135.

redemption not because I am worthy, but because of the mere commiseration of thy grace . . ." ²⁹ That was a new note. In his *Commentary on the Epistles of Paul* (1512) he reiterated his intention of not leaving the church: "There must be neither sects nor separations but a universal united church." ³⁰ The Sorbonne left him alone for a while—the *Commentary* was not censured. It was different with his dissertation on the three Marys, ³¹ which unleashed the fury of the Sorbonne. He had been in trouble already in 1514 for having sided with Reuchlin, and thus incurred the suspicion of the sacred faculty. In 1515 they re-examined the *Commentary* of 1512 and found him wanting in refusing to admit that the Latin version of the New Testament was Jerome's work. ³² All this did not make Lefèvre a Reformer or a Lutheran, although the defenders of the faith endeavored to associate him with Luther. Wrote Beda, the defender of orthodox faith: "The errors of Luther have come into this kingdom by the books of Erasmus and Lefèvre more than by any others . . ." ³³

On basic notions Lefèvre and Luther differed. Lefèvre's *Deus absconditus* is the hidden God, far away, inaccessible to human concepts, unseen, though illimited. Calvin's God was an "interventionist," an active God, while Despériers preferred the God of Averrhoes, "oysif et ne se meslant de rien" ("idle and meddling in nothing"). Lefèvre's Neo-Platonic idea of God, who has painted Himself in nature, has a Cusan accent. ³⁴ On the question as to who starts the

²⁹ "Da mihi salutem aeternam non quia dignus sim, non quia meritis sim, sed ob solam misericordiam et gratiam tuam," *Expositio Continua*, Ps. VI, *Cambr. Mod. Hist.*, II (1903), 283; George Vivilier Jourdan, *The Stress of Change* (London, 1932), p. 32.

³⁰ Graf, *Lefèvre d'Étaples*, *op. cit.*, p. 49; Barnaud, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

³¹ Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, *De Maria Magdalena et triduo Christi disceptatio* (Paris, 1517); Charles Du Plessis d'Argentré, *Collectio Judiciorum de novis erroribus* (Paris, 1728-1736), II, p. VII.

³² Agrippa to Lefèvre, October 1519, Herminjard, *op. cit.*, I, 58, n. 3.

³³ On Beda and Lefèvre, see BSHPF, LXXXV (1936), 251.

³⁴ Otto Hahn, *Faber Stapulensis*, ZKG, LVII (1938), 370.

work of redemption, God or man, Lefèvre answers: God calls the sinner not because of his works but because of forgiveness of sin. Lefèvre endorsed the Thomistic notion of infused grace. Works were compared to the opening of the eyes; he who dares not open the eyes cannot be illuminated by the sun. Thus we cooperate: God depends on our opening the eyes. Luther was opposed to the idea of man's cooperation; justification alone, precisely, enables him to cooperate. What was to Luther a result of justification was to Lefèvre a prerequisite.

When Luther started lecturing on the Psalms in 1513, he relied not only on St. Augustine but on Lefèvre's *Psalterium*. Noticeable was Lefèvre's influence in the contrast between the letter and the spirit, the sensible and intelligible, the *Abbild* (earthly things) and the *Urbild* (pattern of heavenly things). Both Luther and Lefèvre believed that they were living in rapidly changing times: "My son," Lefèvre said to Farel, "God is going to renew the world and you will witness it."³⁵ The "signs of the times" indicated that a change was imminent. However, their concern for a precarious age, on the verge of being transformed, was not shared by all, nor was the hope that God would renew the world. Luther's *Adnotationes* reveal Lefèvre's influence; although Luther did not think too highly of him as a commentator, there is a connection between Luther's exegetical methods and Lefèvre's hermeneutic principles.³⁶ As the vexations against Lefèvre increased, Marguerite d'Angoulême took care of him. She made him a librarian at Blois and wrote to Montmorency: "They made all sorts of trouble for him and good old Fabri did not feel too good about it."³⁷

³⁵ Herminjard, *op. cit.*, I, 5, n., and 22, n.

³⁶ Martin Luther, *Adnotationes Quincuplici Fabri Stapulensis Psalterio manu adscriptae* (Weimar Ausg., 1513), IV, 463; also Luther's letter to Spalatin: "Lefèvre, a man otherwise spiritual and sincere, lacks proper understanding of the Scriptures when he comments on them," October 19, 1516, *Sämliche Werke*, ed. Ernst Ludwig Enders (Halle, 1896-1902), I, 64.

³⁷ Marguerite d'Angoulême, *Lettres* (Paris, 1841), I, 280.

Marguerite, Mother of the French Renaissance.

Marguerite d'Angoulême (1492-1549), later Duchess of Alençon and Queen of Navarre, was reared by a temperamental mother, Louise de Savoie; and with her brother, the future king of France, they formed a "holy trinity," a "perfect triangle."³⁸ Like all France, the three were under the spell of the Italian Renaissance and lived in an atmosphere of urbane poetry; it was an enviable time when battle reports were written by poets, and when even the gardeners of Fontainebleau sent their bills in verse.

Marguerite's first husband (1509) was the insignificant Duke of Alençon, and the second (1527) the far from insignificant Henry, King of Navarre. Marguerite's daughter was the strong-willed Jeanne d'Albret, the mother of Henry IV of Navarre, the first of the Bourbon dynasty of France.

Marguerite's weakness was her unconditional capitulation to her brother. The brilliant but superficial Renaissance King, Francis I, was her hope, her Lord, her "Christ." More fervent was this sister's love for Francis I than Jacqueline's for Pascal, Henriette's for Renan, or Lucille's for Châteaubriand. In poetic abandonment Marguerite said that the earth and the moon, the fragrant woods and the flowery meadows, the sea and the golden stars, and all nature bowed to contemplate and worship him, the king, her brother.³⁹ In the *Heptaméron* she calls her fickle brother "the world's holiest man," an expression on which Montaigne comments in his *Essays*.⁴⁰

Francis I was indeed sensuous and greedy, but endowed

³⁸ Champollion-Figeac, *Captivité du Roi François Ier* (Paris, 1847), p. 455.

³⁹ Marguerite de Navarre, "La Coche," *Les Marguerites de la Marguerite des Princesses* (Paris, 1875), IV, 246-248; R. Ritter, *Les solitudes de Marguerite de Navarre, 1527-1549* (Paris, 1953), *passim*.

⁴⁰ Marguerite de Navarre, *Heptaméron des Nouvelles* (Paris, 1880), Journée III, Nouvelle 25; Michel Eyquem de Montaigne, *Essays* (Hillsborough, California, 1948); *Essays*, ed. Albert Thibaudet (Paris, 1937); *Essays* (Paris, 1595), I, p. LVI.

with refined tastes. During the religious tempest he seesawed frequently from Catholicism to Lutheranism. But he showed courage in refusing repeatedly to accept the verdict of the Sorbonne, as in the case of Berquin.⁴¹ He protected the humanists and poets even if they were not orthodox, showed interest in the Reformation movement at Meaux, and invited Melanchthon to Paris.⁴² Conspicuously he came to the defense of his sister Marguerite when she was attacked by the Sorbonne. After 1537 Francis stayed put. He then took a definitive stand for Catholicism.

During Marguerite's lifetime only two of her numerous writings were published, one of them the *Miroir*, in 1531.⁴³ The second edition of the *Miroir* was published together with the *Dialogue en forme de vision nocturne*, written in 1524, the *Pater Noster*, and the *Penitential Psalms*. Marguerite's *Miroir* was translated into English in 1544 by Princess, later Queen, Elizabeth I when she was eleven years old. This translation incurred Henry VIII's displeasure, which did not hinder Elizabeth from dedicating her youthful translation to Katherine Parr, her stepmother.⁴⁴ The second publication in Marguerite's lifetime was the *Marguerites*,⁴⁵ a miscellaneous collection of poems, mysteries, devotional and spiritual songs.

⁴¹ Lefèvre to Farel, July 6, 1524, Herminjard, *op. cit.*, I, 219; Francis I is referred to as "rex generosissimus."

⁴² Will Grayburn Moore, *La Réforme Allemande et la Littérature Française. Recherches sur la Notoriété de Luther en France*. "Publications de la Faculté des Lettres, Fasc. 52" (Strasbourg, 1930), p. 286: Melanchthon's nephew, André, was in France in 1541, "où il tenoit des escoles et preschoit." He was arrested by the Bishop of Agen, but freed on Marguerite's intervention.

⁴³ Marguerite de Navarre, *Le miroir de l'ame pecheresse ouquel elle recongnoit ses faultes et pechez, aussi les graces & benefices à elle faictz par Jesuschrist son espoux. La Marguerite tresnoble et precieuse s'est proposee a ceulx qui de bon cueur la cherchoiet* (Alençon, 1531).

⁴⁴ *A godly meditacyon of the Christian soule . . . compiled in Frenche by lady Margarete quene of Navarre; and aptely translated into English by the right vertuose lady Elizabeth, daughter to our late soverayne Kyng Henry VIII* (London, 1548), III, 1414; Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 486.

⁴⁵ *Les Marguerites de la Marguerite* (Paris, 1547), No. XVI.

Her other works are posthumous, such as the *Heptaméron*, where some see a work of Gallic lasciviousness in the vein of Boccaccio and Poggio, while others, like M. Bataillon and E. V. Telle, consider it a work of deep Christian morality.⁴⁶ Her *Letters* were (unsatisfactorily) published mostly by F. Génin.⁴⁷ It was Génin who launched the rumor of Marguerite's incestuous love for her brother, a scandal which was picked up and magnified by Michelet. In 1896, Lefranc published her last *Poems*, containing epistles, comedies, and spiritual songs, most important of which were the *Prisons* and *La Navire*.⁴⁸ Her mystic correspondence with Briçonnet was largely edited by Ph. A. Becker in 1900.⁴⁹ In 1904 Paturier reprinted the *Pater*; in 1914 Sturel reprinted sundry poems; in 1924 Schneegans published some of Marguerite's mysteries. A complete set of her works is being contemplated by Saulnier and Maurice Marichal of the Ecole des Chartes.

Among the many contemporaries who wrote on Marguerite, the following were mostly used here: the anonymous *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris*,⁵⁰ an eyewitness of religious events; Brantôme's record of the rumors which he had heard through his mother Anne de Vivonne, one of Marguerite's chambermaids (Brantôme's gossipy account must be read of course with caution); the *Obituary* written by Charles de Ste. Marthe,

⁴⁶ Emile V. Telle, *Oeuvre de Marguerite d'Angoulême, reine de Navarre, et la querelle des femmes* (Toulouse, 1937); V. L. Saulnier, "Martin Pontus et Marguerite de Navarre. La Réforme Lyonnaise et les Sources de l'Heptaméron," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, XXI (1959), 577-594.

⁴⁷ *Lettres de Marguerite d'Angoulême, soeur de François Ier* (Paris, 1841): the first volume of the *Lettres* contains 171 letters published by F. Génin from the fonds Béthune; they were addressed mostly to Montmorency and d'Yzernay.

⁴⁸ A. Lefranc, ed., *Les dernières poésies de Marguerite de Navarre* (Paris, 1896); Lefranc, "Les idées religieuses de Marguerite de Navarre d'après son oeuvre poétique," *BSHPF*, XLVII (Paris, 1898). *Navire* was of feminine gender in the 16th century.

⁴⁹ Philip-A. Becker, "Marguerite duchesse d'Alençon et Guillaume Briçonnet Evêque de Meaux," *BSHPF*, XLIX (Paris, 1900), 393-477.

⁵⁰ *Le Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris sous le règne de François Ier* (Paris, 1910).

her chaplain; ⁵¹ the revealing and amusing *Journal* of her mother, Louise de Savoie, a candid portrait of a cunningly astute person. ⁵² The history of the captivity of Francis I, published by Champollion-Figeac, records Marguerite's stay in Madrid. ⁵³ The *Book of Martyrs* by Crespin was used here, as well as the *Histoire ecclésiastique* attributed to Beza. ⁵⁴ Florimond de Raemond, reared in a Protestant atmosphere, turned against the Protestants and became one of Calvin's most acrimonious but clear-sighted foes in his *Histoire de la naissance . . . de l'hérésie*. ⁵⁵ Calvin's correspondence was used, especially his French letters ⁵⁶ published by Jules Bonnet, and his acerbic tract against the Spiritual Libertines. ⁵⁷ Strasbourg was the mother of studies in French Protestantism. The works of Charles Schmidt and his disciples, Weiss and Reuss, also Dean H. Strohl and Prof. Wendel, are among the best. The essay on Lefèvre by C. H. Graf is still authoritative. ⁵⁸ The most substantial standby is Herminjard's *Correspondence des Réformateurs*. ⁵⁹

⁵¹ Charles de Sainte-Marthe, *Oraison funèbre de la reine de Navarre* (Paris, 1554).

⁵² Louise de Savoie, *Journal* (Paris, 1836).

⁵³ *Poésies du roi François Ier, de Louise de Savoie . . . de Marguerite reine de Navarre* (Paris, 1847).

⁵⁴ *Histoire des églises réformées du royaume de France* (Paris, 1521-1563). The authorship of this document has not been established; it was attributed to Beza by Croix de Maine and de Thou; to Beza and Nicolas de Gallars by Ancillon; it is a partisan work, estimated by some as "scandalously incorrect." In the critical edition of 1889, by Baum and Cunitz, Rudolphe Reuss has examined at length the arguments for and against Beza's authorship, *Hist. eccl.*, III, pp. XXI-XLIII. Cf. on this question of authorship Paul-F. Geisendorf, *Théodore de Bèze* (Genève, 1949), pp. 340-345.

⁵⁵ Florimond de Raemond, *L'Histoire de la Naissance, Progrès, et Décadence de l'Hérésie de ce Siècle* (Rouen, 1629).

⁵⁶ *Lettres françaises de Calvin* (Paris, 1854); Jacques Pannier, *Calvin l'Ecrivain* (Paris, 1930).

⁵⁷ D'Argentré, *op. cit.*

⁵⁸ Graf, "Jacobus Faber Stapulensis. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Reformation in Frankreich," *Zeitschr. für hist. Theologie* (Strasbourg, 1842); Graf, *Essai sur la vie et les écrits de Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples* (Strasbourg, 1842).

⁵⁹ See *supra*, note 20.

Some of the most penetrating studies on Marguerite are by literary critics like Ste.-Beuve,⁶⁰ or by economists like Hauser, and by the historian Imbart de la Tour,⁶¹ while A. Renaudet displays his vast erudition in *Pré-Réforme*.⁶² The most exhaustive work on Marguerite is by Pierre Jourda of Montpellier, *Marguerite d'Angoulême*.⁶³ This is a standard work which it will be difficult to surpass. Very helpful also is Jourda's *Tableau chronologique* of Marguerite's publications.⁶⁴ In 1930, a superb contribution was made by W. G. Moore, *La Réforme allemande et la Littérature française*.⁶⁵ Significantly this very informative work was published by the faculty of letters, and not of theology, of Strasbourg. Other recent publications are by Margaret Mann,⁶⁶ E. Walser, W. F. Patterson, and E. V. Telle.⁶⁷ Lucien Febvre also wrote a substantial essay on "Une question mal posée."⁶⁸ Some of our material was gathered in the libraries of Geneva, Bruxelles, Strasbourg, Paris, and especially in the Bibliothèque des Pasteurs in Neuchâtel.

One of the best guides in French Protestantism is the *Bulletin* published by the Historical Society of French

⁶⁰ Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve, *Causeries du Lundi* (Paris, n.d.), VII, 434-454.

⁶¹ Pierre Gilbert Imbart de la Tour, *Les Origines de la Réforme* (Paris, 1905-1914); see Vol. III, *L'évangélisme*, 1521-1538.

⁶² A. Renaudet, *Préréforme et Humanisme à Paris pendant les premières guerres d'Italie* (Paris, 1916).

⁶³ Pierre Jourda, *Marguerite d'Angoulême* (Thèse; Paris, 1930); see Renaudet's book-review of Jourda's biography of Marguerite, *Revue du XVI^e siècle* (Paris, 1932).

⁶⁴ Pierre Jourda, "Tableau chronologique des publications de Marguerite de Navarre," *Revue du XVI^e siècle* (Paris, 1925), pp. 209 ff.

⁶⁵ Moore, *op. cit.*

⁶⁶ Margaret Mann, *Erasmus et les débuts de la Réforme française* (Paris, 1934).

⁶⁷ Walser, *op. cit.*; Warner Forrest Patterson, *Three Centuries of French Poetry* (Ann Arbor, 1935); Telle, *op. cit.*

⁶⁸ Lucien Febvre, "Une question mal posée. Les origines de la Réforme française et le problème général des causes de la Réforme," *Revue Historique*, CLXI (1929); Febvre, *Autour de l'Heptaméron* (Paris, 1944).

Protestantism,⁶⁹ together with the works in the admirable library at the Rue des Saints-Pères so ably built up by N. Weiss and J. Pannier. The Rabelais Society published the *Revue du seizième siècle* (1913-1932), followed by *Humanisme et Renaissance*, (1934-38), and then later, *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance* since 1941, edited by Miss E. Droz. The Catholic side of our problem is found in the *Revue de l'histoire de l'Eglise de France*.⁷⁰

Who Were the French Lutherans?

While Lefèvre wrote commentaries, Luther's voice began to be heard in France. Rapidly, the atmosphere in Paris was changing. With the appearance of Lutheran tracts the masses were drawn into the turmoil and Lutherans were reported in various parts of the land.

Who were the French Lutherans? They were those who did not belong, "les mal sentants de la foi" (in evil odor to the faith), those who dared to defy the church, including the fellow-travelers. They were called Novators, Biblians, Fabrisians, Lutheristes, luterrie, Luthererie, Christandins and Evangelicals, the last being particularly consonant with heretical, "of evil odor to the faith." The *Histoire ecclésiastique* stated that before the term "Huguenot" came into existence, French Evangelicals were often referred to as Lutherans or Christandins.⁷¹ The Lutherans, a term of opprobrium, were those who in France translated, printed and propagated tracts condemned by the theological faculty, those with subversive ideas. A Lutheran, said Bossuet, is he "who takes the Augsburg confession as his rule."⁷² But what about Lutherans

⁶⁹ BSHPF, *passim*.

⁷⁰ *Revue de l'Histoire de l'Eglise de France* (Paris), publ. by the Soc. Eccles. de France.

⁷¹ *Histoire Ecclésiastique*, I, 284 (see note 54); Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 283, 284. "Zuinglianae Oecolompadianaeque sectae homines, quos vulgus *Lutheranos*-vocat," François Ier aux Etats de l'Empire (Paris, 1535), Herminjard, *op. cit.*, III, 252, n. 8.

⁷² Jacques Bénigne Bossuet, *Histoire des variations des Eglises protestantes* (Paris, 1689), pref., 17.

before 1530, the year of the Augsburg Confession? Lutherans were those who were drawn to the new ideas and were fired by revolutionary teachings, like Farel's. It took a revolution to change hearts; as Farel wrote to Oecolampadius, how easy it is to present a few dogmas, but to change hearts is "divine."⁷³ There was dynamite in Farel's message, in his *Summaire*.⁷⁴ This tract, in comparison with Calvin's works, is of a primitive mind. Yet in tracts like Farel's we have the seed of French activism.⁷⁵ It was an evangelical marching order to those who had become Lutherans without depending altogether on Luther and did not yet think of changing the order of the church.⁷⁶

In Jurieu's mind a Lutheran was mainly prompted by curiosity to look into the debate on indulgences. More incisive is the opinion of the orthodox defender Florimond de Raemond: A Lutheran was "an individual who follows either Luther or Zwingli or Melanchthon, Oecolampadius or Bucer."⁷⁷ In fact he called Zwingli "a hidden Luther," and Farel, Lefèvre, and Roussel were "Zwinglian Lutherans."⁷⁸ For that matter, the term "Lutherans" in France was universally used before "Huguenot," a term on which there still is so much uncertainty.⁷⁹ There were Lutherans in France but

⁷³ "Facile enim est aliquot dogmata auditorum instillare et inculcare auribus; *animum autem immutare, divinum opus est*," August 2, 1524, Herminjard, *op. cit.*, I, 254.

⁷⁴ Guillaume Farel, *Summaire et briefve declaration d'aulcuns lieux fort necessaires a ung chascun chrestien, pour mettre sa confiance en dieu et ayder son prochain* (Turin, 1525); published in facsimile (Paris, 1935), Farel's *Summaire* is not only a statement of faith but a polemical tract; chapter XXVI is reminiscent of Luther's *Von Weltlicher Obrigkeit*; on Farel, cf. *Guillaume Farel (1489-1565). Biographie Nouvelle* (Neuchâtel, 1930), 780.

⁷⁵ Richard Nürnberger, *Die Politisierung des französischen Protestantismus* (Tübingen, 1948).

⁷⁶ *BSHPF*, LXVIII (1919), 63; Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 106; Karl Benrath, "Die Summa der heiligen Schrift," *Jahrbuch für protest. Theol.*, VII (1880), 127.

⁷⁷ Florimond de Raemond, *op. cit.*, 879.

⁷⁸ Herminjard, *op. cit.*, III, 252.

⁷⁹ "Le procès d'un mot," *Bibl. d'Human. et Renaiss.*, XII (1950), 208.

there was no Lutheran church (although Herminjard hints otherwise), no chapel, no Lutheran preacher.⁸⁰ But if to be a Lutheran meant to desire and work toward a change in the clergy, an urge to read the Bible, an insistence on salvation by grace, then there were Lutherans in France.

Luther's Writings in France

Luther's writings were known very early in France. On February 14, 1519, Froben of Basel wrote to Luther that six hundred of his (Luther's) books had been sent to France and Spain. "They are being sold in Paris and also read in the Sorbonne and approved, as our friends have informed us."⁸¹ Four days later Froben's proofreader, Capito, wrote about the same event; so did Tschudi.⁸² And in April, 1519, Luther himself expressed to Johann Lang his satisfaction that the theologians at the Sorbonne had read his writings and he mentioned that they were also read in Italy, Spain, England, and Brabant.⁸³

Bulaeus wrote that the books that were sent in 1519, in Latin, were the *Theses*, the *Resolutiones*, the *Disputation* with Eck, Prierias, and Carlstadt, and some sermons. The University of Paris had been invited to pronounce upon the Leipzig dispute (June, 1519). Luther and Eck consented, July 14, to having their debate examined.⁸⁴ It took the Faculty of

⁸⁰ Herminjard thinks that the following passage indicates that there was an organized secret Lutheran group in Paris in 1524: ". . . ac a tuo discessu vix semel atque iterum nos visitarit idque *sine ulla concione*," Jean Canaye to Farel, July 13, 1524, Herminjard, *op. cit.*, I, 242, n. 11.

⁸¹ Martin Luther, *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. Ernst Ludwig Enders (Halle, 1896-1902), I, No. 149. The presence and early influence of Luther's writings in France is discussed in the important work by Moore, *op. cit.*, *passim*; esp. pp. 46, 281.

⁸² Pierre Tschudi to Beatus Rhenanus, May 17, 1519, Herminjard, *op. cit.*, I, 47.

⁸³ Luthers *Werke* (Weimar Ausg.), I, 146, n.; I, 369.

⁸⁴ "Die 20 Januar. (1520) comparavi 20 libros intitulatos: '*Disputatio inter egregios viros et doctores Joa. Eckium et M. Lutherum*' . . . ad conclusionem Universitatis distribuendos deputatis et illis qui vellent eorum opinionem referre in praefata Universitate." Herminjard, *op. cit.*, I, 63, n.

Paris eighteen months to render a judgment. On one hand the Faculty wanted to make contact with Rome but did not realize that this delay stimulated public curiosity. Just prior to Luther's appearance at Worms, the Sorbonne rendered a verdict in the 104 Propositions of the *Determinatio*. At the same time the Parliament was instructed to forbid the circulation of these writings—a police measure! Melancthon, whose works became known in France also, especially the *Loci Communes*, answered the Sorbonne in his tract *Against the Furious Decree of the Paris Theologians*. Not only were Luther's writings sent to Paris, but also Carlstadt's *Against the Celibacy of Priests*, and the *Apology of Marriage*.⁸⁵

Luther's writings penetrated into the French provinces, Tours, Orléans, Avignon. It is interesting to find that the first sermon by Luther to be translated into French, and the only one so far, was translated in Southern France and dedicated to Marguerite. That sermon did not discuss doctrinal or polemical issues, but was devotional in tone. It has been shown by G. W. Moore that the other Lutheran tracts that reached France first were likewise free from doctrinal questions; it was thought best to reach the readers by way of exhortation and to throw the spotlight on piety first.

That first Lutheran sermon translated into French was *De praeparatione ad moriendum*.⁸⁶ Since it was appropriately dedicated to Marguerite, "duchesse d'Alençon," it could not

⁸⁵ Charles M. Jourdain, *Index chronologicus chartarum pertinentium ad historiam Universitatis Parisiensis* (Paris, 1662), pp. 326, 327; D'Argentré, *op. cit.*, pp. 305, 401.

⁸⁶ *Sermo Martini Lutheri de Praeparatione ad moriendum e vernaculo in latinum versus*, 1520. The manuscript of the French translation is in the library of Carpentras where it was listed in 1901. Luther's original text is found in Otto Constantin Clemen, *Luthers Werke in Auswahl* (Bonn, 1925), 161; Maurice Marichal, "Antoine d'Oraison, premier traducteur français de Luther," *Bibl. d'Human. et Renaiss.* (1947), pp. 78 ff; Moore believes that the first Lutheran tract translated into French was the *Summe de l'escripture sainte* (Basel, 1523), where it came through Hinne Rhode and translated by Farel; Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 107; O. C. Clemen, *Arts moriendi*, Holztafeldruck von ca. 1470 (Zwickau, 1910).

have been written after 1527, when Marguerite ceased to be duchess of Alençon to espouse the king of Navarre; Luther's own Latin text of the sermon appeared in 1520 in Antwerp. The author of this translation was Antoine d'Oraison. It is significant that this translator lived in the valley of the Durance, near Avignon, where the teachings of the Waldenses had survived. D'Oraison, viscount of Cadenet, had his estate near Mérindol and Cabrières where persecutions against the French Waldenses were directed by Jean de Roma. Marguerite intervened and begged her brother, the king of France, to halt the proceedings. It is therefore not surprising that this first sermon, so Lutheran in accent and character, should be dedicated to Marguerite, who in turn translated Luther's *Pater*.

There is no doubt about the avidity with which Luther's writings were received in France. Zwingli was informed that none were read more eagerly. Glareanus tells of one bookseller in Frankfurt who in September, 1520, alone, sold 1400 copies,⁸⁷ and he said that everywhere people spoke well of Luther "although the chain of the monks is long." "Where Luther has spoken, no one has said better than he."⁸⁸ It came to the place where Bucer called France "a little Germany" and Lefèvre wrote to Farel: "Whatever you get from Germany pleases me very much."⁸⁹ Even the most German of Luther's works, his Bible translation, was in demand in France. In the winter of 1525-26 several of Lefèvre's friends stayed as guests in Capito's home in Strasbourg: Farel, Roussel, Michel d'Arande, Simon Robert and Vedasta. They undertook a translation of the Bible in the "original" as based on "Greek,

⁸⁷ Zwingli, *Opera*, VII, 151; Herminjard, *op. cit.*, I, 62. "De Luthero quid scribam nihil habeo. Unum hoc scio, doctissimos quosque de doctrina et viro sentire optime..." Henri Glareanus to Oswald Myconius, April 7, 1521, Herminjard, *op. cit.*, I, 63, n. 6.

⁸⁸ "Ubi Luther bene dixit, nemo melius," *BSHPF*, LXVI (1917), 230; Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

⁸⁹ "Omnia quae a te veniunt et (*sic*) Germania mihi Maxime placent," Lefèvre to Farel, April 20, 1524, Herminjard, *op. cit.*, I, 208.

Hebrew and German translations." Roussel translated the Pentateuch; but the task remained unfinished. Roussel's contribution was never published but possibly Lefèvre used it for his own Bible version published at Antwerp, in 1528, by Martin Lempereur.⁹⁰

(To be concluded)

⁹⁰ "Deinde hic *occupamur aliquot, ut integra Biblia, non ex vulgata editione sed consultis hebraeis, graecis, et iis quae in germanicam linguam tralata (sic) sunt, in vestram transfundantur linguam,*" Gérard Roussel to Nicolas Le Sueur, December, 1525, Herminjard, *op. cit.*, I, 415.