

THE CHEVALIER DE LA TOUR LANDRY; AN ASSESSMENT
OF HIS "LIVRE" WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE
TO THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN

by

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ABSTRACT

I. Purpose

To place the Livre and its author in their historical setting, in order to evaluate their contribution to ideas on the education of women.

II. Development

1. An outline of cultural influences in Mediaeval France.

2. A description of texts on the education of girls and women prior to the time of the Chevalier de La Tour Landry, noting changes in ideas. Contributions made by Vincent de Beauvais and Pierre Dubois. The influence of the Dicta Catonis, a little book of maxims.

3. The position and condition of women of noble families as a result of certain cultural influences such as that of Courtly Love.

4. An analysis of the examples contained in the Livre, giving an overall picture of the virtues which one could expect to find in an honourable woman with a Christian upbringing.

III. Conclusion

The Livre and its author in relation to the influences of their time and place. A defense against later

critics. Definition of "enseignement," and evaluation of the Livre and its author in the light of the meaning of this term.

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To my Daughters
and
Grand Daughters

Pour ce, mes chières filles, est-il
bon de ne se haster point et de tenir
le moyen estat, c'est à en faire plus
sur le moins que sur le plus.

Le Chevalier de La Tour Landry

PART I

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

THE AUTHOR'S LIFE AND FAMILY BACKGROUND

The castle and village of La Tour-Landry are situated in the Canton of Loroux, some fifteen kilometers from Nantes. Montaiglon, in the introduction to his edition of Le Livre du Chevalier de La Tour Landry pour l'enseignement de ses filles states that the castle, a large tower, dates from the 12th century. There is reason to believe that the La Tour Landry family were established in the region by that time.

Family claims to mythological ancestors dating back to the end of the 5th century must remain open, and the first historical reference is in the year 1220, when a Landry-Latour is involved in a lawsuit. In 1294, a Geoffroy de La Tour is listed among the knights, squires and archers in the service of the Duke of Brittany.

In 1336, a Geoffroy de La Tour Landry, under the banner of Anjou, fought gallantly against the English. He appears to have been the father of the author. Following in the military tradition of the family, this La Tour Landry, also christened Geoffroy, was present at the siege of Aguillon in 1346. His name occurs on various documents as late as 1389, when he married his second wife, Marguerite

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des Roches, a widow with children. His first wife, Jeanne de Rougé had died some time after 1383. From this marriage there were two sons and probably three daughters. For the latter, he wrote his book circa 1371.*

*General source of historical material is contained in the Préface of Montaiglon's edition of Le Livre du Chevalier de La Tour Landry pour l'enseignement de ses filles, publié d'après les manuscrits de Paris et de Londres, Paris (P. Jannet), 1854.

The author of this thesis visited France in the summer of 1966, and found the village of Latourlandry (pop. just under 1,000) about midway between Saumur and Nantes, south of the Loire, and not 15 kms from Nantes, as noted by Montaiglon. A good portion of the wall which surrounded the original castle is still standing, along with two square towers in the style of the 13th century. The castle was destroyed during the wars of religion and the present chateau was built in the 18th century. It is in sharp contrast to the wall and towers. The remaining tower of a church stands nearby, and shows possible Byzantine influence.

CHAPTER II
MANUSCRIPTS AND EARLY EDITIONS OF LE LIVRE

Early French Manuscripts and Texts

The Bibliothèque nationale possesses seven manuscripts of the Livre. Montaiglon lists them as follows, in the order of time of their transcription, and according to their relative value.

1. F. fr. 1190, on vellum, in folio, and written in two columns of thirty lines is the oldest. The first page is decorated with typical ornaments of the time. There is a miniature of the Chevalier seated on a turf, and dressed in a green doublet and lilac cap, in the most extravagant style. Three daughters, in long-sleeved dresses, are all standing. The MS. also contains the Griselidis story, which suggests it is a copy. It is tentatively dated early 15th century. According to Gertrude Burford Rawlings ~~there~~ were 149 chapters in the Chevalier's Livre (editorial note p. 199).¹
2. F. fr. 24397, also on vellum, in folio, is written in two columns of thirty-six lines. It also contains the Griselidis story.
3. F. fr. 580, of ~~which~~ ^{which} the Livre is only a part. The text is very inaccurate, with sections of several sentences missing.

4. F. fr. 24398, on vellum, has thirty-six lines a page written in the large script of the end of the 15th century. It has a miniature, and the last twelve pages contain the story of Griselidis. The spine bears the title "Miroir des femmes mariées."
5. F. fr. 1693 is on vellum, written in two narrow columns of thirty lines. The first stories are missing, and it is incomplete at the end. The eighteenth-century binding appears to be German.
6. F. fr. 1505, on vellum, is written in long lines in the freely running style of the late 15th century. It was once a part of the royal library at Blois.² Folios 139 verso to 144 contain "Le Débat du Corps et de l'Ame" in verse.³
7. F. fr. 9628 is a small in-folio on paper in a very poor script of the late 15th century. The Livre follows an introduction which contains a treatise on sins and on the commandments of God. It is incomplete.

The first French text appeared in 1514, with the following title:

Le Chevalier de la tour et le guidon des guerres,
Nouvellement imprimé à Paris pour Guillaume Eustace,
libraire du roy, Cum puillegio Regis.

At the end of the book is this statement:

Cy fine ce present volume intitulé le chevalier de
la tour et le guidon des guerres. Imprimé à Paris en
mil cinq cens et quatorze le neufiesme iour de novembre.
Pour Guillaume Eustace, libraire du roy et jure de
l'université....

There are 95 numbered and 4 unnumbered folios of the latter, three are occupied by the title and the table following, and the other follows the colophon, and contains the printer's device, which is repeated on the verso of the title. The volume is illuminated throughout, and is in a very fine French binding of the first half of the 16th century.

In 1517 another edition was published in Paris (M. le Noir).

Early English Manuscripts and Texts

An accurate translation exists in the Harleian MS. no. 1764, which is in the possession of the British Museum. Written during the reign of Henry VI, each folio consists of two columns of 33 lines. The work is anonymous, and contemporary to F. fr. no. 1190. According to Montaiglon, it is even a better copy. The Livre occupies folios 1-121; the book of Melibée* by Christine de Pisan, folios 122-146; the story of Griselidis, folios 147-162. On the last two folios, a later scribe added "Le codicille M Jehan de Meung." At the beginning of the text there is a miniature of the Chevalier dressed in blue and seated on a green turf which

*The book of Melibée was copied several times until the 14th century. Written with the purpose of appeasing overly-warlike lords, it became an edifying treatise for women. This explains why until the 15th century it was joined to other manuscripts such as the Griselidis, or the Livre.⁴

surrounds the base of a tree. In the background is a trellis. The three daughters, all standing, are dressed in the fashion of the day. Each chapter has a painted letter. On the second folio are the signatures of two former owners of the MS.: Paulus Durant and David Kellie, written at the close of the 16th century, and at the beginning of the 17th.

In England, the Livre was one of the first productions of the newly developing press outside of France. The work was undertaken by William Caxton, at the request of an unnamed lady who had daughters. It has the following title:

The Booke Whiche the Knyght of the Toure Made to the
Enseygnement & Teching of His Doughters

It was published at his press at Westminster in 1484. In 1810, Ames lists only three complete copies extant: one belonging to Lord Spencer, one to the Marquis of Blandford, and a third to his Majesty the King. The translation is of a remarkable fidelity. However, the too literal translation causes the purity of Caxton's English to suffer. According to Montaiglon, the Harleian translation is superior.

There were early translations and publications of the Livre in Germany. The first of these was published in 1495 by Michel Furter in Bale, and entitled:

Der Ritter vom Turn, von den Exempeln der Gotsforcht
vn erberkeit

The volume was superbly done. A beautiful copy is now in the British Museum. In the miniature, the Chevalier, armed from head to toe, is represented in a sleeping position at

the foot of a tree. His daughters are standing beside him. The translation is by Marquard vom Stein. Later editions appeared in 1498 at Augsburg (Schonsperger); in 1513, again at Bale (Furter); in 1519 at Strasbourg (Knoblouch), and finally in 1538, at Strasbourg (Cammerlander).

Modern Editions

1. The Book of the Knight of the Tower, Landry. Selections done into English by A. Vance (Chapman & Hall), London, 1862, 8VO.
2. The Book of the Knight of La Tour Landry. Compiled for the Instruction of his Daughters. Translated from the original French into English in the reign of Henry VI, and edited for the first time from the unique manuscript in the British Museum, with an introduction and notes by Thomas Wright, London. Published for the Early English Text Society, 1868.
3. The Booke of Thenseygmentes and techynge that the Knyght of the Towre made to his Doughters by the Chevalier Geoffroy De La Tour Landry. Edited with notes and a glossary by Gertrude Burford Rawlings, London (George Newnes Ltd.), 1902.

This volume reproduces slightly more than half of Caxton's version of the Knight's book, omitting the coarser and more tedious chapters, as the editor is careful to explain.

4. The Book of the Knight of La Tour Landry, Early English Text Society. Revised edition, 1906, 8VO.
5. The Book of the Knight of La Tour Landry, edited by G.S. Taylor, with an introduction by D.B. Wyndham Lewis, London (John Hamilton Ltd.).
6. Le Livre du Chevalier De La Tour Landry pour l'ensei-
g-
nement de ses filles, publié d'après les manuscrits de Paris et de Londres par M. Anatole de Montaiglon, Paris (P. Jannet), 1854.
7. Peter Stolingwa, Zum livre du Chevalier de La Tour Landry pour l'enseignement de ses filles, Breslau (Druck von Paul Forster), 1911.

A comparative study of the texts published for Montaiglon and for the Early English Text Society reveals a few interesting differences. Montaiglon compiled his edition from the London and Paris MSS. Thomas Wright, for the Early English Text Society, chose the Harleian MS. rather than Caxton's text because it is a more elegant and interesting monument of the English language. Unfortunately, it is an imperfect MS. with one or two lacunae in the body of the work, and it is truncated at the end by nearly one-fifth of the whole. The editor's only resource was to supply from Caxton's text the parts which are wanting in the inedited MS. There are 144 chapters in his edition, compared to 128 in Montaiglon. The Harleian MS. ends before the end of chapter 120. The extra 16 chapters can be accounted for by

the fact that no. 120 is repeated, and nos. 124 and 128, which are long in Montaiglon, are broken up into several chapters. The Sire de Beaumanoir, who must be the hero of the battle of the thirty (1351), in which 30 Bretons were measured against 30 English, is cited in Montaiglon, chapter 21, whereas, the name is omitted in the corresponding chapter in Wright.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER II

- 1 The Booke of Thenseygnementes and Techynge that the Knyght of the Towre Made to His Doughters by the Chevalier De La Tour Landry. Edited with notes and a glossary by Gertrude Burford Rawlings, London (George Newnes Ltd.), 1902.
- 2 Montaiglon, Préface, p. xli.
- 3 Loc. cit.
- 4 G. Lanson, Histoire de la Littérature Francaise, Paris Hachette.

CHAPTER III

DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY OF WORK

The Livre has a prologue in which the Chevalier states his reasons for writing. He tells of his youthful experience with love, which caused him to be alternately happy or sad, as it does every lover. More than twenty years after her death, the nostalgic remembrance of the ideal lady who had inspired him to compose ballads, songs and virelays, prompts him to think of his own daughters, now at the threshold of life. Because they are young and artless, it is his wish to instruct them with a book in the same gentle way that queen Prines of Hungary instructed her girls.* To accomplish his

*Montaignon, in Notes et Variantes, says: Ce qu'il faut entendre par cette reine Prines ou Prives de Hongrie et par son livre me paroît fort douteux. Legrand d'Aussy propose d'y voir "Elisabeth de Bosnie, femme de Louis 1^{er} ... et mère de trois filles ... à prendre une reine contemporaine, il vaudrait mieux y voir Jeanne de Bohême l'allusion de ce passage reste mystérieux.

Thomas Wright, for the Early English Text Society, notes: Who was the queen of Hungary here referred to as having written a book for the instruction of her daughters appears to be quite unknown. . . . p. 206. Alice Hentsch lists Elisabeth de Bosnie, author of a Manuel d'éducation pour ses filles, in her text, De la Littérature didactique du Moyen Age. She notes that a copy of the work was given to Louis of France, comte de Valois, in 1374.

Further research has uncovered more clues to the identity of this mysterious queen:

Révai: Nagy Lexikona V. 15, p. 479, says that Queen Prines of Hungary was Piroška, daughter of Saint Laszlo, and refers the reader to Iren, Vol. 10, p. 633, which says that Iren Duca, or queen Prines, or Piriska

purpose, he will relate stories not only about good women and their rewards, but also about evil and dishonest women and their punishment. By learning to distinguish good from evil, he hopes his daughters will avoid falling into error. The world is full of hypocrites, and young women should acquire a worldly wisdom so as to be able to cope with the problems of life. Above all, he wishes to show his daughters the true path to follow, so they may serve God, who rewards good deeds a hundredfold. It follows that they will also enjoy the love and goodwill of their neighbors and the world.

In the first chapter the Chevalier tells his daughters it is a good thing to see oneself in the mirror of one's ancestors, and in the stories written about them. Later, in chapter 117, he lends support to his earlier statement with these words:

(archaic form of Piroska) was born in 1088, the daughter of Saint Laszlo and a German princess, and died in 1134 in a monastery for women which she herself had established, and to which she retired after the death of her husband, Alexis Comnenos, Emperor of Byzantium.

Zedler Grosses Universal Lexikon Band 14, column 1255, notes that Piroska, or Irene, was the author of a book entitled Typicum, rules of conduct, or a constitution of a monastery for young girls, which she wrote in Greek. This MS. was found and edited by Montfaucon (1655-1741) at one time procureur-général de Saint-Maur and it is contained in his Analecta graeca. This work is listed in the British Museum Catalogue of Printed Books, Vol. 163, p. 234.

Since intermarriage between the royal houses of Hungary and France is an historical fact, it is very probable that the work of the colourful queen Prines was known in France.

Another point in favour of Irene for Prines, is that the Chevalier uses the past imperfect tense in referring to her. Elizabeth of Bosnia was contemporary to his time, and died in 1387.

Car touz juennes hommes et jeunes femmes qui croient conseil et ne contrarient mie le dit des anciens ne peuvent faillir de venir a honneur.¹

However, he has his doubts and reservations about young people who refuse to profit from the example of their elders and ancestors, and who object to being corrected.

These young people think they are wiser than their parents who have seen more of life. It is a great pity. A well brought up young man or lady should thank the person who corrects him of his folly. One can detect a certain wistfulness in the author's determination to preserve his daughters from causing unnecessary suffering to themselves and to others.

The majority of the 128 chapters are one or two pages in length. Each one contains a story. Seventy-two of them are from contemporary sources, fifty-six are biblical stories, and one chapter is based on the work of Cato, the Roman classical writer.

One might suggest that the rather large selection of religious themes can be traced to the influence of two priests and two clerks who helped the Chevalier extract examples from his collection of books.² On the other hand, stories from the Bible, the lives of Saints and other religious works were too much part of the mediaeval environment for the author to escape entirely. Montaiglon suggests that the collaboration of the clerks in compiling the work may be responsible for the original plan--here only suggested

--not being followed in a regular way.³ In several places the narrative wanders from one type of example to another, and at the end, the Livre retraces its steps to take up again a section which had seemed complete. For example, chapters 12, 13 and 120 are about women who lost their chance of being married because of their coyness.

Peter Stolingwa groups the examples contained in the Livre in the following divisions:

1. Examples which are drawn from the author's own experience. To this group are also added anecdotes which, judging by their contents are taken from real life, although the author does not imply whether he has experienced them himself or has learned of them by word of mouth.
2. Examples which originate in the folk tale and show the characteristics of Fabliaux.
3. Examples which are taken from the Bible.
4. Examples which originate from legends and miracle literature.
5. Examples of historical origins.⁴

On the other hand, Alice Hentsch presents the following divisions:

1. Conseils d'ordre religieux-- ... châtements terribles sur ceux qui n'observent pas ces règles de conduite. Les femmes pieuses sont benies à jamais.
2. Conseils moraux sur la conduite en général, s'adressant à toutes les femmes sans distinction d'âge.
3. Conseils s'adressant plus spécialement aux jeunes filles.
4. Conseils s'adressant plus spécialement aux femmes mariées.
5. Conseils s'adressant aux veuves.
6. Conseils sur l'éducation des enfants.
7. Relativement aux servantes.
8. Sur la femme amoureuse.
9. Tableau de la 'dame honnourable idéale'.⁵

By presenting his chapters in a haphazard arrangement, the author of the Livre unwittingly gave much scope to future critics.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER III

- 1 Montaiglon, ch. 117, p. 228.
- 2 Ibid., p. 4.
- 3 Ibid., Préface, p. xxxii.
- 4 Peter Stolingwa, Zum livre du Chevalier de La Tour Landry pour l'enseignement de ses filles (Druck von Paul Forster) Breslau, 1911, p. 88.
- 5 Alice Hentsch, De la Littérature didactique Du Moyen Age, s'adressant spécialement aux femmes, Halle A.S., 1903, pp. 128-134.

CHAPTER IV

THE STYLE OF THE LIVRE

One can say that until the 14th century, practically all works written in the vernacular were composed in verse. Since rhythm and rhyme exert their fullest effects only when presented to the ear, epic, lyric and dramatic forms had appealed to listening audiences which were largely illiterate. During the 14th century, however, several prose adaptations of verse narratives were already being enjoyed by a slowly expanding reading public. Georges Doutremont lists some 55 epic poems and some 18 adventure romances that were revised in this manner.¹ One such romance was Berinus. As for the works of chroniclers, a few had been written in prose as early as the 13th century by such well-known writers as Villehardouin and Joinville. Literature which dealt with real life naturally had to adopt a mode of expression in harmony with reality, that is, ordinary language, or prose which is objective rather than subjective. The simple and direct style of these writers said what it wished to say because events take precedence over stylistic form.

The 14th century chronicler Jean Le Bel (-1370), irritated by the lack of truth in works hitherto composed in verse, undertook his enterprise in prose, justifying his

choice by his love of truth and his scruples as an historian. At the beginning of his Vrayes Chroniques, he explains his motives clearly:

Qui veult lire et ouir la vraye histoire du preu et gentil roy Edowart ..., si lise ce petit livre que j'ay commencé a faire, et laisse ung grand livre rimé que j'ay veu et leu, lequel aucun controuueur a mis en rime par grandes faintes et bourdes controuuees, duquel le commencement est tout faulx, et plain de menchongnes jusques au commencement de la guerre ... et de la en avant peut avoir assez de substance de verité et assez de bourdes, et sy y a grand plenté de parolles controuuees et de redictes pour embellir la rime et grand foison de si grands proesses racontees sur aucuns chevaliers et aucunes personnes qu'elles debveroient sembler mal creables et ainsy comme impossibles. ... Car l'histoire est si noble, ce m'est advis, et de si gentile proesse, qu'elle est bien digne et mérite d'estre mise en escript pour le en memoire retenir au plus prez de la verité²

Jean Froissart later borrowed heavily from Jean Le Bel who had been his good teacher.

Since the Chevalier's stories ostensibly deal with real life, it is not surprising that he should have chosen prose as his medium of expression. Yet, as with Froissart, his original choice was verse. A transcription of the first few lines of his Prologue, with only minor changes, reveals a regular meter and nearly all the rhyme required in verse:

Prose

L'an mil trois cens soixante
et onze, en un jardin estoye
sous l'ombre, comme à l'issue
d'avril, tout morne et tout
pensiz: mais un pou me resjouy
du son et du chant que je ouy
de ces oysillons sauvaiges qui
chantoyent en leurs langaiges.

Verse

L'an mil trois cens soixante et
onze
En un jardin estoys sous l'ombre
Comme à l'issue du mois d'avril,
Tout morne, dolent et pensif;
Mais un peu je me resjouy
Du son et du chant que je ouy
De ces gents oysillons sauvaiges
Qui chantoient dans leurs
langaiges.³

The author clearly states his reasons for writing his Livre in prose:

... que je ne veulx point mettre en rime, aincoys le veulx mettre en prose, pour l'abrégier et mieux entendre⁴

According to Rasmussen, it is probable that the ideal of brevity was formed on the basis of the rhetorical writings of Cicero and the Rhetorica ad Herenium, which teach that narration should be brief, clear and convincing.⁵ It is evident that the Chevalier's intention was to produce a book with these characteristics. In more than one place he refers to it by the diminutive un livret, probably one of the first writers to use the word in this sense. One may assume that he was an understanding father and teacher who realized that young girls learning to read would soon be bored and dismayed if he were to present them with a large and ponderous book. His choice of vocabulary is simple and direct. Unlike the curial or legal style which characterizes narrative prose until the 15th century, the author's expression is intimate rather than formal, and he often addresses his daughters directly, as Mes chieres filles, and Belles filles.

The modern writer favours a subjective approach in telling his stories. He was there. The mediaeval author, on the other hand, preferred to have a crutch to lean on, so to speak. Someone else had told him the story, as in Chapter 30: "J'ay ouy compter le compte d'un chevalier. ..."

Alice Hentsch finds it difficult to reconcile the stories about lecherous monks in the Livre with the fact that the author says he asked two priests and two clerks to help him.⁶ The truth is that because of their help, the stories are so much more significant.

In presenting his examples, the Chevalier demonstrates his awareness of the value of literary devices, such as unity, coherence and emphasis. Chapter XV is a good sample. The author begins by warning his daughters against disputing with hot-headed fools, male or female. Then he skillfully develops his theme with two examples. In the first, a woman who goes too far in a dispute with a choleric man is finally humiliated by him. In the second, a wise man knows when to cut short a quarrel with a hot-headed woman, to his advantage. The last two sentences sum up and emphasize the lesson of the story:

Et ainsi le droit l'en faire, car l'en ne doit mie
estriver à fol, ne a gens tenseurs, ne que ayent male
teste. Ains les doit-en eschever, comme fist le
chevalier a la dame, comme oy avez.⁷

Although they do not follow an orderly plan, the stories themselves are well-constructed, and written in an unaffected style, suited to the readers for whom they were intended.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER IV

- 1 Les Mises en prose des épopées et des romans chevaleresques du XIV^e au XVI^e siècle, Bruxelles: Palais des Académies, 1939, in -8^o (Mémoires de l'Académie Royale de Belgique, Classe des Lettres, XL), pp. 5-9. Quoted by R.G.C. Holdaway in his article entitled "Verse to prose: a literary fashion."
- 2 Histoire Littéraire de la France, ouvrage commencé par des religieux bénédictins de la Congrégation de Saint Maur, et continué par des membres de l'Institut (Académie des inscriptions et belles lettres), Paris, Imprimerie nationale, Tome 38, p. 247.
- 3 Montaiglon, Préface, p. xxix, and p. 1.
- 4 Ibid., p. 4.
- 5 Rasmussen (Jens), La Prose Narrative Française au XV^e Siècle, p. 23.
- 6 Alice A. Hentsch, De la Littérature didactique du Moyen Age, p. 133.
- 7 Montaiglon, op. cit., p. 34.

CHAPTER V

CONTEMPORARY REACTIONS

The author of this thesis has not been able to find much supporting material for the development of this topic.

However, to judge by the number of French MS. copies extant, one can assume that the Livre became a great favourite in its own country. In England and in Germany, after its translation and publication, it retained its popularity for a long time. Mediaeval works which remained in manuscript form were temporarily forgotten or abolished; only those which were selected for publication continued to circulate and to influence the minds of their readers. The esteem in which the Livre was held is well expressed by Caxton himself in the preface to his 1484 edition, which is here reproduced in part.

Emonge al other this book is a special doctryne & techyng, by which al yong gentyl wymen specially may lerne to bihaue them self vertuously, as wel in their vyrgynyte as in their wedlok & wedowhede, in whiche werk j fynd many vertuous good enseynementis & lernynges, by euydent histories of auctorite & good ensaples for al maner peple in generally, but in especial for ladyes & gentilwymen, douzters to lordes & gentilmen: for whiche book al the gentilwymen now lyuyng & hereafter to come or shal be, arn bounde to gyue laude, praysyng, & thankynges to the auctor of this book, Thene, fo as moche as this book is necessary to euery gentilwoman, of what estate she be, j aduyse euery gentilman or woman, hauyng such children, desyryng them to be vertuously brouzt forth, to gete & haue this book, to thende that they may lerne hou they ouzt to gouerne them vertuously in this present

lyf, by whiche they may the better & hastlyer come to worship and good renomme. And I desyre all them that shall lerne or see ony thyng in this sayd book, by whiche they shal ben the wyser & better. . . .¹

Fifty years later the reputation of the book had become controversial in England. Sir A. Fitz-Herbert, in his work entitled The Book of Husbandry (1534), expresses an opinion on the Livre which is diametrically opposed to that of Caxton's:

I coulde peradventure shewe the housbandes dyuerse poyntes that the wyues deceyue them in: and in lyke maner, howe husbandes deceyue theyr wyues: but if I shulde do so, I shulde shewe mo subtyll poyntes of deceipt, than eyther of them knewe of before. And therfore me semeth beste to holde my peace, least I shoulde do as the knyght of the toure dyd, the whiche had many fayre doughters, and of fatherly loue that he oughte to them, he made a boke, to a good entente, that they myghte eschewe and flee from vyces, and folowe vertues. In the whiche boke he shewed, that if they were wowed, moued, or styred by any man, after suche a maner as he there shewed, that they shulde withstande it. In the whiche boke he shewed so many wayes, howe a man shoulde attayne to his purpose, to brynge a woman to vice, the whiche wayes were so naturall, and the wayes to come to theyr purpose were soo subtylly contriyed, and craftely shewed, that harde it wold be for any woman to resyste or deny theyr desyre. And by the sayd boke hath made bothe the men and the women to knowe more vyces, subtyltye, and crafte, than euer they shulde haue knowen, if the goke had not ben made: in the whiche boke he named hym-selfe the knight of the towre.²

Until the appearance of the Livre, didactic works were mainly collections of masculine stories, which are heterogeneous. A reason for the popularity and long lasting success of the Chevalier's work was that it consisted of entirely feminine stories, something rare, and a quite new departure. In his edition of the book, the Parisian printer

Eustace added the already well known Histoire de Mellibée et de Prudence and Griselidis, putting the narrative into the mouth of the author of the Livre³, a tribute to his popularity.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER V

- 1 The Booke of Thenseyngementes and Techynge that the Knight of the Towre Made to his Doughters by the Chevalier Geoffroy de la Tour Landry, edited with notes and a glossary by Gertrude Burford Rawlings, London (George Newnes Ltd.), 1902, pp. 5-6.
- 2 Sir A. Fitz-Herbert, The Book of Husbandry, published for the English Dialect Society, London, 1882, Vol. 13, p. 98.
- 3 Histoire Littéraire de la France, Tome 37, p. 503.

PART II

THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN PRIOR TO THE APPEARANCE
OF THE LIVRE (AND WITHIN THE MIDDLE AGES)

CHAPTER I

AN OUTLINE OF CULTURAL INFLUENCES

Today we tend to define a well educated person as being one who has attained a certain scholastic level. In reality, education is broader than the instruction offered in schools. It is the total process of training whereby the individual assimilates his own culture, and learns to repress his egotistical instincts. Nevertheless, schools do play, and have always played an effective and important role.

Until the influence of Christianity became almost total, Gallo-Roman culture had provided instruction for girls as well as boys in its civil schools.¹ From the 6th century onward however, these democratic centers disappeared, and were replaced by monastic or episcopal schools. During the 7th century, profane literature almost disappeared, and there was no other instruction except that given by the Church, and in its name. Monastic schools trained those female students who were dedicated to monastic life, or who were placed at the summit of the social scale. Teachers were always male. A notable exception is to be found in the daughters of the philosopher Manegold, who successfully conducted a lay school at Lutenbach in the diocese of Strasbourg.² If there were a few teaching masters employed

by certain families, they became more and more rare, and were replaced by clerics. In the 8th century, Charlemagne's own female relatives were instructed at court by Alcuin, who admired their scholarship so much that he dedicated his Treatise on the Nature of the Soul to one of them.³ Abélard, who taught Heloise in the 12th century, was one of the last of the lay teachers.⁴

The intellectual life of women in monasteries included training in reading, writing, singing, arithmetic, grammar, Holy Writ, medicine and surgery: the last two in order to avoid the intervention of male doctors. Their main occupation was the copying and illuminating of manuscripts, and until the 12th century, the study of Latin.

With the establishment of universities in the 13th century, even the monks deserted their schools for Paris and Oxford. Monastic schools then suffered a lowering of standards, and there was nothing to supplement the loss to women, who were not admitted to the universities.

Christianity had emancipated women by separating her from man, not by placing her beside him. Already in the 6th century, the Rule of the monastery for women which had been founded by Césaire, Bishop of Arles, recommended that no children under five or six years of age be admitted, and absolutely no girls of noble families.⁵ Towards the close of the 8th century, the dying Roland has no thought for his fiancée, Aude. And she can only protest tearfully when the

well-meaning though rather tactless Charlemagne offers her another husband so soon after her loss. ~~The author of the Roland, who composed his work in the 10th century was not influenced by theories of romantic love which permeated the poetry of that period.~~ Honour and patriotism formed the theme of an epic tale, especially one which belonged to the 8th century. A century later, bishops forbade their priests to admit girls along with the boys in their schools. Women apparently did not count as social beings.

However, cultural changes were taking place. By the 12th century, Celtic influence had replaced the Carolingian. In the North, where it was most strong, lords and ladies sat down at the same banquet tables, and after the meal, listened to the songs of trouvères, a delicate pleasure, already attesting a cultivated civilization. Then, during the difficult years of the Crusades, the women who stayed at home assumed increasingly greater responsibilities, and more respect was accorded to them. In the South, songs of the Troubadours idealized a lover's passion for his lady, which approached the cult of the Virgin Mary. These early poets clearly distinguished love and sex. Love was to them a yearning for a psychic gratification which the lover feels only the beloved can give; sex, an impersonal desire which can be gratified by anyone possessing certain fairly common physical characteristics. They fretted lest sex abate the fervor of love's longing, and they never fully resolved the

contest between love and sex.* The religious perpetuated longing by placing the beloved altogether out of physical reach: "the Bride of Christ." On the other hand, proponents of the more worldly Courtly Lovem assuming that marriage, as a social contract, precluded the necessity of the existence of love between the partners--in fact some went as far as to say that such love was well nigh undesirable--drew up an elaborate set of rules by which the aspiring lover of a noble married lady should govern himself. These rules, derived from Ovid's Ars Amandi had been re-codified by Andreas Capellanus in the 12th century. What ennobling effect, if any, they may have had on the woman is not known. At any rate, the ladies were placed on a pedestal, so to speak. But no matter how noble and lofty the means employed in winning their love, adultery was always the final goal. The Troubadour ideal soon gave way to the more pragmatic approach of Courtly Love, which was adopted as the theme of their poetry by writers such as Chretien de Troyes. Other writers, notably Marie de France, although not neglecting this theme, seemed to prefer love in the Celtic tradition, where it was often linked with death. If one dies before it does, love indeed is the end.

*Ernest Van Haag, "Love or Marriage," in Harper's Magazine, May, 1962.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER I

- 1 Paul Rousselot, Histoire de l'éducation des femmes en France, Paris (Didier), p. 18.
- 2 Ibid., p. 18.
- 3 Histoire littéraire de la France, Tome IV, p. 310.
- 4 Rousselot, op. cit., p. 18.
- 5 Ibid., p. 22.

CHAPTER II

FOUR GROUPS OF TEXTS ON THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN

Alice Hentsch divides the texts which were written for and about women, and which influenced their education in the Middle Ages, into three groups:

A. The texts of the Church Fathers which are of a specifically religious order, with the dominant note an exhortation to virginity and its glorification. All were written in Latin, and in some cases in Greek. Saint Cyprian in De cultu feminarum, blames Eve for the evil in the world, and in his De habitu virginum, he says that a woman should not try to make herself more beautiful than she really is, for this is trickery. Saint Ambrose's Ad virginem devotam exhortatio advises women to flee from men. Saint Jerome, author of the Vulgate had many fervent disciples and friends among the ladies of Roman society in the 4th century. He praises widows who do not remarry in his text entitled Ad Furiam de Viduitate Servanda. Parents are advised to choose their children's books with care in Ad Laetam de institutione filiae. They should be given a well educated tutor who leads an exemplary life, and they should not be told things which will have to be retracted later on when they are discovered to be lies.

Saint Augustine, in De sancta virginitate insists that the fecundity of a married woman is never worthy to be compared to the excellence of a virgin. Virginity is honoured because it is consecrated to God. This author is more lenient when he deals with the question of a widow's remarriage.

In the 6th century, Fulgentius recommends continence in marriage, and insists on faithfulness on the part of the husband as well as of the wife. The couple are thus placed on equal footing. Aldhelm of Wessex, known as a Greek scholar, praises virginity, but he says that one must not despise marriage.

B. A second group of writers gave advice of a superficial nature. For them the woman is always an object of luxury, and her first duty is to please; her most indispensable quality is beauty. They never address themselves to women who are good, but plain, and the popularity of their works coincides with the flourishing age of chivalry. Rules of conduct advocated by poets such as Etienne de Fougères have no other aim than to make a person an agreeable companion, without any preoccupation for moral betterment. Garin lo Brun deplores the decadence into which the cult of love has fallen. A woman, he says, should know how to make herself an object of desire: she should be gay, courteous, and sensible. And for poets like Jacques d'Amiens women are playthings, existing solely for the pleasure of men.

C. The third group contains teachings of a moral order, and constitute the cradle of modern pedagogy. With Philippe de Novaire, convention is no longer a first consideration. Religion develops, deepens, and purifies itself. Practical living regains its rights, and ignorance takes a backward step. Women are considered the companions of men. His La clef d'amour is a violent attack against marriage, a woman's prison. Another poet, Robert de Blois, believes that women are not just simply dolls, but living beings. Generally, writers in this group are interested in reality, and in women in all social conditions.*

D. To these groups, the author of this thesis would like to add a fourth, consisting of two 12th century writers whose ideas on the education of women were advanced for their time.

The first of these was the Dominican monk, Vincent de Beauvais. At the request of Queen Marguerite, wife of Louis XI, he wrote a treatise entitled De eruditione filiorum nobilium. The most extensive precursor of the Humanist tracts on education, it is a kind of anthology of selected passages from classical and Biblical authors. The last nine chapters, based almost entirely on the letters of Saint Jerome, are devoted to the education of girls. ^{Vincent} He insists

*Details of authors and their texts described in this section have been taken from De la Littérature didactique du Moyen Age, s'adressant spécialement aux femmes, by Alice A. Hentsch.

that girls of noble parents be instructed in letters and good morals. If interested in reading and writing, they will escape harmful thoughts and the pleasures and vanities of the flesh. Naturally he would expect the parents and teachers to provide suitable studies. He advises parents to keep a close watch on their daughters, and the chief method he advises for keeping them chaste is keeping them at home.¹ Of course the woman in the Middle Ages was nearly always at home, in her father's or in her husband's.*

In expressing concern about the success and happiness of a girl's marriage, Vincent de Beauvais lists five principles in which she should be instructed before leaving her parents:

1. She must love and honour her husband's relatives with humility and patience.
2. She must love her husband with voluntary submission. She must care for the house, and be hospitable. She should support her husband's defects patiently and sweetly.

*Six hundred years later, although women have become emancipated to a greater or lesser degree, young girls still need the protection of their homes. According to Arabella Kenealy:

The higher the organism, the more and for the longer period its infancy exacts increasing devotion and nurture. Among the poor classes, the child depends upon its hard working parents for a period varying between 12 and 16 years. In professional classes, the young sons and daughters are not fully qualified for independent existence before the ages of 23 or 25.²

3. She should beware of jealousy which destroys family unity.
4. She should refrain from dying her hair, and using other similar means to please her husband.
5. She must love and teach her sons and daughters and domestics according to the law of God and therefore should allow nothing offensive to faith or morals to remain in the home.³

To the husband he says: "Vir caput est mulieris," but he warns him that the wife is the heart of the family. She is neither mistress or servant; she is his companion: nec domina debet esse, nec ancilla sed socia.⁴ (Yet she must love her husband with voluntary submission.) Vincent de Beauvais is a worthy forerunner of Christine de Pisan in pleading for the broadening of the scope of a woman's life.

However, it is to Pierre Dubois that reference must be made to find a radical change in ideas. Pierre would admit girls to the schools at the age of four. He would provide them with the same basic education as boys, namely, with Latin and one other language, grammar, logic, religion, and apologetics, the rudiments of natural science, and surgery and medicine--not to avoid the intervention of male doctors, but to take their part in the conquest and maintenance of the Holy Land. Some girls would marry physicians and surgeons, and through their education would be of

greater assistance to their husbands in the care of the sick. The well instructed and good looking also might be married to ^owalthy Orientals (Moslems) to lead these men to the true faith. They would be instructed in order to possess a basic understanding of Greek, Hebrew and Arabic. Learning therefore became in his view a practical means for Christian women to attract and capture those who admire these qualities. At home, or in her own country, the well educated woman could have taken her place in academic life, as she had already done in Italy.

The subordination of the study of Latin to that of living languages, including oriental languages, the transformation of convents into teaching establishments, the assignment of a social role to women, while giving the importance of a social function to their education, all these new and bold ideas expressed by Pierre Dubois in his De recuperatione Terre Sancte⁵ were being heard by the Middle Ages in France for the first time. And apart from such isolated efforts such as the establishment by Saint Louis in the 13th century of schools at Pontoise and elsewhere for the education of orphaned daughters of knights killed in the Holy Land, these ideas would not be understood for a long time. Although women had been tried and not found wanting in the attainment of scholastic achievement as long before as during the time of Charlemagne, their lives would continue to be very much restricted to the domestic

pattern approved by conservative Christian tradition.

Their models would be Our Lady and the patient Griselidis.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER II

- 1 Astrik L. Gabriel, The Educational Ideas of Vincent of Beauvais, the University of Notre Dame Press, 1962, p. 20.
- 2 Arabella Kenealy, Feminism and Sex Extinction, London Unwin, 1920, p. 17.
- 3 Quoted in Gabriel, op. cit., p. 41.
- 4 Ibid., p. 16.
- 5 Ibid., p. 39.

CHAPTER III

CATO

Throughout the Middle Ages an interesting little textbook survived all cultural changes. This was the Dicta Catonis or "Cato" as it was called, the "vade mecum" of every student. According to J.W. and A.M. Duff, it is likely that an unknown author gave to his collection of wise saws the title as an echo of the moral instruction addressed generations earlier by Cato the Censor (234-149 B.C.) to his son, and contained in his Carmen de Moribus.¹ In the 4th century this book enjoyed an extensive vogue. At the turn of the 6th century, Columbanus, the Irish monk, added many lines from Christian sources, and it is not unreasonable to suppose that the book was re-worked in the Carolingian era. At any rate "Cato" was one of the books, along with the Livre of the Chevalier de La Tour Landry which were selected by Caxton for publication in the early years of his press at Westminster. It appeared in 1483 as a prose version.² However, this collection of maxims was known long before then in England, since Chaucer accounts for the foolish marriage of the carpenter in the "Miller's Tale" by remarking that "he knew not Catoun, for his wit was rude."³

As late as 1784, the little book was included among the Prima Morum et Pietas Praecepta, printed as a school book at Edinburgh.⁴ In France, from the 12th century onwards, Cato was translated several times. And since the Chevalier composed his book for his daughters to "aprendre a roumancier," that is, to read in French, one might speculate on the probability that Cato, especially the Distiques de Caton of Jean Lefevre,^{*} was included among the books in his library collection. However, following in the tradition of the Bible as did the later Christine de Pisan, he preferred the use of examples for the teaching of his daughters, although his Livre contains a large number of maxims.

^{*}Jean Lefevre was Procureur au Parlement around 1328.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER III

- 1 Martin Schanz, Geschichte Der Romischen Litteratur, Dritter Teil. (C.H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung) Munchen, 1959, p. 34.
- 2 Ibid., p. 39.
- 3 The Cambridge MS. of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, published for the Chaucer Society by Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner and Co., 1902, p. 93, l. 3227.
- 4 J.W. and A.M. Duff, Minor Latin Poets, London, William Heinemann Ltd.), 1934, p. 589.

CHAPTER IV

WOMEN IN THE LATE MIDDLE AGES

As we have noted nearly all of the texts written on the subject of the education of women were intended for the daughters of noble families. Since the menial work was done by servants, the girls could be faced with the problem of how to use their leisure time profitably. However, if they were brought up in the strict Catholic tradition, their lives could be expected to be well filled. But one gathers that such was certainly not always the case, or there would not have been so many exhortations to conserve their virginity, and to carry out their religious duties. A few well-educated women were to be found at the summit of the social scale or in the monasteries and abbeys. If a girl did not marry, she usually entered a convent. Vincent de Beauvais had felt that parents should not force marriage on a girl who wishes to consecrate her virginity to God, but should rather encourage such a noble resolution.¹ Girls were educated in monastic schools or in their homes if their parents were able to acquire a tutor. The clerks who helped the Chevalier write his Livre might have also been employed to teach his daughters.

The wife was expected to be completely devoted to her husband. However, there was not too much opposition

against her attempts to impose her will on him, and she often asserted her influence, especially in Paris. Of course, she might and often did utilize her authority by means of coquettishness, since courtesy did not forbid such tactics.² And so it is not surprising to learn that more and more attention was lavished on aids to beauty, such as clothes, head dresses and make up. From the 13th century onwards, women prized such things as hair dyes, cosmetics, tooth powders, perfumes and pastes for removing the hair, especially along the forehead, to make it appear higher, as a mark of beauty. Hair was dyed fair or dark, but never red, which was considered to indicate an unattractive temperament. There was a fad for daubing the face with white, red, and especially yellow powder, with saffron reserved for the truly elegant. Lavender and violet scents were the favourites of high society in the 14th century. Women carried with them small containers of scent in the form of birds, often covered with feathers to better imitate nature. Sometimes these were placed in richly ornate cages, and hung from the ceiling to perfume the apartment. By this time also, a slim waist and an ample bosom were considered beautiful, and head dresses had become quite elaborate. But young girls continued to let their hair hang as a sign of their virginity.

Forgotten were the exhortations of Pseudo-Thomas, who in his De eruditione principum³ likened the beauty of

a woman to a treasure, which if carried in public places and exposed openly to danger, will be enrapturing. A girl should prefer goodness to corporal beauty. If she is not blessed by nature she is foolish to want to embellish herself by artificial means. The woman who makes every possible effort to become attractive instead of good is pursuing someone else's interest, not her own, for if she becomes beautiful, she actually gratifies someone else. But if she becomes good, she herself will enjoy the perfect state of her soul. She should learn to read and write: Quod valde utile est filias nobilium, dum sunt in custodias litteris imbui, et semper aliquo opere occupari.⁴

Poets and writers of fabliaux took turns in extolling or denouncing the woman who was such a representative product of her time, and in turn, oscillated perpetually between the coarsest reality and an ideal of purity. In spite of the influence of Celtic culture in the North, where women were considered more as the companions of men, and of ideals of Courtly Love which spread from the South, the position of women in the face of increasingly bitter attacks, especially from the clergy, was becoming uncomfortable to say the least. In the 13th century, Guillaume de Lorris, author of the first part of Le Roman de la Rose, advises gentlemen to serve the ladies. His successor, Jean de Meung, who completed the work, persuades them to escape from the yoke imposed by the women.⁵

Towards the end of the 13th century, courtly influences, with their varnish and artifice, began to give way in the face of competition from the more practical ideas of wealthy and cultured bourgeois society in the growing cities. A generation after the appearance of the Livre the elderly husband of a young wife wrote his Ménagier de Paris to instruct her so that in case of his death, she would be a better wife for her second husband.

The nobleman or knight, however, was still a country gentleman who tried to manage his estates successfully. If he went off to the wars his wife was expected to carry on. And if he died she managed her life and that of her children to the best of her ability, and preferably in a continuing state of widowhood. It was for young girls of this social level, his own daughters, raised in the family chateau on the family estate that the Chevalier wrote his Livre.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER IV

- 1 Astrik L. Gabriel, The Educational Ideas of Vincent of Beauvais, University of Notre Dame Press, 1961.
- 2 Alfred Franklin, La Civilité, l'Etiquette, La Mode, Le Bon Ton, Du XII^e au XIX^e siècle, Paris, Emile Paul, 1908, Tome I, p. 1.
- 3 Quoted in ibid., p. 38.
- 4 Loc. cit.
- 5 Gerard Paré, Les idées et les lettres au XIII^e siècle, Le Roman de la Rose, édition Le Centre de Psychologie et de Pédagogie, Montréal, 1947, p. 29.

PART III

AN ANALYSIS OF HIS EXAMPLES

CHAPTER I

THE VIRTUE OF PIETY

In the stories the Chevalier relates for the instruction of his daughters, he reveals the general virtues considered to be desirable in the ideal woman. These are: piety, humility, courtesy, pity, charity, obedience, loyalty, patience, chastity and moderation.

Piety consists of devotion to religious duties and practices. When she arises in the morning, the first thing a good woman should do is give praise to God by saying a prayer such as: Laudate Dominum, omnes gentes, benedicamus patrem et filium. It is better to thank God for his gifts than to ask Him for favours (chapter 2). A short sincere prayer is better than a long one interspersed with thoughts on other matters, car vous ne pourriez aler deux chemins à un coup, ou vous yrez l'un, ou vous yrez l'autre (chapter 5). One should always pray for the dead, who return such prayers. It is important to attend Mass regularly and as often as possible. Behaviour in Church or on a pilgrimage should always be exemplary; the journey for the latter should be undertaken for no other reason than for religious devotion.

Impiety is punished, as in the following examples:

- Ch.3 Of two sisters who fall in love with two brothers, the elder who has mocked the piety of the younger, is drowned with her lover who has made her pregnant.
- Ch.6 A young lady loses the love of her husband when through an accident which is allowed to happen because of her impiety, she loses her beauty.
- Ch.9 Another lady who was renowned for her apparently pious life, was damned forever because she had not confessed her mortal sin to the priest: et craignoit plus le bobant du monde que la vengeance espirituelle, et pour cuidier effacier mon pechié je jeunoie et donnoye le mien pour Dieu, je ouoye les messes. ...
- Ch.28 Men and women who kept on talking and laughing during the sermon given by a patient and holy hermit were made to cry out and bray like demons when he called on God to make them keep quiet. After much suffering, the more lavishly dressed among the women, having learned their lesson, disposed of their ostentatious finery.
- Ch.26 A vain woman who refused to wear her best garments to a Church service on a feast day because she thought no one of consequence would be there to see them was transfixed to the spot where she stood in her defiance. A hot wind struck her so that she could not move, and she began to swell.
- Ch.30 A knight and his wife who sleep in late on Sunday

mornings, thereby causing inconvenience to the other parishioners, are punished by having to do penance before them on three consecutive Sundays. Here the idea of piety is not for one's own sake, but as an example to others, the social responsibility of the high born.

- Ch.34 Another example tells of a worldly young wife who goes on a pilgrimage to be with her lover. During the service she becomes gravely ill, and in a vision, her recently deceased parents rebuke her.
- Ch.35 Nor is a church a place for sinful behaviour. At Notre Dame de Beaulieu, a man and a woman commit fornication on the altar. By a miracle which works to reveal their sin, they are locked together like dogs, and become the object of curiosity for the villagers who form a procession around them.
- Ch.36 A monk, caught in the same situation by his uncle and friends, is so overcome with shame that he leaves the abbey. All suffer the punishment of shame.
- Ch. 3 On the other hand, piety is always rewarded. The young sister of the girl who was punished for mocking her piety, is given in marriage to a great king of Greece, a fitting reward for the daughter of an emperor who did not forget the dead in her prayers.
- Ch.6 The pious half sister of the woman who lost her husband's love because of her impiety is rewarded in a

happy marriage to a rich and powerful husband.

Ch.32 God comes to the help of faithful women who attend

Ch.33 mass regularly. When their priests become ill, He sends an angel in disguise to replace them, thus rewarding the women who take more delight in pleasing God than in pleasing the world and the flesh.

It is evident from these examples that the life of a pious woman will be better regulated. She will have less time for frivolous activities, and the training, if acquired in youth, will be all the more valuable in later life. Furthermore, she will set a good example for others to follow. But, as the Chevalier explains, piety should be sincere, and not an attempt to compensate for evil done.

CHAPTER II

COURTESY AND HUMILITY

There are several examples illustrating humility and courtesy. The former, which is the outstanding Christian virtue results from a feeling and acknowledgement of one's own weakness and insufficiency. Courtesy expresses itself in politeness, kindness and consideration in manner or address. The author tells his girls that this virtue is the first road which leads to friendship. He says he knows a great nobleman who wins everyone by his consideration for others, so that they always serve him with pleasure (chapter 10). Kindness shown to humble folk will bring greater praise and renown than will courtesy to great people who take it as their due. Lesser folk are honoured when they are addressed politely.

It is discourteous to always turn one's head from side to side. The daughters are advised to turn body and head together, and avoid looking flighty. Many girls lose their chance of marriage because of this fault, as in the following examples:

Ch.13 Two Danish princesses were ignored in favour of their courteous young sister when the King of England was looking for a wife. The eldest appeared light-headed, and the second interrupted people all the time.

- Ch.14 The elder of two Aragonese sisters lost her chance to become queen of Spain because she was discourteous. Wives who are discourteous to their husbands, especially in the presence of others can expect trouble. A querulous wife drove her husband to a fit of anger, during which he broke her nose. Since the nose was considered to be the most beautiful part of the face (chapter 17), the punishment was indeed severe.
- Ch.22 The daughters are warned against verbal exchanges with persons who are easy talkers.* A woman who reproached the Marshall of Clermont for his worst fault in the presence of lords and ladies was humiliated by him before the others. It is best to keep one's peace.
- Ch.23 Three women, who tried to shame the dashing Bouciquant because they had reason to believe that he was fickle and a cheater, were rendered powerless by the dexterity of his verbal defense.

On the other hand, the courteous girl or woman will be rewarded.

- Ch.12 When the King of England chooses the youngest of three Danish sisters as his wife because of her good manners, he observes:

*A maxim expressing this advice is found in Cato:
 Contra verbosos noli contendere verbis; sermo datur cunctis,
 animi sapientia paucis.¹

. . . nulle beauté ne noblesce ne s'apareille, ne passe bonnes moeurs, et n'est ou monde grant aaise comme de avoir femme seure et ferme d'estat et de bonne manière, ne n'est plus belle noblesce.²

Ch.13 The author himself refused to marry a beautiful noble woman because "Elle avoit assez de langaige ... et si avoit l'ueil bien vif et legier ... car elle me pria ll foiz ou lll. ..." Her manner was too free and open with him too soon.

Ch.97 The wise Hester gently corrected her husband in the privacy of their home, for which he loved her dearly. Courtesy softens anger, and leads to domestic equanimity, for the courteous person always avoids doing or saying anything to displease one she loves and honours. (Cato advises one not to quarrel with one "close linked to thee./Anger breeds hate, love feeds on harmony."^{*}

Humble women never question the ways of the Almighty.

Ch.69 Of two wives, one was childless. The other who had several beautiful children shamed her with disdain. God punished the proud woman by having her lose all her children, and rewarded the humble one by giving her several who lived.

Ch.105 The humble Rebecca, childless for many years, was rewarded with handsome twin sons. In Biblical times, twins were considered a blessing and a reward. But

^{*}Litem inferre cave, cum quo tibi gratia iuncta ira odium generat, concordia nutrit amorem.³

in the Middle Ages, on the contrary, they were the cause of much shame and suffering for the mother who was blamed for having had relations with two men, as in the case of the story told by Jean Renart in Galeran de Bretagne⁴ in the 13th century. The inclusion of the story of Rebecca in the Livre, and told in such a sympathetic way, must have reassured the women of the Chevalier's time.

Ch.100 Because of the sincere humility with which she cleansed her soul of sin by bathing the feet of Christ with her tears and drying them with her hair, Mary Magdalen was pardoned.

People who discard their humility in favour of pride are punished.

Ch.83 A worthy man and his wife, also childless for many years promised their first born to the service of the Church. They were given two sons. When they saw how much more handsome was the first one, they decided to make him their heir, and give the second one to the Church. God punished their pride by ending their lineage.

Ch.105 The niece who made her much travelled uncle wait in order to beautify herself when he came to see her, lost her chance of receiving the gift of a beautiful dress, which he had brought back for her.

The author of the Livre praises the two virtues of courtesy and humility. Indeed, he considers them to be so

closely linked that he treats them as one:

Après, mes belles filles, gardez que vous soiez courtoises et humbles, car il n'est nulle plus belle vertu, ne qui tant attrait a avoir la grace de Dieu et l'honneur de toutes gens, que estre humbles et courtoises.
... (chapter 10)

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER II

- 1 J.W. and A.M. Duff, Minor Latin Poets, "Cato," p. 10, ll. 598-99.
- 2 Montaiglon, p. 26.
- 3 Duff, op. cit., p. 36, ll. 602-603.
- 4 Jean Renart, Galeran de Bretagne, roman du XIII^e siècle édité par Lucien Foulet, Paris (Champion), 1925.

CHAPTER III

CHARITY AND COMPASSION

The first quality of the virtue of charity is the love of man for his fellow men. It is expressed by an act of goodwill or affection or compassion. It is also the quality of being kind or lenient in judging others. Moved by compassion a charitable person feels sorrow for the sufferings or trouble of another person or persons, and is seized with the urge to help. Again these virtues have their rewards, while punishment lies in store for those persons who are pitiless and uncharitable. Wise men say that woman is by nature more gentle and compassionate than man. If a woman's heart is hard, she is mannish. A true woman need not be ashamed to cry from a humble heart which is filled with pity for the unfortunate (chapter 103).

The author of the Livre offers the following examples in which the uncharitable are punished.

- Ch.20 Women who pamper their fat little dogs with good care and food while God's poor go hungry can expect small black dogs to make their mouths coal black from their licking when they are on their death bed.
- Ch.16 Jezebel hated hermits and the poor, and the people of the Church so much that she forced them to flee from

the realm. When she died, she was denied a sepulcher, and was devoured by dogs.

Ch. 67 Breneheust, a queen of France, at that time known as Gaul, was so cruel and pitiless that she was quartered on the advice of one of her grandsons who escaped her rampage of slaughter.

Compassionate and charitable women, on the other hand, have their rewards:

Ch.81 The two virtues were combined in Pharaoh's daughter who found the helpless babe Moses and raised him as her own son. She was rewarded by seeing him grow in wisdom and power.

Ch.88 When her city was attacked, Raab and her family were saved because she had given shelter to God's messengers, and had tried to protect them. In the same chapter the author tells of Saint Anastasia who was delivered from imprisonment because God knew that she had helped with her own goods the unfortunate in similar circumstances. He reminds his daughters that according to the Gospel, Jesus Christ on the last day of judgement will have mercy on those who visited the sick and the prisoners. Saint Radegonde, a queen of France, felt that she was still not doing enough for the unfortunate. So she left her husband and all the honour and glory of the kingdom and worldly pleasures to enter a convent at Poitiers. In her honour, God

worked a miracle^a by making a dry old tree which shaded the courtyard to renew itself, so that it bore leaves again, much against the course of nature.

Ch.102 Because of her holy life, her charity and compassion Jesus Christ Himself stayed in the home of Martha, the sister of Mary Magdalen. The author of the Livre could hardly have chosen a better example than this one to impress his daughters with the quality of these virtues.

Ch.106 The virtue of compassion is not confined to women alone. A young knight once came to the rescue of a girl unjustly accused of a heartless crime. He challenged her false accuser to a duel and overcame him--but not without receiving five mortal wounds, as did Christ before he died to save mankind.

The author tells about several gentle and compassionate women, such as those who followed Christ and wept to see him carry his heavy cross. Then there were the three Marys who rose early on Easter morning to anoint His body with precious ointments. During Nero's cruel years, the kindly women of Rome, prepared the bodies of the martyrs for burial. The Chevalier deplores the fact that in his own day so many women set their hearts on worldly things, and on the attention they receive from others.

CHAPTER IV

LOYALTY AND OBEDIENCE

If she is a loyal person, a wife will be true and faithful to duty, love and obligations. In Mediaeval times, she was expected to be completely devoted to her husband, and to comply with her commands, irrespective of their nature. And always, a wife should be worthy of her husband's trust, as he should be of hers.

Ch.58 The first example of loyalty in the Livre is in the story of Joseph who was sold to Pharaoh by his brothers. The queen fell madly in love with him,* but he refused to comply with her wishes because of his devotion to her husband. In a fit of anger, she falsely accused him of trying to seduce her, and he was thrown into prison. Remembering his goodness, God had him delivered,

*It is to be noted that the author identifies Potiphar's wife with Pharaoh's queen. The Vulgate, Genesis, chapter 39, verse 1, reads: *Igitur Joseph ductus est in Aegyptum, emit-que eum Potiphar eunuchus Pharaonis, princeps exercitus, vir Aegyptius, de manu Ismaelitarum, a quibus perductus erat.*

Later translations of the Bible follow different versions of the story, based on J or E accounts which were contemporaneous. Both groups drew from material far older than their own day, sometimes older than Israel itself.¹

Volume III, p. 819, of *A Dictionary of the Bible* states: The long and elaborate story of Joseph presents some very interesting data for consideration, but they are not favourable to the view that it is historically true.

and the queen was punished with a sudden and evil death.

Ch.83 After a barren period that lasted more than one hundred years, Sara was rewarded for her loyalty to her husband Abraham, by giving birth to Isaac.² Rebecca, for her loyalty to her husband, received a similar reward in her sons Esau the hunter and Jacob, the provident one,³ favoured by his mother.⁴ In this context the author compares Rebecca to the lioness and the she-wolf who prefer the cub best able to fend for itself.

Ch.92 The wife of a Roman senator is praised for her loyalty to her husband who was jealous without cause and cruel to her. Committed to fighting a duel, he obtained a proxy because he was too much of a coward. When the man became ill, and no replacement could be found, his wife, realizing the great dishonour that would befall her husband, went to her room and had herself armed and disguised. God saw that she was rendering good for evil, and gave her the courage and strength needed for victory. When her identity was revealed everyone was impressed, and she received even greater honour from the city.

Ch.98 A noble example of loyalty is contained in the story of the beautiful Suzanne. Two priests who were tempted one day when they saw her combing her hair in the or-

chard, threatened to witness in court that they had seen her with another man if she did not comply with their wishes. Death would have been her fate, since two witnesses were believed at that time. Rather than be untrue to her vows, she chose death. To the great amazement of everyone, she was rescued by the four year old prophet Daniel who directed the clever questioning which uncovered the perfidy of the two priests, on whom the death sentence was passed.⁵

Ch.94 Here we have an example of loyalty in friendship.

Flattering friends gathered around the death bed of a Roman emperor, and concerned only with the state of his physical health, kept telling him he would recover. But a faithful old chamberlain who had served him since his childhood, advised him to give to the poor the wealth of worldly goods God had seen fit to bestow on him during his long life. The emperor accepted the wise advice, saying: Plus vault amy qui point que flatteur qui oint.⁶ More valuable is the loyal friend who values the salvation of the soul, for he who loves the body must also love the soul, and he must never conceal from his friend anything that will bring him profit or honour.

Disloyalty is the theme of three entertaining chapters.

Ch.62 This is a contemporary example in which a foolish rope maker's wife (her husband should have tied her!) finally

drove her honest husband to inflicting the effective, if severe punishment of breaking her legs when she persisted in visiting a rich and lustful prior. Her downfall began with her greed, for she accepted little jewels from the man, and as the author remarks: femme qui prent se vent.⁷

Ch.128 A disloyal wife who is unworthy of her husband's confidence can cause a great deal of mischief. On his deathbed, Cato the Censor advised his son to test his wife's loyalty and discretion. In time the young husband confided to her that he had killed the emperor's son, removed his heart and sent it to his parents who ate it in its spicy sauce. The wife soon betrayed the secret to a friend who went directly to the emperor's wife with it, hoping to gain favour. As a result of this indiscreet gossip, Cathonet was almost hanged. One should always weigh the possible consequences of one's words and actions, says the author.

Ch.74 Yet, in spite of the advice of the sages, wives will go on revealing their husbands' secrets. In this example, the husband who confides to having laid two eggs is finally reported to have laid one hundred.

Ch.39 If a wife is disloyal, it will be difficult for her to be obedient. Because of her disobedience, Eve has been blamed for all the woes of mankind. The Chevalier de Latour Landry devotes nine chapters to ^{the} analysis ^{of} this

complicated and portentous sin. If the Middle Ages have been accused of inability to analyse, the author's efforts here certainly prove the contrary. In the end, the daughters--and future readers--are left to speculate on what the history of mankind might have been if Eve had been obedient.

Ch.64 The author advises his girls to obey their husbands especially before company, if they wish to be honored. Queen Vastis, who disobeyed her husband, was banished by him for seven years, and placed on a severely restricted diet.

Ch.72 A wife who would not obey her husband's command to come to the dinner table was made to sit with an ugly vile lackey at another table spread with a dirty cloth.

A good deal of humour is contained in a story about a wife who does obey her husband.

Ch.19 Three cloth merchants made a wager as to which of their wives will prove most obedient. The first two wives refuse to obey, and are struck by their husbands. The third one however, has the meal ready when the men arrive, and later even jumps on the table at her husband's command: Femme, saul sur table! The situation and the lady's honour are saved by the husband's explanation of a clever play on words. He had said: Sel sur table. The daughters learn that common people chastise their women with blows. But a gentlewoman

should be rebuked courteously. The more gentle she is, the more joyfully she will carry out her husband's wishes. After reading this story the girls would be deterred from marrying a man of the class of "gens voitturiers," although they would likely admire the spirit of the first two wives who wished to know why they were being asked to jump into a basin!

The author concludes his chapter in praise of the obedient wife by saying:

. . . et ainsi doit toute bonne femme fère, craindre et obeir à son seigneur, et faire son commandement, soit tort, soit droit, se le commandement n'est trop oultrageux, et se il y a vice, elle en est desblamée, et demoure le blasme, se blasme y a, à son seigneur.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER IV

- 1 A Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. IV, p. 23.
- 2 Genesis 21 (2, 3).
- 3 Ibid., 25 (25:26).
- 4 Ibid., 25:28.
- 5 The Apocrypha. Revised Standard Version, "Susanna," pp. 184-186.
- 6 Vgl. Godefroy V, 583 (quoted in Zum livre du Chevalier by Peter Stolingwa, p. 159).
- 7 Proverbes francais antérieurs au 15^e siècle, édités par Joseph Morawski, Paris, Librairie Ancienne Edouard Champion, 1925, p. 27, no. 738.

CHAPTER V

PATIENCE

Although the Griselidis was a popular model of calm endurance for women in the late Middle Ages,^{*} and the patient and forebearing wife is often met in the Livre, actually only one chapter emphasizes this virtue, with stories taken from Tobit III of the Apocrypha.^{**}

Ch.80 The first story tells how God rewarded the patient Tobias the elder with the return of his sight, while his nagging wife Anna was punished with illness for questioning God's ways.

With uncomplaining patience, Sarah, daughter of the wealthy Raguel, bore the trial of losing seven husbands one after the other. The author explains that all were killed by the demon Asmodeus "pour ce qu'ils vouliuent user d'un trop villain fait que ja ne fait à nommer."

*Griselidis was the heroine of a legend told for the first time by Boccacio (Decameron, X, 10). The story was made into a drama by an unknown French author at the close of the 14th century.¹

**Included in the Latin Vulgate, though not in the Hebrew Canon of Holy Scripture, the Apocrypha had a place in all 16th century English translations of the Bible, and in the King James Version (1611). "And the other books (as Jerome saith) the Church doth read for example of life, and instruction of manners, but yet doth it not apply them to establish any doctrine."²

Further on, referring again to Sarah in Chapter 96, he adds "pour ce qu'ils ne vouliuent pas user de loyal mariage." In Chapter 54, referring to the seven cities burned by the wrath of God, the author cites "le vil pechié de luxure" as the sin "que ja ne fait à nommer."

For her long suffering patience Sarah was rewarded with the gentle Tobias the younger as her eighth husband. They had beautiful children and prospered honorably.

The author's daughters might not have read the Grise-lidis legend, but on the other hand, Cato's maxim could have been familiar to them.*

Resignation to God's will as the crowning jewel of patience is emphasized in these examples. The author concludes by saying:

... nul ne doit despire le mehaing ne le mal d'autrui,
car nul ne scet qui à l'ueil lui peut, ne nul ne doit
esmerveillier ne esmaier des fortunes ne des tribu-
lacions à soy ne à ses voysins, et doit l'en du tout
mercier Dieu. ...

*Quem superare potes interdum vinco ferendo; Maxima enim est hominum semper patientia virtus.³

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER V

- 1 La rousse du XX^{ième} siècle, p. 886.
- 2 The Apocrypha, Revised Standard Version, New York (Thomas Nelson and Sons), 1957, Preface.
- 3 J.W. and A.M. Duff, Minor Latin Poets, "Cato," p. 36.

CHAPTER VI

CHASTITY

This virtue has always been praiseworthy, from Biblical times and from earliest Christian days when members of the secret society pledged themselves not to commit adultery.* A chaste person abstains from indulging in forbidden pleasures of the flesh, and practises continence in marriage.

The Chevalier de La Tour Landry is very much aware of the pitfalls of temptation, and he offers several examples to show how the unchaste are punished.

Ch.55 The daughters of Loth gave birth to an accursed lineage when they conceived from their father whom they had rendered inebriate with wine.

Ch.56 Jacob's daughter caused so much carnage by her fall from the grace of chastity that her uncle remarked to her father: Il vous vaulsist trop mieulx que elle n'eust oncques esté née. She was cut up into small pieces.

Ch.59 The daughters of Moab, who himself had been conceived against the law, went into Hebrew country to seduce

* . . . quod essent soliti stato die ante lucem conuenire, carmenque Christo quasi deo dicere secum inuicem seque sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta ne latrocinia ne adulteria committerent. . . .l

the men so that the wrath of God would fall upon them. Many tribulations resulted from this piece of skulduggery. The author remarks: et volontiers de mauvais fruit.²

Ch.61 Thamar, daughter of King David was made pregnant by her brother Amon who was then killed by their brother Absalom. Gay young flesh is easily tempted, say the Chevalier. He warns his daughters never to be alone with any man, not even with a close relative. But after telling his harrowing tales he indicates his acknowledgment of the influence of Christian teaching by allowing that a girl may be alone with her father or her brother.

The chaste wife is rewarded, as in the next example.

Ch.125 A holy hermit questions his own worthiness before God. He is told in a vision to visit the Provost of Acquillée and his wife. In the absence of her husband the good lady severely tests the moral fibre of her guest who had never learned to be moderate, because he had never faced such temptations. He returned to his hermitage, full of praise for the chaste wife.

Although the author himself married twice, and his second wife was a widow with children, he does not advise a woman to remarry. Rather, she should live in clean widowhood, and rear her children to the best of her ability. Philosophers and Saints have expressed the same conviction:

Tous les auteurs anciens se prononcent contre un deuxième mariage: Saint Jérôme (Patrol. lat., XXII, col. 289-290, et col. 291); Saint Amboise, Saint Paul; exemples de Socrate, de Cicéron. Le Roman de la Rose (l, 136-137) et Eustache Deschamps, dans toutes ses ballades et dans son Miroir, sont fortement convaincus de la sagesse de s'en tenir à une première épreuve.³

Several widows are cited by the Chevalier as examples for his daughters to consider.

Ch.114 The first, a beautiful wife who lost her husband at the battle of Crecy, continued to live a blameless life, and was praised more than ever before.

Another attractive young wife cared for her difficult and senile old husband throughout his long illness and continued to behave impeccably in her widowhood. Queen Jeanne of France is equally praised.

The author advises widows against remarrying for pleasure or light love. If they must marry, they should seek the advice of their parents and wise friends.

Further on in his text, the author handles the ever fascinating and controversial subject of love with analytical dexterity where he records a debate between his wife and himself. Their arguments may be summarized as follows:

The Chevalier: After allowing that a woman or a young lady may love because of honour in certain cases, as in the hope of marriage, he feels that she could love simply for the sake of loving. Her lover, whether a knight or squire, would become a more worthy person, gayer,

better dressed, and ambitious for honour in order to please the woman he loves. Here the author expresses ideas which had been enunciated much earlier by poets such as Drouart la Vache, who based his work on that of Capellanus.

He believes that his daughters should not be restrained to the point where they would be unable to love one man more than another. And again he argues in favour of allowing them to love for the sake of loving, at least once they are married. And if they marry a man of lowly position, it will be to their credit to increase his esteem, so that he may be accepted among the worthy. As for allowing them to kiss and embrace, he exclaims:

Avoy, dame, et, se il la requiert d'acoler et de
baisier, ce n'est mie grant chose; car autant en
porte le vent.*

The Lady of La Tour Landry maintains that all such talk about loving for the sake of loving is simply the common pastime of gentlemen and their friends. In truth, a man wishes to impress the world around him only to receive honours for himself. She advises her daughters to keep their honour clean and blameless before the world. They should avoid falling in love to the point of being mastered by the emotion, which often leads its victims astray. There

*This proverb appears in Villon's poem entitled "Ballade en Vieil Langage Francois."⁴

are always plenty of slanderers and back-biters who delight in spreading evil stories which defame the honour of a good woman.

This emphasis on the nobility of honour, extolled by the epic poets of the Northern school appears to place the Lady of La Tour Landry in opposition to her husband who seems to support the ideas of the Southern Troubadours who sang the praises of Women and "la joie d'amour." She expresses concern about the bad effects of an engrossing love which would prevent them from serving God with as good a heart as before, and she cites the example of the artful goddess Venus who advised the Trojans to send Paris to Greece to seek the most beautiful woman in the kingdom. This was Helen, wife of King Menelaus. As a result of this expedition, forty kings died, and more than one hundred thousand men. She is convinced that no love sick woman will ever be in a state to love God perfectly, and she will be tempted more sorely in church than elsewhere.

She is not in favour of allowing her girls to love a man of lower rank. Nor should they set their hearts on men of high position, for great lords will not marry them. Rather, they will only deceive them to obtain their own false pleasure. As for women who have affairs with married men, priests or monks, with servants or others of low degree, they are worse harlots than those unfortunate women in brothels. These poor creatures fall into the sin of lechery only because of need

or poverty, or because they have been deceived into that kind of life.

She expects her daughters to be gay with all sorts of honourable people, and more so with certain ones than with others. It is true, however, that no woman can have two hearts, no more than a greyhound can run after two beasts at one time.

The best kind of love is the one that makes no demands. Wise women of old maintained that as soon as girls allow themselves to be kissed they put themselves into the hands of the devil who is very subtle. The mother warns her girls not to accept any gifts, for many a woman has placed herself in subjection, simply because of covetousness.

The Chevalier does not reply to his wife's last argument, and so ends the debate. In the preceding chapter, however, he insists that a woman of quality and honour should take good care to keep herself that way. She should always be on guard against false pretenders, long and thoughtful looks, little sighs, and affected countenances. Women who stand firm in the face of all these ruses should be praised. However, in criticizing the Dame de Villon's suggestion that a lover should be tested by his lady for a period of seven years (this cruelty on the part of the lady was one of the obstacles to be overcome by the Courtly Lover) the Chevalier says that seven years is too long for a man to wait for an embrace.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER VI

- 1 C. Plini Caecili Secundi: Epistularum Libri Decem, p. 339.
- 2 Saint Matthew, 7:18.
- 3 Mathilde Laigle, Le Livre des Trois Vertus de Christine de Pisan, et son Milieu Historique et Litteraire, Paris (Honoré Champion), 1912, p. 98.
- 4 Francois Villon, Poésies, Ballades, Editions Broceliande, Strasbourg, 1958, p. 79.

CHAPTER VII

MODERATION

There are many examples throughout the Livre that encourage the cultivation of the virtue of moderation... the sophrosyne of Greek philosophy. A moderate person who avoids extremes, and is temperate in conduct or expression is rewarded. On the other hand, violations of the golden mean may and do cause complications with varying degrees of seriousness. In the guise of his excellent examples, the author teaches moderation in eating, drinking, in clothing and in one's habits and personal relationships.

Ch.16 Greed is a manifestation of immoderation. In the absence of her husband a wife eats a tasty eel without telling him. The household magpie catches her in the act and tells on her. In a fit of anger the wife plucks all of its feathers, and thereafter when bald-headed visitors come to the house, and others with large foreheads (a dig at women who pluck their hair to heighten their foreheads as a mark of beauty), the bird cries out "Vous en parlates de l'anguille," an embarrassing punishment for a greedy wife who is immoderately vain and bad-tempered.

- Ch.17 Jealousy is intemperate. A wife gets into a fight with "the other woman," who breaks her nose.
- Ch.68 Mary, the sister of Moses, envied her brother so much that God punished her with an illness which forced her to live away from everyone.
- Ch.70 Sampson's wife betrayed her husband to the enemy for a price. When she remarried he came to the feast and pushed the house down on the newly-weds, thus killing the pagan and the covetous wife.
- Ch.71 Anger is an expression of immoderation. A wife's recurring fits of anger over small issues finally cause the death of thirty-three thousand persons.
- Ch.73 There is no moderation in flattery. Therefore it is a bad thing to have flatterers around one, for they never dare tell the truth nor give loyal advice, and people are thus often detracted from the right road.
- Ch.52 A woman who persisted in trying to beautify herself by removing the hair from her forehead was finally abandoned by her desperate husband who then donned a hair shirt and took up fasting on Wednesday (the day Christ was sold) and on Friday, as the lesser of two evils.
- Ch.89 For their moderation in eating and drinking, Sampson's parents were rewarded in their strong son who upheld the law of God. At the end of this chapter the author says:

Pourquoi mes chières fillez, gardez-vous de celui
mauvais vice de trop boire, ne gourmender, ne mengier

fors aux droites heures, comme à disner et a soupper.
 Car une fois mengier est vie d'ange, et deux foiz
 est droite vie d'homme et de femme, et plusieurs
 fois mengier est vie de beste. ...

Before considering the author's examples which teach moderation in dress, a short account of the styles in Mediaeval France up to his time will reveal certain trends.

At the beginning of the 12th century, long garments replaced the short ones which had been worn for centuries.¹ Frankish costume had been simple. But with an increase in the number of princely courts, and resulting competition, dress became more elaborate. It was highly stylized, brilliant in colour, with strange and often beautiful shapes. A faithful mirror of its time, it recognized distinctions of class and vocation as being at least as important as the distinction between the sexes. And it rarely lacked in dignity.² The 13th century became the most brilliant of the age. All classes went forth, resplendant in purple, even the peasant. As Quicherat writes: Le paysan enivré de se voir dans la tenue d'un empereur, se juge l'égal de toutes puissances.³ However, by this time, the costumes of men and women were so much alike that antiquarians have often confused the sexes on monuments. Emblems or badges were worn for identification.

By the end of the century, unforeseen difficulties necessitated the institution of sumptuary laws. Slavishness to elaborate style prompted the abstemious Saint Louis to enunciate a doctrine on matters of dress, which appealed to

the good sense of the people, and approved of those who observed moderation. Yet people continued in their extravagant ways as long as they could. Costumes became more daring, and in the case of female dress, slits in the bodices went so far as to reveal the flesh beneath. Predicators called these openings "fenetres de l'enfer."⁴

Extravagance in dress is a sign of uneasy times and impending catastrophe, says the author of the Livre. He cites the Biblical deluge as an example (ch. 47). The girls are urged not to be first in adopting new styles, especially those from foreign countries (ch. 21). The best course to take is to follow the example set by the good women of one's own country. He reminds them that "est-il bon de ne se haster point et de tenir le moyen estat, c'est en faire plus sur le moins que sur le plus." And he deplores the fact that servants and chamber maids put furs on their backs and heels. Since they do not ride in carriages, their feet become caked with mud and they resemble the backs of sheep. In winter these women die of cold because the fur is not on their breasts and stomachs, and in summer fleas and lice get into it.

Ch.49 A young woman who is not very wise becomes the object of curiosity for her friends who come to see her new head dress, called "Du gibet" (casset^{ête}). The author's daughters may well wince at the mere thought of supporting such a contraption, which was anchored to the

hair with silver pins.

- Ch.50 A woman who had an extravagant wardrobe goes to hell when she dies and is made to suffer more by having to wear a flaming dress.
- Ch.52 A woman who had been immoderate in altering the facial attributes God had given her was tormented by many devils in hell when she died.
- Ch.27 Saint Bernard's sister, over-dressed in her finery, was put to shame by her brother. He reminded her that one tenth of her finery would clothe more than forty unfortunates against the cold.
- Ch.31 An inordinately vain and selfish woman who caused inconvenience to the other parishioners by taking one quarter of the day to arrange herself, was punished by being made to see the ugly back side of the devil when she looked into her mirror late one Sunday morning

Good habits of moderation manifest consideration and respect for other people. Extravagance is never a virtue, more especially when people suffer as a consequence of it. One long dress, two short ones and two cottes hardies (a kind of overcoat with long sleeves) should suffice any woman, says the author in chapter 50. And he echoes the thought expressed in Cato:

Pleased with small store, take care to avoid the extreme
Safer the craft that sails a moderate stream.*

*Quod nimium est fugito parvo gaudere memento; tutam
age est puppis modico quae flumine fertur.⁵

The Middle Ages enjoyed great freedom of word and action, and the crudest expression frightened no one.

- Ch.54 Yet when the Chevalier de La Tour Landry writes on the subject of lust he uses a circumlocution to refer to the sin against nature: "que ja ne fait à nommer." It stinks so badly that the stench rises to the sky and upsets all heaven and nature. In the days of Sodom and Gomorrah, whoever could indulge in it did so, forcing himself to do it, unbridled, without rime or reason. Because their hearts had become overheated with lust, God punished the inhabitants of these cities by making them perish in sulphurous flames, which smell horribly.
- Ch.122 "But for destruction's sake, ice is also great," says the poet Robert Frost. And in a singular tale which reveals the easy morals of his own day, the author gives an example of what happens when people interfere with the balance of nature.

Several knights and ladies made an ordinance by which they were to dress and live in winter as if it were summer, and vice versa. When a married man, a Galoys, visited a married woman, a Galoyse, it was understood that her husband would take his horse and visit another Galoyse, whose husband would be expected to depart, or suffer shame. This life of promiscuous behaviour lasted some time, until most of the proponents died stiff of cold beside each other. One might say they were martyrs

of love, remarks the author, and he adds: Ce est le siècle fort à connoistre et moult merueilleux---tels et telles le cuident bien connoistre qui en sont deceus, et si connaissent moins que ils ne cuident.

The Chevalier's daughters are left to consider the effects of two extremes: that of a single overpowering passion which can consume its victims (as in the tale of La Chate-laine de Vergy mentioned by their mother in chapter 124), and the equally fatal consequences of the creeping cold which results from the scattering and reduction of the flame of Venus into weak little fires which eventually die out.*

In the selection of these examples, the author's intention appears to be the teaching of moderation and decorum in love, as in every other facet of life.

The girls are reminded never to forget that God praises the good woman through his Son, who said long ago: Una

*A modern interpretation of this very old problem is contained in the Interpreter's Bible: Miscellaneous sex relationships; illicit so-called love affairs are not love; they are only lust. Sex is part of the divine ordaining, and in its right use is sanctified. But sex impulses, undisciplined, degrade the personality into an instrument of low passion. It has no loyalty, and therefore its "romance" is rottenness. . . . Those who have let themselves go in sexual license can become so carnal, cynical and callous that it will be hard for them to love one woman truly, or to bring to marriage a whole heart.⁶

When sexual objects are easily and guiltlessly accessible, in a society that does not object to promiscuity, romantic love seldom prospers. Love is unlikely to arouse the heart of someone brought up in a harem, where the idea of uniqueness has a hard time. Romans sometimes wondered if love would not blunt and tame their sexual pleasures, whereas the troubadours fretted lest sex abate the fervour of love's longing.

preciosa margarita comparavit eam, which means that she is like a large round pearl, clean and white, whether she is a virgin, or a chaste wife who keeps clean the sacrament of marriage.

As the finest example of the woman his daughters should have as their model, the author of course selects the Mother of Christ. She has no equal, for in her were combined all of the virtues in their noblest degree:

She was alone in pious prayer when the Angel appeared to her, and announced the forthcoming birth of her son.

She asked him how it was that she should be with child, since she had had no carnal knowledge of man. The Chevalier praises her for wanting to know about these things, and contrasts her to our first mother Eve, who did not look or think ahead, nor enquire where her actions might lead her.

Holy Scripture praises her for her humility when she said to the Angel: Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done according to thy word. Mary was courteous to everyone, and took the trouble to visit people in need of counsel or consolation.

She is also praised for her compassion at the marriage feast in Galilee. When the supply of wine failed, she asked her son Jesus to help. Mary always obeyed her husband Joseph, and it was with uncomplaining resignation and patience that she suffered the trial of seeing her Son's holy passion.

So humble and charitable, she is indeed the finest model a girl or woman could have. The author regrets that there are so many vain and proud women in his day. They want to be first in everything in order to have more of the useless glory of the world. He reminds his daughters that the humblest will be the most exalted. And if woman must suffer, they should not wonder or fret, for not even the Mother of Christ was spared.

FOOTNOTES FOR CHAPTER VII

- 1 Joan Evans, Dress in Mediaeval France (Oxford at the Clarendon Press), 1952, p. 202.
- 2 Jules E. Quicherat, Histoire du Costume en France, Paris (Librairie Hachette), 1877, p. 143.
- 3 Ibid., p. 177.
- 4 Loc. cit.
- 5 J.W. and A.M. Duff, Minor Latin Poets, "Cato," Book II, maxim 6.
- 6 The Interpreter's Bible, New York (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press), 1952, p. 766.

PART IV

CONCLUSION

AN EVALUATION OF THE AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION

In order to assess the Chevalier de La Tour Landry and his Livre, it is necessary to identify him in relation to the influences of his time and place. His relatively long life extended through the better part of the 14th century, and perhaps into the 15th, in other words, the close of the Middle Ages. At that time, the Byzantine Empire was waging a losing struggle with the Mohammedans, who finally conquered Constantinople in 1453. In France, the millenium had seen the fusion of Roman, Germanic and Christian institutions, and the subjugation of Feudal barons by powerful kings who were then to dispute among themselves the domination of the world. The Renaissance, with its "libre arbitre" was still to find its way northward from its home in Italy. As for the success of democratic ideas and institutions, that is a fact of contemporary times.

Throughout the centuries, the age was concerned with conduct more than with conversation. Its didactic realism made itself the auxiliary of Christian morality and worldly morality at the same time.¹ The Church elevated the ideal of virginity to a dogma of excellence, and its doctrine on marriage was relegated to the rank of a palliative, destined for those who could not be chaste, thus giving the impression

of lessening the dignity of marriage to the profit of celibacy.

As we have seen, education was in the hands of the Church, and if their parents so desired, girls of noble families might be sent to convents or monasteries for instruction. These were the only schools available to them, even as late as the time of Fénelon. In most cases they were educated at home. Marriages were generally arranged by the parents, and although love might play a part, it was not considered necessary to their success. Perhaps because of this situation, extra-marital affairs were not uncommon, if one can judge by the literature of the time. A code of manners such as the one compiled by Andreas Capellanus, and the ideas and advice contained in the lyric poetry of the period served to give a polished veneer to what might otherwise have been a rather rapacious society.

In the second half of the 13th century, this courtly civilization lost its brilliance. The rise of an increasingly wealthy and cultivated middle class in the growing towns dealt a serious blow to artificial practices of which it sensed the futility. This new bourgeois society turned seriously to the Bible as its guide.

The Chevalier de La Tour Landry, a member of the lesser nobility, took part in the defense of his country, and, as has been noted, he did so with distinction in 1346. At that time he must have been around twenty years old. He

was in his forties, therefore, this man of the world who had seen a good deal of life, when he decided to instruct his daughters by writing a book for them. It is plain from its pages that his library was of respectable proportions, containing many classics, ancient and modern. Historical references in the anecdotes, names such as Bruneheust, and la royne de Chippre, help form a link between the remote Biblical past of many of the stories and the author's own time, in which Bouciquant, Fouques de Laval, la dame de Languillier, le sire de Beaumanoir were well known personalities.

Some of the stories he included in his collection would hardly have been the choice of his wife, but he knew perhaps better than she did, the kind of temptations and situations their daughters might have to face. Since they were young and beautiful, and would likely be married, his main concern appears to have been their happiness as wives and mothers, and even as widows, because widowhood was a likely possibility. Not one chapter of the Livre suggests the girls might enter a convent. On the contrary, the author wants them to be prepared to face the world around them, where reality is often disconcerting. They must learn to govern themselves, to be discriminating in their choices, and to set a good example.

Critics of the Livre begin with Caxton, who has nothing but praise for it in the preface to the 1484 edition

of his translation.

In the 16th century Sir A. Fitz-Herbert feels that the book has a corrupting influence with its examples of vice, subtlety and craft. The English gentleman was certainly forgetting or simply disregarding the Bible from which the author selected nearly one half of his stories. And as far as offering the evil as well as the good for his daughters to consider, he was simply following the lead set by Biblical writers, and he would have received the unqualified support of later critics such as John Milton who wrote:

Since therefore the knowledge and survey of vice is in this world so necessary to the constituting of human virtue, and the scanning of error to the confirmation of truth, how can we more safely and with less danger scout into the regions of sin and falsity than by reading all manner of tractates, and hearing all manner of reason? And this is the benefit which may be had of books promiscuously read.²

In his preface Montaignon notes that Gudin and Legrand D'Aussy are of the opinion that the Livre is filled with obscenities. He disagrees, but allows that the book would have been improved by a smaller contribution from the Bible.³

The charge of obscenity is founded on the two stories which tell about fornication in a church. However, such instances of misbehaviour must have been common enough, or the author would have ignored them. Later writers sharply censure lecherous monks. In Antoine De La Salle's Le Petit Jehan De Saintr  , the flower of chivalry is baffled and beaten by a cursed monk before the very eyes of his former

protectress.⁴ L'Heptaméron of Marguerite de Navarre⁵ contains no fewer than 16 nouvelles which criticize certain lascivious representatives of the Church. As for the criticism against the number of Biblical contributions, one might suggest that since the author tells his daughters that it is a good thing to see oneself in the mirror of one's ancestors, these stories would give them an opportunity to consider improvements, if any, made by later generations.

The book has three distinct notes:

1. Deep, but not dark piety. The sincerity of the Christian author is never in doubt, and when he resorts to satire to illustrate his point, it is never religion that he attacks, only the people who shame it.
2. A charming tenderness which is manifest in constant references to his dear daughters, and in his concern for their physical and moral, as well as their spiritual well-being.
3. The calm disarming frankness of the Catholic Middle Ages which evokes such horrified censure from puritan critics.

Gertrude Burford Rawlings says that the ethical standard of the book frequently falls somewhat low, inasmuch as it makes expediency and hope of reward loom very large on the moral horizon.⁶ Again, one must keep in mind that the Livre was written for adolescents, perhaps not quite ready

for what Lessing calls the ripe age when people do good for its own sake.

Vincent de Beauvais thought of education as a complete preparation for adult life. His system includes training not only in virtues but in practical affairs as well, and he insists that virtue cannot be taught through the teaching of ethical systems, but rather with practical advice and helpful suggestions.

In the light of these considerations, one can understand why the author of the Livre added "pour l'enseignement de ses filles" to the title. The word "enseignement" meant "connaissance, avis, conseil" in old French, and "une personne enseignée" was "une personne bien élevée" that is, well brought up. Evidently he has no criticism to make of their early up-bringing. What concerns him now are the problems they must face as young adults. But in order to reap the benefits contained in the lessons of his book, they must first learn to read, or "apprendre à roumancier" as their father expresses it. And because certain people do not wish to have their wives and daughters learn to read and write, he makes his own attitude on the subject quite plain:

Je dy ainsi que quant d'escripre, n'y a force que femme en saiche riens, mais quant à lire, toute femme en vault mieulx de le scavoir, et cognoist mieulx la foy et les perils de l'ame et son saulvement, et n'en est pas de cent une qui n'en vaille mieulx, car c'est chose esprouvée.⁷

If a woman cannot learn to write, at least she should learn to read. After all, the advice is very sensible. Much has since been written on the benefits of reading, but little has been said about the possible benefits of writing.

To his daughters, he says it is a good thing to send one's children to school to learn from books of wisdom, where they may learn how to save their bodies and souls (ch. 90). The lives of the Church Fathers and the Saints are more profitable reading material than the study of fables and lies. References to animals in the Livre are usually made to illustrate a lesson in a humorous way, and they indicate that the author appears to have been a most observant country gentleman.

There is a great change in this book from those that preceded it. The general tone is not the same; woman is no longer considered in the light of Courtly Love. The idea of the family acquires a much greater importance, and conjugal happiness is the most desirable goal. For the girls, the book is a guide for their conduct through life. However, the gentle moral philosopher who was its author, did not attempt any revolution in the position of women. But neither did the early humanists of half a century later. Vittorino da Feltre, who founded a famous school at Mantua in 1424,⁸ still considered home, social life, the rearing of children, the practice of charity and religious obligation to be the first duties of a woman.

According to A. David-Sauvageot, people in the Middle Ages did not know how to analyse. Unlike the Greeks who wanted to understand, they were satisfied only to see.⁹ The Chevalier de La Tour Landry is an exception. By selecting examples illustrating the social behaviour of four periods, including his own, by his excellent presentation of the debate on love, and the astute analysis of the effects of mother love or the lack of it on children, he proved that he was not only an observer, but a serious thinker as well.

Although in matters of dress he advises his daughters not to copy the styles of foreign countries, he encourages them to be respectful of authority, foreign as well as domestic, by his praise of kings, including the wise English king, although France and England had been at war for so many decades. And it is always with sympathy that he refers to Constantinople, which was then the beleaguered bastion of Christendom.

It is in a Christian marriage blessed with monogamous love, with passion reserved only for the transcendent worship of God, and in a virtuous life devoted to their children and to charitable deeds that the father hopes his daughters will find fulfilment. Then, as in the case of the dame Olive de Belle Ville,¹⁰ minstrels may sing their praises when they have left this earth.

From the study of his Livre we may conclude that the Chevalier de La Tour Landry was a progressively conservative

gentleman, and a Christian Humanist of the late Middle Ages. In the outspoken expression of his language, he is typical of his time. The rather large proportion of Biblical selections in his manuel would appear to be in keeping with bourgeois influence which was already gaining strength. He was original in his presentation of a book exclusively for girls, and written in prose rather than in poetry. His views encouraging the formal education of children indicate he was progressive. On the other hand he could be considered retrogressive in advising women to wear hair shirts.

It is not difficult to understand why the Livre enjoyed great popularity for a good two hundred years. The perennial character of many of its ideas make it interesting to read even today.

FOOTNOTES FOR CONCLUSION

- 1 A. David-Sauvageot, Le Réalisme et le Naturalisme dans la Littérature et dans l'Art, Paris (Calman-Lévy, éditeur à la Librairie Nouvelle), 1889, p. 87.
- 2 John Milton, Areopagitica, and of Education, edited by George H. Sabine (Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc.), New York, 1951, pp. 18-19.
- 3 Montaiglon, Preface, p. xxxiii.
- 4 Antoine de la Salle, Le Petit Jehan de Saintré, Londres (J.M. Dent & Sons).
- 5 Marguerite d'Angouleme, Reine de Navarre, L'Heptaméron des Nouvelles, Paris (Librairie des Bibliophiles), 1879, Vols. 1 and 2.
- 6 Gertrude Burford Rawlings, (ed.), The Booke of Thensey-gnementes and Techynge that the Knyght of the Towre Made to his Doughters by the Chevalier de La Tour Landry, p. 202.
- 7 Montaiglon, p. 178.
- 8 William Harrison Woodward, Vittorino da Feltre and other Humanist Educators, New York (Bureau of Publications, Teachers' College, Columbia University), 1964, quoted in the foreword by Eugene F. Rice Jr.
- 9 A. David-Sauvageot, op. cit., p. 85.
10. Montaiglon, op. cit., p. 276.

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