

MEDIEVAL EDUCATION :
A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

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ABSTRACT

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by John J. Contreni

Before research can be undertaken on a particular problem it is helpful and, indeed, imperative to first review the "state of the question." The purpose of this essay, therefore, is to provide background for a further study of medieval education. This essay does not aim to supply a history of medieval education or even a history of one aspect of medieval education. Rather, it aims to uncover the various approaches of historians toward medieval education, and the major trends in the historiography of medieval education..

The essay begins with a sampling of humanists' attitudes toward medieval culture. Though not historians of the Middle Ages, the men of the Renaissance entertained strong feelings about the age which preceded their own. Implicitly they compared the educational system of their own day to that of the late Middle Ages. The comparison was not favorable to medieval education. To the classicists of the Renaissance the concerns of medieval education smacked only of ignorance and barbarity.

During the Enlightenment period various scholars who turned their attention to medieval education and educational institutions produced works of real merit. Histories of particular universities and of the refinement of culture and knowledge were, for the most part, based on a consideration of medieval education. But here again the preponderant note in historical scholarship was the exaltation of the most recent period and that period's institutions to the detriment of those of a "less fortunate" time.

A break in the historiography of the Middle Ages and, therefore, of medieval education, came with the romantic wave of the late XVIIIth and early XIXth centuries. For various reasons, the romanticists exalted the Middle Ages and replaced the negative approach of previous scholars toward that period with a constructive approach which attempted to treat the Middle Ages on its own terms. It was with the revolt of the romanticists against Enlightenment rationalism that medieval studies, properly considered, were born.

In the historiography of medieval education since the XIXth century, the major emphases have been placed on individuals and institutions, especially during the period of the universities. The universities of the High Middle Ages have dominated the field of medieval educational studies. The universities and, to a lesser extent, the cathedral schools and other educational institutions of the Middle Ages have been examined from a judicial, political, and constitutional viewpoint. Indeed, education during the Middle Ages in general

has been viewed apart from any larger context, the larger context in which individuals moved and institutions were formed and evolved.

It is the conclusion of this essay that our understanding of medieval education and intellectual life would be enriched by a fresh approach to the major educational movements and developments that occurred during the Middle Ages. One such approach would consider the impact of social phenomena on cultural life..

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A THESIS

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PREFACE.

In some fashion or another every society and culture has made some provision for what we call today education. Whether it has been some sort of prehistoric instruction in survival or in the requirements of the cult or today's audio-visual, computerized, multiversity "living-learning experience," man has always taught, instructed, and, in general initiated some sort of transfer of knowledge. From the "Go ye therefore and teach all nations" of the Scriptures through the missionaries who closely followed (and sometimes preceded) the conquerors and gold-seekers into new territories to today's Peace Corps volunteers and social workers in the Great Society, education has been an integral part of Western man's culture and, thereby, his history.

The study of the history of education, therefore, would seem to be especially fruitful to the historian who attempts to understand a people's ideas and institutions. It can be argued that a people's values are reflected in the substance of their educational theory and system. Conversely, it can be argued, perhaps more strongly, that a people's educational system and content reflect more a set of ideals as differentiated from the actual, lived values practiced by society. In either event, the study of the history of education provides us with an excellent opportunity to know, and

more importantly, to understand the intellectual history of a people and an era.

The present study aims to establish an historical background for a future study of medieval educational and intellectual history. Such a background study is of importance to the historian for two reasons. First, it acquaints him with the results of previous historical scholarship. Secondly, an historiographical study of a particular problem opens up new approaches to the problem and suggests new questions to be asked concerning it. The important element in historical scholarship is, I think, not so much the sources but rather the questions that are put to the sources. It is closer to the truth of the matter to say that each generation asks different questions than to say merely that each generation writes its own history.

In the preparation of the historiographical analysis of opinion concerning medieval education, I have operated with several guideposts in mind which it would be well to note at the outset. First, I have found it convenient to organize the first major section of this paper according to the well-known (and well-worn) conventional periods of history, e.g., the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, Romanticism. I have done this chiefly to bring some semblance of coherency and order to the paper while remaining secure in the belief that no reader will give more importance to labels than is their due. In general, there does seem to be a difference in outlook between Erasmus and his contemporaries and Voltaire and his contemporaries which warrants placing the for-



mer in the Renaissance and the latter in the Enlightenment. Beyond this, though, the over-emphasis of labels to the point where they are used to typify an outlook ascribable to all men of a certain period is dangerous. Here, such conventional terms used to designate historical periods will be used exactly as that - conventional terms and no more.

Secondly, I have not confined my researches solely to the writings of the historians of each period. Rather, I have felt free to consult the opinions of philosophers, educational theorists, novelists, "popular" writers, and thinkers in general in addition to historians. I have done this primarily because for some time historians did not treat of the Middle Ages, much less medieval education, whereas the other types of sources did in some respect or another. Also, aside from increasing the number of useful sources available, such a broad sampling of opinion vis a vis medieval education is more representative of any attitude than a sampling of historians alone is.

By no means have I exhaustively examined the full depth of possible opinion toward the Middle Ages and education during that period. In general, for the earlier periods I have examined only the writings of the major figures of those periods. From approximately the middle of the XVIIIth century, however, the number of writers and thinkers consulted has become fuller.

Thirdly, my study of medieval education will focus on the period from the decline of classical education to the

establishment of the medieval university, i.e., from approximately the beginning of the IVth to the XIIIth century inclusive. In terms of the development of education in the Middle Ages I believe this period to be an historically significant one.

A note should be made of the implications of the term "education" as employed in this paper. I use the term "education" in the narrow sense, that is, as referring to schools, teachers, and the taught, and only secondarily to such considerations as the state of learning or the development of science or literature during any particular period.

Finally, it is in the very nature of this study to raise more questions than it purports to answer. In surveying the representative source material pertaining to medieval education for the last six centuries and more, many interesting problems that beg for further analysis have been seemingly slighted. If the reader has been made aware of these problems, however, this study will have fulfilled the purpose for which the author undertook it.

* * *

It is a pleasurable duty to gratefully acknowledge the assistance of those who aided and guided my labors. To Professor Richard E. Sullivan, Chairman, Department of History, Michigan State University, who first suggested this study, I am grateful for encouragement, insights, and valuable criticism. Without the aid of Mr. Walter Burinski and his staff at the Inter-Library Loan department of the Michigan State University

Library many of the books and articles noted in the body of this essay would have been unavailable to me. I appreciate their work in my behalf. My wife, Katharine, assisted in the long preparation of this study with cheer and patience. Not only did she assist with the lion's portion of the onerous task of typing, re-typing and correcting the manuscript but, in addition her keen appraisal of the text and my prose saved me from numerous embarrassments and tested my conclusions. To her belongs the special gratitude of a graduate student husband.

J. J. C.

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INTRODUCTION

THE MIDDLE AGES IN HISTORY

In the first part of this study, I will examine the historiography of medieval education in broad outline. Chronologically, this part of the paper will cover the period from the XIVth century humanists to the XIXth century romanticists. Before examining the literature, however, I would like to make a few general remarks concerning the tenor of historical thought in regard to the Middle Ages as a whole and medieval education in specific.

The humanists had little knowledge of the Middle Ages. It was not as if there were no textbooks to inform the Renaissance of the "facts" of medieval history, but rather that the humanists had a peculiar historical sense which made impossible any real view of the Middle Ages. In reading the works of the various humanists and Renaissance thinkers, one is repeatedly struck by their far- and short-sightedness to the complete lack of any balanced, over-all view. The humanists were concerned with either their own era or, at most, the previous generation or two and, of course, with classical antiquity. It was as if the period from the IVth century A. D. to the XIVth century had never existed. There is, of course, no call and little merit to fault the humanists for the neglect of such a euphemistic commodity as a "balanced, over-all

view." The fact remains, however, that the humanists thought little about the period we call medieval. They thought and knew more of Agesilaus and Epaminondas than of Clovis and Charlemagne.

Still, it is possible to construct an informative picture of the humanists' attitude toward medieval education. The humanists themselves were not so far removed from the Middle Ages that certain aspects of it were not familiar to them. One legacy of the Middle Ages which survived into the Renaissance was the educational system of the later Middle Ages. In celebrating the advances of their own time, the humanists did not refrain from commenting on those elements which smacked on a non-classical (that is, in effect, medieval) milieu. Thus, by examining the humanists' attitude toward things medieval which were in their own midst it is possible to obtain some notion of their attitude toward the Middle Ages and medieval education.

The hallmarks of the humanistic ideals of education and learning were polite letters and Latinity. Insofar as medieval education had become largely a matter of dialectic, the humanists did not hesitate to fulminate against the barbarities of the scholastics. Also, the grammar taught in the schools of the late Middle Ages was not strictly Ciceronian and thus all the medieval manuals and grammatical treatises were considered by the humanists to be out-worn and even vulgar in their linguistic rudeness. In fact, any vestige of medieval education or any medieval author was only recommended

insofar as the medieval element was classical in some fashion.¹ By far though, the most salient criticism levelled by the humanists against medieval education was against the lack of good literary style taught in medieval schools and against the product of those schools, scholasticism.

In the period of the Enlightenment medieval education was given a fuller treatment than had been accorded to it by the Renaissance humanists. The treatment itself may not have been particularly sympathetic to medieval education and the Middle Ages in general;² however, it at least reflected

¹Thus, Lionardo Bruni D'Arezzo's (fl. 1405) advice on a program of studies in Lady Baptista Malatesta:

"You may naturally turn first to Christian writers, foremost amongst whom, with marked distinction stands Lactantius, by common consent the finest stylist of the post classical period. Especially do I recommend to your study his works 'Adversus falsam Religionem,' 'De via Dei,' and 'De opificio.' After Lactantius your choice may lie between [sic] Augustine, Jerome, Ambrose, and Cyprian; should you desire to read Gregory of Nazianzen, Chrysostom, and Basil, be careful as to the accuracy of the translations you adopt." (First set of italics mine.)

It was primarily Lactantius' and the Fathers' classical style which recommended them and not the thoughts that that style conveyed. "De Studiis et Literis," tr. William Harrison Woodward, Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanist Educators ("Classics in Education," no. 18; New York: Bureau of Publications, Teacher's College, Columbia University, 1963), pp. 124-125.

²Wallace K. Ferguson's analysis of rationalist historiography is the best concise statement of the Enlightenment's view of the Middle Ages that I have found and is an excellent guide to the presuppositions held by one age writing of another:

"The assumption of the basic similiarity of human nature in all times and places in itself tended to get in the way of a sympathetic understanding of men who lived under different conditions from their own. If men in the past acted in ways that to the enlightened philosophers seemed unreasonable, it could only be because they were the victims of ignorance or superstition or of unjust institutions

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry, no matter how small, should be recorded to ensure the integrity of the financial data. This includes not only sales and purchases but also expenses and income. The document further states that regular audits are necessary to verify the accuracy of these records and to identify any discrepancies.

In the second part, the focus shifts to the management of cash flow. It highlights the need for a clear understanding of the company's current financial position and the ability to forecast future cash requirements. The document suggests implementing a system of budgeting and controlling expenditures to ensure that the company remains financially stable and solvent.

The third part of the document addresses the issue of debt management. It advises companies to carefully evaluate the terms and conditions of any loans or credit facilities they may be considering. It also stresses the importance of maintaining a good credit rating, which can be achieved by paying debts on time and keeping a low debt-to-equity ratio.

Finally, the document concludes by emphasizing the role of the management team in overseeing the company's financial health. It states that the management should be actively involved in all financial decisions and should ensure that the company's financial policies are clearly defined and consistently applied.

some attempt to come to grips with the period the humanists ignored almost completely.

The writers of the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries turned to the medieval period more than their predecessors had for three reasons which may be epitomized by the words Reformation, Nationalism, and Enlightenment.

The Reformation made of history a vast proving ground to which polemicists, apologists, and historians of both camps - Protestant and Catholic - resorted in order to trace the development of their own particular point of view. The history of the Middle Ages could no longer be ignored as it highlighted the despotism of the Catholic Church and the misery of its communicants wallowing in servitude, ignorance, and superstition, or, on the other hand, provided the defense against such a view and proved how bankrupt Western civilization

and irrational laws. In any case, the historian en philosophe seemed often less concerned with attempting to understand than with his duty to sit in judgement on the actions of men of the past. This situation was particularly evident in the approach of the rationalist historians to the Middle Ages. By all the standards of the Enlightenment, medieval men were hopelessly sunk in ignorance, superstition, and barbarism, victims of every form of oppression. Moreover, the elements in the society of the old regime which the French rationalists were endeavouring to overthrow - the dominant position of the Church and the privileged position of the nobility - were all legacies from the Middle Ages. Their attitude toward that benighted period, then, could only be one of undiluted condemnation. In the words of Voltaire: 'It is necessary to know the history of that age only in order to scorn it.' "Introduction" to J. C. L. Sismondi, A History of the Italian Republic Being a View of the Origin, Progress and Fall of Italian Freedom (Garden City: Doubleday and Company, 1966), vii-viii.

would have been had it not been for the culture-saving and dark-dispelling work of the medieval Church.

Nationalism dictated that the Middle Ages be plumbed for the story of a particular nation's development. It was obvious that a history which attempted to narrate how England or France came to be could not stop at the history of Imperial Rome. In a very real way, the nations of the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries had their roots in that period after the "fall" of Rome - those ten centuries which the humanists all but ignored. Thus, in tracing the antiquities and history of their nation, historians placed at the head of their narrative an account of the Middle Ages.

Prides in one's national language is perhaps the most telling manifestation of nationalistic sentiment. Closely allied to identification with one language is the pride taken in the literature of that language and its linguistic antecedents. The humanists knew of only one language - Latin - and of only one literature - that of Antiquity. However, in the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries we begin to witness the emergence of histories of literature which have in common two traits: first they are written to show the development of a national literature; secondly they consider the medieval period integral to that development. Boethius and Cassiodorus, King Alfred and Beowulf, Charlemagne and the chansons de geste all occupy their place in the histories of Italian, English, and French literature for one reason or another.

The third reason for historical interest in the Mid-

dle Ages is somewhat more difficult to delineate than the influence of the Reformation and Nationalism. The term "enlightenment" characterizes a frame of mind which tended to place the accomplishments of its own age at the zenith of human progress. However, there would have been little satisfaction in "having arrived," as it were, if one could not have been reminded of whence he came. Some comparison with less happy times was therefore necessary in order for the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries to celebrate their own advances. Thus the rationalist historians turned to the Middle Ages to begin the story of man's progress from medieval ignorance to eventual enlightenment.³

These three new ingredients in historical writing

³Thomas Warton (1728-1790), professor of history at Oxford and poet laureate of England (1785) eloquently captured this sentiment:

"In an age advanced to the highest degree of refinement, that species of curiosity commences, which is busied in contemplating the progress of social life, in displaying the gradations of science, and in tracing the transitions from barbarism to civility.

That these speculations should become the favourite pursuits, and the fashionable topics, of such a period, is extremely natural. We look back on the savage condition of our ancestors with the triumph of superiority; we are pleased to mark the steps by which we have been raised from rudeness to elegance: and our reflections on this subject are accompanied with a conscious pride, arising in great measure from a tacit comparison with the infinite disproportion between the feeble efforts of remote ages, and our present improvements in knowledge."

The History of English Poetry From the Close of the Eleventh to the Commencement of the Eighteenth Century To Which Are Prefixed Three Dissertations: 1. Of the Origin of Romantic Fiction in Europe, 2. On the Introduction of Learning into England, 3. On the Gesta Romanorum (4 vols.; London: Thomas Tegg, 1824), I, 2.

did not insure the Middle Ages a respectable place in historical scholarship. Gilbert Stuart (1742-1786) could still fault the Middle Ages for its lack of taste and relegate the notes he made on medieval sources to an appendix in his A View of Society in Europe⁴ and Voltaire (1694-1778) in addressing his Essai sur les moeurs et l'esprit des nations to Mme. du Châtelet could still characterize the attitude toward the Middle Ages as one of "révulsion."⁵ Indeed, the Encyclopédie, that great index of Enlightenment opinion, had no article titled either moyen-âge or médiévale.⁶ If some could

⁴"The foundations of a work like this I have attempted, must be the laws of barbarous ages, antient [sic] records, and charters. These I could not incorporate with propriety in my narrative. This instructive, but tasteless erudition, did not accord with the tenor of a portion of my performance, which I wished to address to men of elegance, as well as to the learned."

A View of Society in Europe in its Progress from Rudeness to Refinement: Or, Inquiries Concerning the History of Law, Government, and Manners (Edinburgh: John Bell and J. Murray, 1778), vi..

⁵"Vous voulez enfin surmonter le dégoût que vous cause l'histoire moderne, depuis la décadence de l'empire romain et prendre une idée générale des nations qui habitent et qui désolent la terre."

Essai sur les moeurs et l'esprit des nations et sur les principaux faits de l'histoire depuis Charlemagne jusqu'à Louis XIII (2 vols.; Paris: Editions Garnier Frères, 1963), I, 195..

⁶In an eleven page article entitled "écoles", the Encyclopédie dismissed the medieval period in three curt sentences:

"Dans la primitive église, les écoles étoient dans les églises cathédrales, & sous les yeux de l'évêque. Depuis, elles passèrent dans les monastères; il y en eut de fort célèbres: telles que celles des abbayes de Fulde & de Corbie. Mais depuis l'établissement des universités, c'est-à-dire depuis le douzième siècle, la réputation de ces anciennes écoles s'est obscurcié, & ceux qui les tenoient ont cessé d'enseigner."

1. The first part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various positions of the Board of Directors of the Corporation.

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demonstrate greater attention toward the Middle Ages, some could just as well ignore it.

Several histories of medieval education, schools, and learning were written during this period. One should not expect to encounter, however, a perceptive and stimulating treatment of this aspect of medieval social and intellectual history. In the idiom of the period's historians, "the times were as yet unfelicitous" for anything more in historical writing than a chronicling of who taught what, where, and when. Often history was written according to centuries. Although this method might have proved useful "for uniting in the mind the great current of events and recalling to the memory their order and connexion,"⁷ it was singularly inept for getting at the heart of human history - a history which does not run according to the neat, mechanical pattern of century, decade, year, month, and week. Also, the prevailing notion of the Middle Ages as "dark", "gloomy", and ignorant hindered any real appreciation of medieval culture. Education

Encyclopédie, edd. Diderot, D'Alembert, et al. (37 vols.; Paris: Briasson, David, Le Breton, Durand, 1775), V, 303.

⁷The quote is from a much-used XVIII-XIXth century textbook and seems to typify the prevailing attitude toward the uses of history, Alexander Fraser Tytler, Elements of General History, Ancient and Modern (Concord, N. H.: Isaac Hill, 1825), p. 102. Two influential works examined below used the century-by-century approach with deadening effect: Johann Loran von Mosheim, An Ecclesiastical History, Ancient and Modern and, the Maurists, Histoire littéraire de la France (see below pp. 38-42, 46-49.)

fostered under the "leaden gray skies" of the Middle Ages little invited serious and scholarly consideration.

In the Romantic period the notion of the Middle Ages as the "Dark Ages" was laid to rest and one can begin to point to some substantial and significant historical treatments of medieval education. However, the former came to pass not without a struggle (even today a surprising number of people believe without qualification that the Middle Ages were "dark") and the latter was accomplished only after much chaff accompanied the wheat with which we are primarily concerned in this paper.

One of the most signal phenomena of historical scholarship within the last century and a half has been the genesis and rapid growth of medieval studies on a professional level. Before the turn of the XIXth century, there were only individuals who wrote about the Middle Ages; beginning with the early 1800's there were medievalists. The explanation for the emergence and expansion of a trained group of people specializing in medieval history has been as varied as it has been elusive. Some would have it that the intellectuals of Europe, having witnessed the excesses of the French Revolution, turned their attention to a more remote and supposedly happier past - the Middle Ages. Again, the wars of liberation fought against Napoleon Bonaparte may have spurred nationalistic sentiment, particularly among the Germans, to delve deeper into the medieval period. The novels of Walter Scott

and the aura of the entire romantic movement also furnished a possible explanation for the new and wider interest in the Middle Ages.

Whatever the ultimate wellspring or wellsprings of this new movement in historical scholarship, the important fact for this study is that subjects such as medieval education at last began to receive full historical treatment. That this treatment did not mature overnight and that sometimes there was more chaff than wheat will, I trust, be shown below. The fact remains though that beginning in this period serious attempts were being made to come to grips with the history of the Middle Ages.

These attempts were manifested in three new trends in the writing of medieval history. First, in this later period beginning in the early XIXth century, there was much less emphasis on the Greek and Roman eras. The story of medieval education for the most part began with the leavings of the Roman Empire - notably with a consideration of Gallo-Roman education - before launching into the familiar litany of monastic, palace, and cathedral schools and the universities. Secondly, the Middle Ages were no longer universally condemned as "dark." For the historians of the XIXth century, it was a century that was epitomized by the term "dark" and not an entire period. The favorite dark century was either the VIIth or the Xth. Historians found that more of the Roman Empire lingered on into the Middle Ages than had been previously thought and that the revival of learning in the XIVth and XVth

centuries had some antecedents in previous centuries. These considerations plus the long acceptance of the Carolingian period as a time of significant revival and light, served to circumscribe the actual length of "darkness" in the Middle Ages. And now, the Xth century has received its official "rehabilitation";⁸ a like event for the VIIth century can not be far off.

Lastly, there was a transformation in the actual treatment of medieval education. Previously historians had dealt with the key figures, the "great men" of medieval education, and built their remarks about medieval education around the premise that the history of that education was for the most part a function of the activities of those few individuals. Along with this emphasis on individuals, the closely allied treatment of a particular institution's foundation and history comprised the boundaries of the standard historical treatment of medieval education. However with the XIXth century and the advent of full-fledged medieval studies and the concomittant specialization, the history of medieval education became more varied. To the historians of this later period, medieval education revealed aspects untouched by their predecessors. The whole complex of medieval education now began to be approached from legal, social, philosophic, economic, educational, and even scientific viewpoints. Historical interest ranged all the way from such weighty subjects as the corporate

⁸Lynn White, Jr., et al., "Symposium on the Tenth Century," Mediaevalia et Humanistica, IX (1955), 3-30.

nature of the medieval universities and papal policy toward education to such seeming minutiae as the daily lives of the students and a mother's manual of instruction for her son. Unfortunately, for the most part the universities were the major recipients of this varied scholarly interest in medieval education.

PART ONE

THE HISTORY OF MEDIEVAL EDUCATION TO 1850

CHAPTER I

HUMANISM AND THE RENAISSANCE (1350-1600)

Francesco Petrarch (1304-1374), the "Father of Renaissance Humanism," had little liking for the office of schoolmaster. He recommended it only to those

who can do nothing better, whose qualities are laborious application, sluggishness of mind, mudiness of intellect, prosiness of imagination, chill of the blood, patience to bear the body's labors, contempt of glory, avidity for petty gains, indifference to boredom.¹

Other than this rather unflattering depiction of the schoolmaster's qualities, Petrarch wrote little of education, especially of that of the Middle Ages.² In his De Ignorantia, he voiced the characteristic Renaissance attack on scholasticism and further criticized medieval medical education for its dependence on the use of bestiaries.³ Petrarch was more to the point of education in his autobiographical "Letter to Posterity." It would seem from this document that Petrarch

¹"To Zanobi da Strada, Florentine schoolmaster and poet," in Letters From Petrarch, selected and ed. by Morris Bishop (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1966), p. 108.

²In a paper fundamental to the understanding of the humanists' view of the Middle Ages, Theodor E. Mommsen has shown that Petrarch, far from treating sympathetically of any aspect of the Middle Ages, was indeed the author of the notion of the "dark ages." "Petrarch's Conception of the 'Dark Ages,'" Speculum, XVII (1942), 226-242.

³Sur ma propre ignorance et celle de beaucoup d'autres (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1929), pp. 12-13, 68-69.

received an education which was very much medieval and which served him well despite his dissatisfaction with the trivium. His final judgment of his education, however, was not so much against medieval education per se but against the profession for which his education prepared him:

In both these places [Avignon and Carpentras] I learned a little grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric, fitted to my age. And how much one commonly learns in the schools, or how little, you know well, dear reader. Then I went to study law at Montpellier for four years, and then to Bologna, where I took a three-year course and heard lectures on the whole body of civil law. Many asserted that I would have done very well if I had persisted in my course. But I dropped that study entirely as soon as my parents' supervision was removed. Not because I disliked the power and authority of the law, which are undoubtedly very great, or the laws saturation with Roman antiquity which I love; but because law practice is befouled by its practitioners. I had no taste for learning a trade which I would practice dishonestly and could not honestly.⁴

The educational theorists of the Renaissance had more to say of medieval education if only by implication. Pietro Paulo Vergerio (1349-1420), Vittorino da Feltre (1378-1446), Lionardo Bruni D'Arezzo (fl. 1405), Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (1405-1465), Matteo Palmieri (1406-1457), and Battista Guarino (1434-1513) each made important contributions to Western education. Indeed the histories of Western education usually trace the roots of modern education to the thought of these Italian humanists. The essentials of that thought was determined largely by two events, both of which involved the recovery of some lost part of antiquity. The first event was the translation in 1411 of Plutarch's treatise On Education. The second was Poggio's famous "rescue" of Quintillian's

⁴Letters From Petrarch, ed. Bishop, p. 8.

Institutes from the moldy recesses of St. Gall. With such guideposts as Plutarch and Quintillian, it could hardly have been expected that the humanists would cast a favorable eye toward the medieval period.

Matteo Palmieri in his Libro della Vita Civile spoke for most humanists when he described the advances in education of his own day over the educational system of the Middle Ages:

Thus the noble achievements of our far-off ancestors [that is, the men of ancient Rome] are forgotten and have become impossible to modern men. Where was the painter's art til Giotto tardily restored it? A caricature of the art of human delineation (sic)! Sculpture and architecture, for long years sunk to the merest travesty of art, are only today in process of rescue from obscurity; only now are they being brought to a new pitch of perfection by men of genius and erudition. Of letters and liberal studies at large it were best to be silent altogether. For these, the real guides to distinction in all the arts, the solid foundation of all civilisation, have been lost to mankind for 800 years and more. It is but in our own day that men dare boast that they see the dawn of better things. For example, we own it to our own Lionardo Bruni that Latin, so long a bye-word for its uncouthness, has begun to shine forth in its ancient purity, its beauty, its majestic rhythm. Now, indeed, may every thoughtful spirit thank God that it has been permitted to him to be born in this new age, so full of hope and promise, which already rejoices in a greater array of nobly-gifted souls than the world has seen in the thousand years that have preceded it. If but our distressed land enjoy assured peace, most certainly shall we garner the fruits of the seed now being sown. Then shall we see these errors, deep-seated and long reputed, which have perverted every branch of knowledge surely rooted out. For the books which in an age of darkness are themselves - how otherwise? - dark and obscure, and in their turn darken all learning by their subtleties and confusion. . . . But I see the day coming when all philosophy and wisdom and all arts shall be drunk from the pure fountainhead - the great intelligences of old. . . . By way of illustration, it is not so long ago that a man would spend a large portion of his working life in the intricacies of Latin grammar. Inferior masters, teaching from perverse manuals, mingled grammar with philosophy, with logic, with heterogeneous learning, reducing it to an absurdity. But

we now rejoice in seeing our youth entering on the study of Latin by such an order and method that in a year or two they come to speak and write that language with a fluency and correctness which it was impossible that our fathers should ever attain at all.⁵

Here we read all the Renaissance complaints against the process of learning in the Middle Ages: it took so long, was conducted in an uncouth language, and suffered confusion by its contamination with logic. None of the other Italian humanists added to this indictment of medieval education. Lionardo Bruni opposed "true learning," that is, "the knowledge of realities - Facts and Principles - united to a perfect familiarity with Letters and the art of expression" to the scholastics' "mere acquaintance with that vulgar, threadbare jargon which satisfies those who devote themselves to Theology."⁶ Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, when he recommended the study of history to Ladislas, King of Bohemia and Hungary, had in mind the ancient historians, the Bible, and the deeds of Aeneas and Romulus and Remus and not anything which the Middle Ages might have offered. The "Renaissance pope" characterized the products of medieval historians as the "products of mere ignorant chroniclers, a farrago of nonsense and lies, destitute of attraction in form, in style and in grave reflection."⁷ Additional bits

⁵Quoted and translated by William Harrison Woodward, Studies in Education During the Age of the Renaissance (New York: Russell and Russell Inc., 1965), pp. 66-68.

⁶"De Studiis et Literis," pp. 123-124.

⁷"De Liberorum Educatione," in Vittorino da Feltre and

and snips could be gleaned from the writings of the humanists to further substantiate the point being made here: that the Italian humanists condemned what they thought to be medieval education for its lack of emphasis on style and graceful expression and for its over-emphasis on logic. Simply put, the humanists labeled as "barbarian" all that was not classical.⁸

From the theories of the Italian humanists, subsequent educators took their cue until the advent of John Dewey.⁹ It is perhaps not too far-fetched to attribute the bad press which the Middle Ages has generally received throughout history to the biases against things medieval which the widespread and long-lived acceptance of the humanists' edu-

Other Humanist Educators, p. 152.

⁸The formula would seem to work in the opposite direction also.. The humanists recommended the study of medieval authors who were in the least particular classical. See, Bruni D'Arezzo, pp. 124, 127; Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, p. 152; Battista Guarino, "De Ordini Docendi et Studendi," in Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanist Educators, p. 173. St. Augustine appears to have been a favorite medieval author of the humanists. The reason for this is apparent in Bruni's warning to Lady Baptista to shun the writings of the holy men of her own day:

"Let her not for an instant yield to the impulse to look into their writings, which, compared with those of Augustine, are utterly destitute of sound and melodious style, and seem to me to have no attraction whatever."

⁹Eugene F. Rice, Jr., foreword to William Harrison Woodward, Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanist Educators, xv-xvi:

"The principles of the fifteenth-century Italian humanist educators were restored with only minor shifts of emphasis by Erasmus and Juan Luis Vives, the greatest educational theorists of the sixteenth-century, and took firm institutional form in the secondary schools, both Catholic and Protestant of the early modern period. They remained the dominant ideals of education until the end of the nineteenth century."

cational tenets and program made inevitable.

Perhaps the most valuable document in assessing the Renaissance attitude toward medieval education is Francois Rabelais' (c. 1494-1553) The Histories of Gargantua and Pantagruel. The entire work represents a mine of information illustrative of the Renaissance's view of medieval institutions in general. In addition to education, monasticism, the Church, and medieval science and other facets of the Middle Ages, all come under the biting satirical criticism of Rabelais' pen. Rabelais' particular value stems from his penchant for detail in describing the activities of Gargantua and Pantagruel. Where most humanists cast vague aspersions at medieval education, Rabelais gave the names of specific medieval educators and texts which aroused his scorn. Thus, a rather long passage from Gargantua and Pantagruel in which the education Grandgousier provided for Gargantua is described and evaluated is worth quoting:

Accordingly they appointed as his tutor a great doctor and sophist named Thubal Holofernes, who taught him his letters so well that he said them by heart backwards; and he took five years and three months to do that. Then the sophist read to him Donatus, Facetus, Theodolus, and Alanus in Parabolis, which took him thirteen years six months and a fortnight. But note that during all this time he was teaching Gargantua to write the Gothic script, and that he copied out all these books himself, for the art of printing was not yet practiced. Also he generally carried a huge writing desk weighing more than seven thousand hundredweight, the pencil case of which was as big and stout as the great pillars of Ainay, while the ink-horn hung from it on great iron chains, capable of carrying a ton of merchandise.

After this the sophist read him De modis significandi, with the commentaries of Bang-breeze, Scally-wag, Claptrap, Gualehaul, John the Calf, Copper-coin, Flowery-tongue, and a number of others; and this took him more than ten years

and eleven months. And Gargantua knew the book so well that at testing time he repeated it backwards by heart, proving to his mother on his fingers that de modis significandi non erat scientia.

The sophist read him the Compostum, on which he spent sixteen years and two months, at which point his said preceptor died. In the year fourteen-twenty he caught the pox.

After that he had another ol wheezer named Master Jobekin Bridé, who read him Hugutio, Hebrard's Grecimus, the Doctrinal, the Parts of Speech, the Quid est, the Supplementum, Mumble On the Psalms, De moribus in Mensa servandis, Seneca, De quator virtutibus cardinalibus, Passavantus, cum commento, Dormi secure for festivals, and several more works of the same dough; by the reading of which he became as wise as any man baked in an oven.

Meanwhile his father observed that although he was really studying quite well, and spent all his time at his lessons, he was making no progress at all. What was worse, he was becoming quite sawny and simple, all dreamy and doltish.

When Grandgousier complained of this to Don Philippe des Marays, Viceroy of Papeligosse, that gentlemen answered that it was better for the boy to learn nothing than to study such books under such masters. For their learning was mere stupidity, and their wisdom like an empty glove; it bastardized good and noble minds and corrupted all the flower of youth.

"To prove this," said Don Philippe, "take any young person of the present day, who has studied only two years; and if he has not a better judgement, a better command of words, better powers of speech, better manners, and greater ease in company than your son, account me forever a boaster from La Brenne." This proposal greatly pleased Grandgousier, and he ordered it to be carried out.¹⁰

As a result of Don Philippe's comparison, it was made

¹⁰Tr. J. M. Cohen (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1955), pp. 70-71. In dramatizing the faults of medieval education, Rabelais held up to satire the standard educational treatises of the later Middle Ages. Among the identifications that can be made from the above quoted passage are Michael de Morbais' (otherwise known as Modista from the title of his work) De modis significandi which first appeared around 1220. Hebrard (fl. 1212) was known as Graecista from his Grecimus, a metrical work on grammar. Hugutio's (fl. 1200) dictionary contained an especially damning feature in the eyes of the Renaissance thinkers as it ignored classical authority. Donatus, of course, provided the standard Latin grammar which was read throughout the Middle Ages.

manifest that there was a considerable gulf "between the knowledge of your old-time ~~non~~-sensological babblers and the young people." Subsequently, Gargantua was sent off to Paris and presumably to a better, more modern education. In this description of his education under the tutelage of Thubal Holofernes and Jobekin Bridé, Rabelais launched a full-scale attack on the underpinnings of medieval education - or, at least, what he knew of medieval education. Here again we read the complaint that the medieval program of studies took inordinately long (Gargantua's studies under Thubal Holofernes alone consumed forty-five years, ten months, and a fortnight!) and, in the end, accomplished nothing.

In a later passage, Gargantua recounted to his son his educational experiences by way of enjoining Pantagruel to make the best of the opportunities which were not available in his day. Here, the sad state of Gargantua's education, of medieval education, was linked to the prevailing darkness of the entire medieval period and to the barbarian invasions:

The times were not as fit and favorable for learning as they are to-day, and I had no supply of tutors such as you have. Indeed the times were still dark, and mankind was perpetually reminded of the miseries and disasters wrought by those Goths who had destroyed all sound scholarship.¹¹

With mention of the barbarian invasions, the two foci of practically all subsequent adverse criticism of medieval education were established. From within, the manuals and and scholasticism of the Middle Ages made of education a

¹¹Ibid., p. 194.

travesty. From without, the invasions made any kind of learning during the Middle Ages of necessity of a rather rudimentary and sorry sort.

No sampling of Renaissance opinion could ever be complete without a consideration of the two XVth century luminaries of the Renaissance, Desiderius Erasmus (c. 1469-1536) and Juan Luis Vives (1492-1540). Both these men never actually referred to medieval education. However, there were enough elements of medieval education within their own experience to warrant an examination of their reflections on learning.

Erasmus' early education was at the hands of the Brethren of the Common Life whose educational outlook and practices were strongly medieval although the influence of the Italian humanists had begun to affect the Brethren in the latter half of the XVth century.¹² The influence of the

¹²The rapid transition that the Brethren made during the latter half of the XVth century is succinctly stated by Albert Hyma:

"Until the middle of the fifteenth century the Brethren of the Common Life were not affected by the educational theories of the humanists. Their methods remained thoroughly medieval and their textbooks differed not at all from those used in smaller centers of learning. But after 1455 a few of the most progressive brethren came in touch with humanistic principles, while near the close of the century the educators in their midst evinced a rather surprising liking for the teachings of such bold writers as Valla and Ficino. Though it may not be proper to say that the Devotio Moderna absorbed the teachings of the leading humanists, it certainly is true that many brothers openly sided with radical reformers who attacked the papacy, and ridiculed the standard texts used in the schools."

The Youth of Erasmus ("University of Michigan Publications: History and Political Science," vol. X; Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1930), p. 30.

humanists on the Brethren was apparently too feeble in Erasmus' case. In his autobiography, Erasmus wasted little enthusiasm on his early education:

He [Erasmus' father] provided a liberal education for the boy, and sent him to school when scarcely more than four years old; but in his early years he made little progress in that unattractive sort of learning for which he was not born. In his ninth year he was sent to Deventer; his mother followed him to watch over his tender age. That school was still barbarous. The Pater Meus was read over, and the boys had to say their tenses; Ebrardus and Johannes de Garlandia were read aloud.¹³

In this brief passage, Erasmus gave no clue as to why the school was barbarous. A later remark made in the preface of the 1520 edition of his Book Against the Barbarians provides this piece of information: "In my childhood," he wrote, "polite letters were wholly banished from the schools of learning."¹⁴ It was only by a "certain native impulse" that Erasmus was able to escape the barbarism of the schools and be "carried off to the haunts of the Muses, just as if I had been inspired." The Renaissance humanists had an ideal of education which centered on the authors of classical antiquity, on polite letters. Any other kind of education

¹³The Epistles of Erasmus From His Earliest Letters to His Fifty-First Year Arranged in Order of Time, ed. and tr. F. M. Nichols (3 vols.; London: Longmans, Green, and Company, 1901), I, 7. The Pater Meus was a declension exercise (pater meus, patris mei, etc.) which in some form or another is still practiced by Latin classes in today's secondary schools. Ebrardus was mentioned by Rabelais and John de Garland (fl. 1230) was an Englishman who spent most of his life in France. His Synonima and Vocabularum aequivo-
corum interpretatio were very popular in the schools.

¹⁴Quoted by Albert Hyma, p. 183.

which omitted polite letters was, therefore, of necessity, barbaric.

Erasmus wrote several treatises embodying his own educational ideals. In De Ratione Studii, he fulminated against masters who wasted students' time by forcing them to memorize grammatical rules. Learning comes not from rules, he wrote, but "by daily intercourse with those accustomed to express themselves with exactness and refinement, and by copious reading of the best authors."¹⁵ He grudgingly allowed logic a place in the course of studies but only on the stipulation that logical studies be confined to the study of Aristotle:

. . . I prohibit the verbiage of the schools. Do not let us forget that Dialectic is an elusive maiden, a Siren, indeed in quest of whom a man may easily suffer intellectual shipwreck. Not here is the secret of style to be discovered. That lies in the use of the pen. . . .¹⁶

Again, the emphasis was on the cultivation of style, style which was better learned by reading and writing than by memorization and dialectic according to Erasmus.

In another treatise, De Pueris statim ac liberaliter instituendis, Erasmus remarked how the education of his day, influenced by the Middle Ages, fell far short of the ideal presented by antiquity:

¹⁵In William Harrison Woodward, Desiderius Erasmus Concerning the Aim and Method of Education ("Classics in Education," no. 19; New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1964), pp. 163-164.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 165.

What a contrast when we look around to-day! We see boys kept at home in idleness and self-indulgence until they are fourteen or fifteen years of age. They are then sent to some school or other. There, if they are lucky, they gain some touch of grammar, the simpler inflections, the agreement of noun and adjective. They are then supposed to "know" Latin, and are put on to some terrible text in Logic, which will spoil what little good Latin accidence or syntax they have acquired. My own childhood was tortured by logical subtleties which had no reference to anything that was true in fact or sound in expression. Not a few Masters postponed Grammar to Logic and Metaphysic, but found that they had to revert to the rudiments of Latin when their pupils were fast growing up. Great heavens, what a time that was when with vast pretension the verses of John Garland, eked out with amazing commentary were dictated to the class, learnt by heart, and said as repetition! When Florista and the Floretus were set as lessons! Alexander de Villa Dei, compared with such a crowd, is worthy of positive commendation. Again, how much time was spent in sophistries and vain mazes of logic! Further, as to the manner of teaching, what confused methods, what needless toil, characterized instruction.¹⁷

Erasmus' critique of education stands by itself and needs no comment. One can only wonder how it was, in the face of archaic and pernicious standards, that any humanists emerged intact from the schools.

Juan Luis Vives¹⁸ during his short life span wrote

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 220-221. Florista was responsible for a metrical syntax which was especially employed in the Netherlands; Alexander de Villa Dei (fl. 1200) was perhaps the only medieval grammarian favored by the humanists. He wrote a hexameter prose poem which dealt with accidence, syntax, and prosody. Alexander's work was edited by Sintheim of Deventer who was credited by Erasmus for bringing the "first scent of learning" to the school at Deventer. The Epistles of Erasmus, ed. and tr. F. M. Nichols, I, 7.

¹⁸ A good, short introduction to Vives' place in the Renaissance has been provided by Lynn Thorndike, "John Louis Vives: His Attitude To Learning and To Life," Essay in Intellectual History (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1929), pp. 329-342. Thorndike concluded that Vives, as humanist and critic, was of a higher status than Erasmus:
 "he was not only not one of those humanists who

voluminously as a humanist and as a critic of humanism. An examination of his works reveals a different attitude toward the past than that espoused by the majority of humanists. In his two treatises concerned with learning and education in general, De Causis Corruptarum Artium and De Tradensis Disciplinis,¹⁹ Vives, alone of all the humanists, viewed the Middle Ages in a positive light. Not only did he recommend the reading of medieval authors,²⁰ in addition, he traced the problems which beset education to antiquity and to mankind in general than to some catch-all period of chaos and darkness.²¹

flattered princes and toadied to patrons, but further . . . he was a true scholar and citizen of the world. In these respects he is even somewhat superior to Erasmus, whom he resembles in many other respects. If he does not have Erasmus' genius for sly sarcasm and ridicule of human folly, he is perhaps a man of wider reading and of deeper sincerity." (p. 342)

¹⁹Both in Opera Omnia, vol. VI. Valencia: Benedicti Monfort, 1745.

²⁰Most humanist educators when recommending the study of history ended their proposed reading lists with the Roman historians. It is quite eye-opening in light of this to read Vives' list of recommendations which not only included medieval Latin historians such as Bede, Hermann the Lame, and Otto of Freising, but, in addition, such vernacular authors as Saxo Grammaticus, Froissart, Monstrelet, Commines, and Valera Hispanus. Also, unlike Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (see p. 17, above) Vives recommended historians who had written of small nations or single cities. Ibid., De Tradendis Disciplinis, Bk. V, chapter 2.

²¹The causes for the corruption of the arts in his own day Vives felt to be: rivalry among masters, lack of humility, avarice, ambition, and the obscurity of the ancients, notably Aristotle - an obscurity which was compounded by Aristotle's commentators. Ibid., De Causis Corruptarum Artium, Bk. I, chapters 3-4.

From a humanist who thought that a good sentence in French or Spanish was to be preferred to one in corrupt Latin, one might expect a positive treatment of medieval education, a treatment that did not fault the men of the Middle Ages for not being Greeks or Romans. But, here, again, the general lack of knowledge and interest in the Middle Ages made any kind of historical treatment of it an impossibility. Vives seemed to be rather open-minded toward the medieval period; however, nowhere in his educational treatises did he concern himself with medieval education.²²

In sum, no historiography of Renaissance opinion toward medieval education is possible. From the various autobiographical writings and educational treatises it is possible, however, to piece together the general outlines of the humanists' stance toward medieval education. This can only be done by conceding the assumption that the education of the Renaissance period was still strongly medieval. Such a concession is necessary because the humanists did not reflect in any meaningful way on what we have come to know as the medieval period. Rather their historical observations and critiques were confined to their own era and experiences

²²In the De Causis Corruptarum Artium, Bk. II, chapter 2, Vives did list medieval grammarians in much the same vein as did Rabelais and Erasmus:

"... Hugutio, Papias, Catholicon, Brachylogus, Graecismus, Johannes de Garlandia et alia ridicula nomina, quae docerent suam quisque patriam, non Latinam linguam."

or to an immediately preceding generation. These observations were juxtaposed with some ideal taken from their notion of classical antiquity, the net result being that the medieval period received only vague and skimpy treatment from the humanists. Thus, any picture of medieval education which we can ascribe to the Renaissance is only one indirectly and by implication.

CHAPTER II

THE ENLIGHTENMENT

AND THE ROMANTIC REVOLT (1600-1850)

From the middle of the XVIth century and especially after the beginning of the XVIIth century, European scholars poured out a spate of tomes treating of education in its various aspects.¹ The majority of works were written by scholars attached to the universities whose history they commemorated or by scholars who were in the patronage of the aristocracy and were thus encouraged to write of a particular family's educational and cultural works and of a particular area's educational development. Aristocrats of all ranks during this period of enlightenment felt it their duty to subsidize men whose task it was, in effect, to act as erudite ornaments to a particular dynastic house. Their histories rarely went beyond the bounds of a narrative

¹One good index to the amount of historical literature written on the subject of education during this period is Christopher Heumann's appendix, "Bibliotheca Historica Academicii," to the 1739 edition of Hermann Conring's De Antiquitatibus Academicis. At the end of Conring's series of essays, Heumann attached an annotated bibliography which recommended the most important works dealing with education in general, education in specific countries, and particular educational institutions, primarily universities. The list was 212 pages long! See, De Antiquitatibus Academicis: Dissertationes Septem Una Cum Eius Supplementis. Recognovit Christopher Heumann. Gottingen: Sumtibus Bibliopoli Academici Privilegiati, 1739.

chronology of the founding and history of an individual institution. Yet, in this the savants of the period exercised a knowledge of the medieval sources that is both surprising and fresh in light of the almost complete ignorance of the XVth and early XVIth centuries toward the Middle Ages.. Also, there was no effort among these men to ridicule and castigate the men of the Middle Ages as others had and have continued to do, but rather, for the first time a segment of scholarly society thought that there was something historically worthwhile to describe in the Middle Ages.

One example of this kind of scholarship is Hermann Conring's (1606-1681) De Antiquitatibus Academicis which he first published in 1651 and later again in 1674 with supplementary notes.² Of the seven dissertations assembled in this book, the third, "In hac de ortu Academiæ agitur,

²The full citation for this work can be found in the previous note..

In addition to Conring's book, there were several other important studies of medieval education written during this period which, however, were unavailable to me: Middel-dorpius, Academiæ Orbis Christiani Libri Duo, Cologne, 1567; Jean Mabillon, Traité des études monastiques, Paris, 1692; Jean Launoy, De scholis celebrioribus seu a Carolo Magno, seu post eundem Carolum per Occidentem, Paris: Martin, 1672; Claude Joly, Traité historique des écoles épiscopales et ecclésiastiques, Paris: Muguet, 1678; Hermann Itter, De Honoribus Academicis Liber, Frankfurt, 1685; Johann Lorenz von Mosheim, De Schola Palatinum veterum Francorum regnum, Halae, 17--; J. H. Stuss, De prim. coenobiorum schol., Nordhusae, 1728; Johanne Georg Hagelgans, Orbis Literatus Academicus Germanico-Europæus, Frankfurt a/M: Hocker, 1737; G. Keuffel, Historia originis et progressus scholarum inter Christianos, Helmstadt, 1743; Cesare Bulæus (=Du Boulay, =Duboullai), Historia Universitas Parisiensis, 2 vols., Frankfurt a/M: Minerva GmbH, 1966 (Originally, 1665).

nominatim Oxoniensis, Cantabrigiensis, Parisiensis, Bononiensis, & Salernitanae,"³ has the greatest bearing on medieval education. Conring's aim in this address was to disclose the origins of European schools - origins which he confessed "valde latet in obscuro"⁴ and which his previous addresses, dealing with remoter antiquity, had overlooked.

Beginning with the Vth century, Conring noted that the flood of Germanic peoples into the Roman Empire had almost completely eradicated professors and public schools "per omnem illum terrarum tractum." True, there was a Cassiodorus and a Boethius and under the Ostrogothic rulers of Italy there were schools of grammar, rhetoric, and law, "sed dubio procul per fuerunt rudia omnia."⁵ The decisive

³Ibid., pp. 65-109. The first and longest address, "In qua de statu scholarum ubique terrarum ac gentium inde ab antiquissima memoria usque ad academiarum in Europa artium agitur," is a general history of education which dealt successively with education among the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Gauls, the Eastern Roman Empire, the Moslems and the Jews before it considered medieval education: "Atque huius quidem primum initium factum est [de occidentalium scholarum nova origine] Lutetiae Parisorum auspiciis Caroli, cui ulli alii, virtus, pietas ac res gestae Magni cognomentum merito indiderunt." (p. 49; italics in the original) In addition, Alfred's founding of Oxford was praised before a list of European universities and the story of their foundations ended the essay. Essays V and VI traced the development of the legal status of the schools and emphasized the privileges and immunities given to scholars and students, especially by Frederick II. (pp. 141-191)

⁴Ibid., p. 66.

⁵Ibid., p. 67.

moment in Western education Conring felt was the work of St. Benedict and the institution of his Rule throughout the West.⁶ The monastic fathers in the East had their sacred schools and there was Honorius' foundation at Lerins; however, with the work of Benedict and his followers all the old monasteries were not only reformed but were given new constitutions - constitutions which made of the monasteries both schools of piety and schools of learning. Soon, it was impossible anywhere in the West for anyone throughout the VIth, VIIth, and VIIIth centuries to find a book which did not reflect monastic influence.⁷ Despite the monastic schools however there were as yet no philosophy, no Roman law, no polite letters, no Christian doctrine, no medical arts, no professional chairs to be found anywhere in the West for more than 200 years.⁸ The light of erudition remained in the East, specifically in Constantinople, while Western learning suffered constant harassment at the hands of the barbarians.

The IXth century and the Carolingian educational reforms vastly improved the status of Western education. Under the Carolingians⁹ the number and quality of monastic schools increased as did the number of their distinguished

⁶Ibid..

⁷Ibid., p. 69.

⁸Ibid., pp. 69-70.

⁹Ibid., "Supplementum XXXII," pp. 283-293.

alumni.¹⁰ In addition, a new kind of school, based on the household schools of Basil in the East and Augustine in Africa, was instituted. These cathedral schools, like the monastic schools, were grounded in the Rule. Under the authority of Charlemagne and Louis the Pious, every episcopal see had a "canonicorum collegio"¹¹ adjoined to it.

Conring's sketch of the history of the monastic and episcopal schools was designed as background for the proper subject of his address, the origins of the public schools.¹² It is to this third type of school that Conring devoted the major portion of his dissertation. In this section, he discussed the questions surrounding the founding of the universities at Oxford, Cambridge, Paris, Ticino, Osnabrück, returned to Paris to consider the greatness of that university, and finished with short treatments of Bologna and Salerno. Wisely deciding that the true origins of the academies of his own day could not be traced to a single source,¹³ Conring concentrated on outlining the contributions of men instrumental in the foundation of particular schools and the disciplines for which each school had achieved

¹⁰Ibid., p. 70.

¹¹Ibid., p. 72.

¹²It is difficult to determine the exact meaning of the term "public schools" (schola publica) as it is employed by Conring and other historians of this period. Whatever the exact meaning of the terminology, the public schools after the year 1000 perceptibly began to eclipse the monastic and cathedral schools. Ibid., "Supplementum XLV," pp. 331-332.

¹³Ibid., p. 74.

fame. He conceded that Alfred and Charlemagne were somehow influential in the establishment of the Universities of Oxford and Paris, but exhibited more reserve in questioning whether Charlemagne founded all the universities whose origins were attributed to him. The account of the universities was written from a legal point of view with more importance attached to popes, kings, and emperors who granted charters, privileges, and immunities to schools than to the masters, students, and the schools themselves. For all the impressiveness of Conring's work, his knowledge of medieval sources and his lack of antipathy toward the Middle Ages, one leaves his work somewhat disappointed in its fundamentally antiquarian nature.

Jean Baptiste Cr  vier's (1633-1765) history of the University of Paris¹⁴ is a good example of the kinds of histories written about that university and other European universities. Although Paris perhaps had a more spectacular history as a university town than many others, the histories of all were of the same mold: more histories of institutions than of institutions of education and learning.

Cr  vier wrote his work in order to bring up to date and rectify portions of a previous history of the university written by Duboullai. Cr  vier in large measure followed Duboullai's work and the Histoire Litt  raire de la France differing with them only on certain points of chronology

¹⁴Histoire de l'universit   de Paris depuis son origine jusqu'en l'ann  e 1600. 7 vols. Paris: Desaint et Saillant, 1761.

and detail.¹⁵ Cr  vier, too, had his own opinion about Charlemagne's part in the establishment of the university. If the university did not originate with the Carolingian's re-establishment of learning, then it certainly grew out of Charlemagne's Palace School:¹⁶ "C'est cette   cole que nous devons considerer avec le plus d'attention, puisque c'est a'elle que l'University de Paris rapporte son origine."¹⁷ The crucial point concerning the relationship between the palace school and the university was the question of whether the school was fixed or whether it moved with the court. Duboullai, in Cr  vier's opinion, had too hastily opted for placing the Palace School at Paris from the reign of Charlemagne.¹⁸ All that Cr  vier was willing to concede was that the School probably became fixed at Paris during the reign of Charles the Bald.¹⁹

Whatever the ultimate origins of the University of Paris, there was no doubt on Cr  vier's part that the splendor and fame of the school at Paris dated from the twelfth century. Until that time, the school at Reims under Gerbert, that of Chartres under Fulbert, and that of Bec under Lanfranc and Anselm, all strongly contested Paris' place as the most populous and most fecund school.²⁰ The

¹⁵Ibid., I, preface.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 13-14.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 26.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 46.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 49.

immediate cause of the University's rise to fame was the vast number of students attracted to Paris by Abelard's controversies and reputation. As a result of Abelard's academic battles, especially those with William of Champeaux, three new schools were founded. However, these schools, lacking the quality of a "corps ensemble", could not be considered as constituting a university.²¹ Nevertheless, the movement toward a university was well on the way. After Abelard touched off the original spark, more and better masters and students came to Paris to study until they became quite unmanageable:

Ainsi le concours infini d'auditeurs, & le trop grand nombre des maîtres, attesté par les écrivains du tems, étoient des occasions de confusion & de désordre. Et c'est ce qui obligea l'Ecole à se former en compagnie, afin que cette vive et nombreuse jeunesse put être gouvernée par une discipline commune, & que les maîtres se soutinssent mutuellement, & gardassent la paix entre eux s'astreignant à des devoirs respectifs les uns à l'égard des autres. Aussi est-il prouvé qu'avant la fin du douzième siècle, qui est celui de la grande multiplication des disciples & des maîtres à Paris, l'Ecole saisoit corps.²²

After this, the finishing touches were given to the full-fledged establishment of the University in the XIIIth century when the University acquired the legal instrumentalities, the offices, privileges, and regimen necessary for the functioning of a corporate entity.²³ From this point, Crévier went on to list and applaud the

²⁰Ibid., p. 111.

²¹Ibid., pp. 122-123.

²²Ibid., p. 253.

²³Ibid., pp. 276-277.

various masters and rectors of the University whose work lent additional fame and prestige to it.

Enough has been recounted of Cr  vier's treatment of one aspect of medieval education to indicate the tenor of so many works dedicated to the genealogies of XVIIth and XVIIIth century universities. They were not so much concerned with education in the medieval period as they were with establishing some renowned base in the Middle Ages for their own institution. In doing this, men like Cr  vier represented a segment of Enlightenment thought which did not conceive of the Middle Ages as totally dark. The universities did not spring full-blown into the XVIIth century and for this reason historians were forced to consider the Middle Ages and medieval education in a positive, constructive light if only from the aspect of origins, proto-origins at that.

A less charitable view of the Middle Ages and, consequently, of medieval education was taken by other historians of this period who in their general historical surveys readily pounced on the ignorance of the Middle Ages and the corruption and indolence of the "popish" clergy who perpetrated the darkness of that period. It was primarily this stance toward the Middle Ages rather than that typified by Cr  vier, which was conveyed to the majority of XVIIth and XVIIIth century readers. The specialized histories of education tended to circulate among a select scholarly audience, whereas the more general histories of

the medieval period enjoyed a wider circulation. One such influential work was Johann Lorenz von Mosheim's (1694-1755) An Ecclesiastical History.²⁴ Mosheim's book, published the year of his death, dominated opinion about the state of learning in the Middle Ages for a century. It underwent several editions in languages other than its original Latin and was popular even in colonial America.

The plan of An Ecclesiastical History is a century-by-century analysis of the "progresses and calamities" which befell Christianity from its foundation until the XVIth century Reformation. Each century received a chapter in Mosheim's schema and each chapter was divided between the "external" and "internal" history of the Church. Education and the state of learning were subsumed under the heading of internal history along with such matters as the evolution of liturgy, theology, and Church organization. The external history of the Church was comprised of the history of Christianity in general, that is, of political and civil history. That Mosheim's is a standard "dark ages" treatment of the Middle Ages is made obvious by a brief review of his "century-chapters." As the Middle Ages progressed (or retrogressed?) each of Mosheim's chapters became more and more compressed evidently indicating that there was hardly anything of worth to narrate in those particular centuries. The VIIth, VIIIth,

²⁴Tr. Archibald Maclaine. 2 vols. New edition. New York: Harper and Bros., 1844.

IXth, and Xth centuries' chapters are the skimpiest in the two volumes on An Ecclesiastical History. When the state of Christianity and its culture rebounded in the XIth century, the chapters entered into more detail and eventually exceeded the length and scope of the chapters dedicated to the first ~~six~~ centuries of Christian history.

For Mosheim, the barbarian invasions did not obliterate education and learning in the West. Rather, worse than this, the barbarians caused knowledge and public instruction to be confined to the priests and monks, the worst possible kinds of people for such tasks, under whose aegis learning degenerated to

an enormous phantom of barbarous erudition. They indeed kept public schools, and instructed the youth in what they called the seven liberal arts; but these, as we learn from Augustin's account of them, consisted only of a certain number of dry, subtile, and useless precepts, and were consequently more adopted to load and perplex the memory, than to improve and strengthen the judgement: so that toward the conclusion of this century [the Vth], the sciences were almost totally extinguished; at least, what remained of them was no more than a shadowy form, without solidity or consistence.²⁵

The priests and the monks were not entirely blameful though. In them and in their cathedral and monastic schools, the liberal arts and the sciences found a refuge, "such as it was," to which "we owe the preservation and possession of all the ancient authors, sacred and profane, who escaped in this manner the savage fury of Gothic ignorance and are happily transmitted to our times."²⁶ The work of medieval men

²⁵Ibid., I, 135-136.

²⁶Ibid., p. 160.

then amounted to no more than the lesser of two evils, albeit a fortunate evil.

Mosheim's work need not detain us longer except to point up several characteristics of this kind of treatment of medieval education. One trait could be characterized as the "night and day " approach to the Middle Ages.. Invariably, the "dark ages" were painted in the deepest gloom with the most despairing colors. Yet, paradoxically, a Charlemagne or a Gerbert emerged somehow onto to scene and were celebrated for his genius and refinement. Is it too much to ask where a Charlemagne and a Gerbert came from if conditions were so universally prejudicial toward learning of whatever sort?

Another characteristic that we might note in passing is the use of a deus ex machina, as it were, when narrating the educational history of the West. In the histories of the Enlightenment period it becomes obvious that medieval men were hopelessly mired in ignorance and ensnared by "the ignominious stupidity and dissoluteness of those sacred orders which had been appointed as the guardians of truth and learning,"²⁷ despite the Charlemagnes and Alfreds, the Alcuins and Gerberts. It becomes equally obvious that they would have remained in such a state were it not for Eastern learning which came into the West once with the Arabs and a second time with the Greeks just before

²⁷Ibid., p. 240.

the Renaissance. What makes the emphasis on outside saving elements rescuing Western learning particularly objectionable is that the action between the two cultures, Western and Eastern, is viewed only as one-way. Mosheim wrote:

However excessive this veneration for the learned Arabians may have been, it must be owned that all the knowledge, whether of physic, astronomy, philosophy, or mathematics, which flourished in Europe from the tenth century, was originally derived from them: and that the Spanish Saracens, in a more particular manner, may be looked upon as the fathers of European philosophy.²⁸

The image of the father from the East bringing forth a European child neglects entirely the part played by the Europeans in the reception of Eastern learning. It was as if the Europeans passively acquiesced to the Arabian influence.

One more characteristic of the "dark ages" approach to the Middle Ages is the rather sudden and jolting progress those ages do make once the darkness has been banished. For Mosheim it was the conversion of the Normans that wrought the almost immediate reawakening of Europe:

The reception of Christianity had polished and civilized, in an extraordinary manner, the rugged minds of the valiant Normans. For those fierce warriors, who, under the darkness of paganism had manifested the utmost aversion to all branches of knowledge and every kind of instruction, distinguished themselves after their conversion by their ardent application to the study of religion and the pursuits of learning. This vehement desire of knowledge, that increased from day to day, and became at length, the predominant passion of the politest European nations, produced many happy effects.²⁹

And in the XIIIth century,

²⁸Ibid., p. 242.

²⁹Ibid., p. 260.

In the western world the pursuit of knowledge was now carried on with incredible emulation and ardour; and all branches of science were studied with the greatest application and industry.³⁰

As with the unexplained culture-heroes and the introduction of Arabian learning into the West, this characteristic of the "dark ages" theory of medieval intellectual life simply does not account for the history it purports to relate. The sudden appearance of men of genius in an age of ignorance, the rapid and complacent absorption of advanced learning, and the overnight revivification of European intellectual life all contribute to give the lie to the "dark ages" theory. Even if the facts of the theory's proponents, such as the genius and learning of Charlemagne or Alfred, are adjusted, their notion of the "dark ages" yet remains incredible. One reason why such a theory has long remained attractive is, I believe, because the historians of the "dark ages" neglected to treat adequately the bedrock of European intellectual history which for centuries were those monastic and cathedral schools whose only merit in the eyes of the majority of Enlightenment historians was the preservation of ancient texts.

Two greater luminaries of Enlightenment historiography than Mosheim, Voltaire and Gibbon, had little to write of medieval education. They both approached the Middle Ages from the aspect of its "darkness" and, thus, little of their energy or love was spent on medieval intellectual history let

³⁰Ibid., p. 304.

alone medieval education.

If Voltaire's (1694-1778) attitude toward the Middle Ages could be epitomized by a single word, that word would be his oft-repeated sauvage. For Voltaire, even the appearance of a Charlemagne on the intellectual scene was dampened by the prevailing savagery:

Les sciences et les beaux arts ne pouvaient avoir que des commencements bien faibles dans ces vastes pays tout sauvages encore.³¹

Voltaire, unlike many other historians of his period, was consistent in his attitude toward medieval education and intellectual life. Where others celebrated the XIIth and XIIIth century awakening, Voltaire wrote instead,

On passa, dans ce XIIIe siècle, de l'ignorance sauvage à l'ignorance scolastique. Albert, surnommé le Grand, enseignait les principes du chaud, du froid, du sec, et de l'humide; il enseignait aussi la politique suivant les règles de l'astrologie et de l'influence des astres, et la morale suivant la logique d'Aristote.³²

Edward Gibbon (1737-1794) perhaps gave the classic expression to the "dark ages" theory of the Middle Ages. Simply put, all wisdom and learning resided in the East after the fall of the Empire in the West. The Renaissance and reawakening came only with the introduction of classical literature into the West in the carriages of the natives of Thessalonica and Constantinople who fled the terror and oppression of Turkish arms and escaped "to a land of freedom, curiosity, and wealth."³³ However,

³¹Essai sur les moeurs, I, 349 (Full citation, page 7, n. 5)

³²Ibid., p. 638. (Italics in the original)

³³The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire (3 vols.;

Before the arrival of classic literature the barbarians in Europe were immersed in ignorance; and their vulgar tongues were marked with the rudeness and poverty of their manners.³⁴

In a similiar vein with Voltaire and Gibbon was William Robertson's (1721-1793) A View of the Progress of Society in Europe.³⁵ This short essay was intended to introduce the Scottish historian's larger work, The History of Charles the Fifth. Paradoxically, it was the small essay which received greater acclaim than the main work. In A View of the Progress of Society in Europe, Robertson was critical and harsh toward the Middle Ages and especially toward the role that the Church, her monks and priests, played in that period. Schools and education in the Middle Ages were for Robertson a source of wonder:

Fruitless and indirected as these [scholastic] speculations were, their novelty roused and their boldness interested the human mind. The ardour with which men pursued these uninviting studies was astonishing. Genuine philosophy was never cultivated, in any enlightened age, with more zeal. Schools, upon the model of those instituted by Charlemagne, were opened in every cathedral, and almost every monastery of note.³⁶

Beyond this, medieval education received scant attention from Robertson. At one point he stated that "the establishment of colleges or universities is a remarkable era in literary history."³⁷ After that promising sentence, he

New York: The Modern Library, 1932), I, 720.

³⁴Ibid., p. 725.

³⁵In vol. I of The History of Charles the Fifth. 2 vols. New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1860.

³⁶Ibid., I, 72.

³⁷Ibid., p. 251.

proceeded to describe the workings of the universities rather than to communicate to his readers why anything such as the establishment of a college or university should be remarkable..

Other than the specialized educational histories of the period, various literary histories dealt more with medieval education than did Mosheim, Voltaire, Gibbon, or Robertson.. The literary histories were, generally, less critical toward the Middle Ages than the period's general histories and more concerned with the topic of education. The schools were often the seed-beds for literary productions and, discounting oral literature, the schools provided the only audiences for medieval authors..

The literary histories, like the general histories, exerted much influence and had a wide reading public. Two treatments of literature stand out as probably the most often quoted and authoritative of the Enlightenment period. The less well-known of the two today is a collection of essays by Ludovico Muratori (1672-1750). Muratori in his essays, collected in the six volume Antiquitates Italicae Medii Aevi,³⁸ touched on practically every aspect of life in medieval Italy. Two of the essays, "De Literarum Statu, Neglecta et Cultura in Italia Post Barbaros in Eam Invectos usque ad Annum Christi Millesium Centesium: Dissertatio

³⁸ Mediolani: Ex Typographia Societates Palatinae in Regia Curia, 1740..

XLIII,"³⁹ and "De Literarum Fortuna in Italia Post Annum Christi MC. Et De Academiarum sive Gymnasiorum Ereptione: Dissertatio XLIV,"⁴⁰ dealt with the state of Italian literature during the Middle Ages and were widely quoted by both antagonists and protagonists of medieval intellectual history. The reason for this becomes apparent upon examining Muratori's work. Muratori's essays were remarkable not so much for what he said, but rather for the enormous amount of source material Muratori wove into his narrative.⁴¹ For subsequent writers, Muratori was to be a mine not only of scholarly opinion, but, more, of original sources. His treatment of medieval education, however, never advanced beyond the stage of listing schools founded and the quotation of pertinent medieval sources illustrative of a particular school's early history. Muratori took particular care to defend Italian medieval culture and in this respect may be considered as outside the camp of the "dark age" historians. Italy did, Muratori showed, have schools of some sort, as the sources indicate, and Charlemagne did, significantly, draw some of the men to staff his court school from Italy.

The second influential literary history of the Enlightenment period was begun in the years just before the

³⁹Ibid., III, cols. 809-881.

⁴⁰Ibid., III, cols. 881-999.

⁴¹For example, in order to show the influence of scholars from the British Isles on Italian learning, Muratori included in one of his essays four pages full of the catalogue of Bobbio's library. Ibid.

close of Muratori's life. Beginning approximately in mid-XVIIIth century, the Maurists under the direction of Dom Antoine Rivet de la Grange (1633-1749) began publication of the Histoire littéraire de la France.⁴² Each volume in this series is given over to a particular century and a full list of "French" authors with their biographies and a detailed resume of their works occupies each volume. Unlike the chapters on the Middle Ages in Mosheim's An Ecclesiastical History, the volumes in the Histoire littéraire devoted to the medieval centuries are no less full than the volumes for other centuries. The Maurists tapped almost every bishop, priest, and monk who wrote anything and included him in their collection. The entire work is still staggering today and remains of some use despite the drawbacks of a century-by-century compilation. For this study the relevant portion of the Histoire littéraire de la France is the introductory essay which prefaces each century division and describes, in general, the state of learning for that century.

In addition to giving every cathedral and monastic school in medieval France some notice, the Histoire littéraire had a favorable attitude toward medieval education in general. For the Maurists, no matter how unfavorable civil and political events were to learning in the Middle Ages, the schools of France always performed creditable service. The Maurists' justification for this judgment becomes evident in the following quote:

⁴²Nouvelle édition par M. Paulin. 16 vols. Paris: Victor Palme, 1865-1892.

Pour juger du mérite de ces Écoles, et du soin que les Moines ont pris de cultiver les lettres dans les temps les plus déplorable, il suffit de savoir qu'en tous les temps, mais sur-tout en ce siècle-ci, [the Vith] et les six suivants, ils ont fourni à l'Eglise de France en particulier un nombre prodigieux de sçavants Evêques, et donné à la Republique des lettres une nuée de célèbres Ecrivains.⁴³

Obviously, one must accept the position that there were a prodigious number of learned bishops and a "cloud" of renowned writers in the Middle Ages in order to appreciate the cathedral and monastic schools as the Maurists did. Most historians of this period, however, did not view medieval bishops and writers in the same light as did the Maurists. For the majority of commentators the bishops were "rude" and "indolent" (not to mention being part of the Romish conspiracy to reduce mankind to a kind of ecclesiastical servitude) and the writers were slavishly imitative and sterile. If one can accept the notion that men of some learning and ability were produced in the Middle Ages, then one must inevitably agree with the Maurists that the schools were doing something and that they did it well. This latter position seems to me to be the more historically realistic especially when we remember that the "indolent" bishops and "imitative" writers were prejudged by the biases and standards of another age.

The basic attitude of the Maurists, then, I think was perhaps the most fruitful to emerge in this period vis-a-vis medieval education. There was among the Maurists a

⁴³Ibid., III, 34.

tendency to over-emphasize the learnedness of churchmen (a learnedness which seemed always to be tempered by a note of sanctity and piety) just as the "dark age" historians had been too eager to condemn the barbarity and ignorance of the same churchmen. Also, the Maurists were susceptible to the general notion of historical writing of the time and were content merely to list schools and teachers and to describe what was taught rather than to relate the schools and education in general to the work and position of the sociological bloc they isolated as the finest products of medieval education: the bishops. However, despite certain lacunae and over-statements, I think the approach toward the schools of the Middle Ages which emphasizes their function in their own society to be a more fruitful one than one which emphasizes the schools solely as a function of the Charlemagnes, Alfreds, Gerberts, and Abelards of the Middle Ages.

To balance the account of literary histories, short mention should be made of another such history which continued to be popular for a century after its original publication and which, unfortunately, was more literary than historical..

In his The History of English Poetry From the Close of the Eleventh to the Commencement of the Eighteenth Century, Thomas Warton (1723-1790) included an essay "On the Introduction of Learning into England."⁴⁴ In it we

⁴⁴See p. 6, n. 3, above, for the complete citation.

learn that "among the disasters introduced by these irresistible barbarians, the most calamitous seems to have been the destruction of those arts which the Romans still continued so successfully to cultivate in their capital, and which they had universally communicated to their conquered provinces,"⁴⁵ and that in the Middle Ages learning in general was so sparse that Pope Martin in the VIIIth century had to send to the remotest parts of Germany for books for the papal library and that the books, once acquired, were deemed such valuable possessions that their alienation was absolutely forbidden.⁴⁶ Charlemagne, in addition to propagating Arabian literature and founding "the universities of Bononia, Pavia, Paris, and Osnabrück"⁴⁷ employed Alcuin "to regulate the lectures and discipline of the universities."⁴⁸ The general view of medieval education given Warton's readers was at its "best" when describing the XIth century revolution in education:

Towards the close of the tenth century, an event took place which gave a new and very fortunate turn to the state of letters in France and Italy. A little before that time, there were no schools in Europe but those which belonged to the monasteries or episcopal churches; and the monks were almost the only masters employed to educate the youth in the principles of sacred and profane erudition. But at the commencement of the eleventh century, many learned persons of the laity as well as of the clergy, undertook in the

⁴⁵Ibid., I, ciii.

⁴⁶Ibid., cvi, cix-cx.

⁴⁷Ibid., cxxx.

⁴⁸Ibid., cxxx-cxxxi. "He [Alcuin] first advised Bede to write his ecclesiastical history of England."

most capital cities of France and Italy this most important change. The Latin versions of the Greek philosophers from the Arabic had now become so frequent and common, as to fall into the hands of the people; and many of these new preceptors having travelled into Spain with a design of studying in the Arabic schools, and comprehending in their course of instruction those numerous and useful branches of science than the monastic teachers were acquainted with, communicated their knowledge in a better method, and taught in a much more full, perspicuous, solid, and rational manner. These and other beneficial effects, arising from this practice of admitting others besides ecclesiastics to the profession of letters, and the education of youth, were imported into England by means of the Norman conquest.⁴⁹

One group of writers, the educational theorists who provided valuable information on the Renaissance humanists' attitude toward medieval education, has been thus far absent from this examination. However, the fact of the matter is that the most noted Enlightenment educational theorists, Michel de Montaigne, Montesquieu, and Rousseau, for example, had little of significance to say of the Middle Ages. Their concern was to reform educational practice as it was in their own day and although they would have had little sympathy for medieval educational concepts, that period was of no concern to them.

In the period approximately from 1600 to 1800, important advances were made in the study of medieval education. In contrast to the previous, so-called Renaissance period, this later period exhibited a much greater, if not unprecedented, interest in the Middle Ages in general. Instead of the vague references that the humanists made toward the Middle Ages, we have seen that the Enlightenment period

⁴⁹Ibid., cxli.

devoted entire volumes and multi-volume collections to various aspects of medieval history. In addition, the medieval period was given a hearing in the general and literary histories of the time. The wider interest in the Middle Ages brought with it, of course, interest in the schools and education of that period. The preponderance of material written on medieval education was in the form of countless histories of universities and academies, although the general histories and the histories of letters gave significant attention to medieval education.

If the Middle Ages and medieval education received a wider press in this period, that is not to say that they received a better press. The scholarly works devoted strictly to some aspect of education evinced a regard for medieval source materials that was fresh and enlightened. However, their treatments of education and schools bordered on the antiquarian and their main concerns, in the end, were not so much for medieval education as they were, in most cases, for quibbling questions about certain aspects of medieval education.

Other types of historical writing treated of education in the Middle Ages within the context of that age's prevailing darkness and "leaden-gray skies."

Both these treatments served to establish the general pattern within which the history of medieval education, with notable exceptions, was to be studied for more than a century and a half after 1800. The fundamental

concerns for many historians who turned their attention toward medieval learning and education would still be the problems of who founded what school at what particular point in time. Others with an anti-medieval or anti-clerical bent (or both) would still consult the history of medieval education only for the purpose of demonstrating the backward condition from whence civilization and education had escaped.

Some, though, in the Enlightenment period and later began to study medieval education outside the confines of the prejudices of this Enlightenment pattern. Although not writing directly of education, two men in the two century period I have surveyed above gave expression to new attitudes toward human events, especially those of the mind, which promised much for the future study of medieval intellectual and educational history.

In his essay, "Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences," David Hume (1711-1776) struck out against those who interpreted the history of intellectual events in terms of the few celebrities or culture-heroes of a particular age. For Hume, historical events could either be understood as the products of a particular cause or, on the other hand, as products of chance.

What depends on a few persons is, in a great measure, to be ascribed to chance, or secret and unknown causes: what arises from a great number, may often be accounted for by determinate and known causes.⁵⁰

⁵⁰Essay XIV in Essays Moral, Political, and Literary (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 112.

Faulty history is written when historians "assign causes which never existed, and reduce what is merely contingent to stable and universal principles."⁵¹ In regard to the progress of learning and of the arts and sciences in general, one is first inclined to attribute such progress to chance, to those single, spectacular elements that so obviously highlight the advances being made.

But there is a reason which induces me not to ascribe the matter altogether to chance. Though the persons who cultivate the sciences with such astonishing success as to attract the admiration of posterity, be always few in number in all nations and ages, it is impossible but a share of the same spirit and genius must antecedently be diffused throughout the people among whom they arise, in order to produce, form, and cultivate, from their earliest infancy, the taste and judgement of those eminent writers. The mass cannot be altogether insipid from which such fine spirits are extracted.⁵²

Hume's observation would seem obvious to most to-day. That it was not so obvious to a previous age's historians has been, I trust, made clear above. Hume, in the above excerpt, was indicating, perhaps only feebly and by implication, a new direction in the study of intellectual history, a direction which gave for the first time some importance to the sociological aspect of man's intellectual history.

In quite another context, Robert Jacques Turgot (1727-1781), the French economist, in his Discours sur l'histoire universelle made an observation which, again, at first seems as obvious as Hume's. We have seen above how attractive

⁵¹Ibid., p. 114.

⁵²Ibid., pp. 114-115.

1. The first step in the process of the scientific method is to ask a question. This question should be based on observation and should be specific and measurable. For example, "Does the amount of water affect the growth of plants?"

2. The second step is to form a hypothesis. A hypothesis is a statement that can be tested. It should be based on the question and should be a prediction of the outcome. For example, "If the amount of water increases, then the growth of the plants will also increase."

3. The third step is to design an experiment. The experiment should be designed to test the hypothesis. It should include a control group and an experimental group. For example, "I will grow two groups of plants. One group will receive 100 ml of water per day, and the other group will receive 200 ml of water per day. I will measure the height of the plants every week for four weeks."

4. The fourth step is to collect data. Data is the information that is gathered during the experiment. It should be recorded in a table or graph. For example, "I will record the height of the plants in centimeters. I will also record the date and the amount of water given to each group."

5. The fifth step is to analyze the data. This step involves looking at the data and seeing if it supports the hypothesis. For example, "I will calculate the average height of the plants in each group. I will then compare the two averages to see if there is a significant difference."

6. The sixth step is to draw a conclusion. A conclusion is a statement that summarizes the results of the experiment. It should be based on the data and should answer the original question. For example, "The data shows that the plants that received 200 ml of water per day grew taller than the plants that received 100 ml of water per day. Therefore, the hypothesis is supported."

7. The seventh step is to communicate the results. This step involves sharing the results of the experiment with others. It can be done through a presentation, a poster, or a written report. For example, "I will write a report about the experiment and present it to my class."

8. The eighth step is to repeat the experiment. This step is important because it helps to confirm the results. For example, "I will repeat the experiment with a different group of plants to see if the results are the same."

• The scientific method is a process that helps us to answer questions about the world around us.

• It is a systematic way of thinking and doing science.

the "dark ages" approach to the Middle Ages was throughout the Enlightenment period. The notion itself was adduced to characterize the result on intellectual affairs of barbarians, warfare, feudalism, and corrupt and ignorant clergy, among a host of other elements of decadence. The unstated assumption behind this notion of the "dark ages" is that all these agents of ignorance and corruption made impossible any learning and intellectual history and, therefore, the historian need not bother to study or explore periods of chaos and "darkness" as they contain nothing of value to him. Turgot, on the other hand, thought otherwise:

Il ne faut pas croire que, dans les temps d'affaiblissement et de décadence, ni même dans ceux de barbarie et d'obscurité qui succèdent quelquefois aux siècles le plus brillants, l'esprit humain ne fasse aucun progrès. Les arts mécaniques, le commerce, le usages de la vie civile, font naître une foule de réflexions qui se répondent parmi les hommes, qui se mêlent à l'éducation, et dont la masse grossit toujours en passant de génération à génération. Ils préparent lentement, mais utilement et avec certitude, des temps plus heureux: semblables à ces rivières qui se cachent sous terre pendant une partie de leur cours, mais qui réparaissent plus loin, grossies d'une grande quantité d'eaux qui se sont filtrées de toutes les parties du sol que le courant déterminé par la pente naturelle a traversé sans le montrer.⁵³

Although we know today that the designation "dark age" is devoid of any real meaning, in Turgot's day it was synonymous for many with the Middle Ages and the sterility of that period. In that context, Turgot's point that even

⁵³In Oeuvres de Turgot, Eugene Daire (ed.) (2 vols.; nouvelle édition; Paris: Guillaumin, 1844), II, 666.

the most obscure times are never stagnant and that nothing never happens in history, was ahead of its times. It indicated that in at least one corner some consideration was being given to the subtler movements and undercurrents in history and not just to the moments of brilliance and awakening. Perhaps times of adversity and trial are more pregnant with meaning for the future than the supposed renaissances of history. Perhaps, also, the renaissances which occupy such a prominent place in so many historical treatments have their roots and are determined by those periods which are known only for their unrest and turbulence. In any event, Turgot seemed to indicate that previous historians in ignoring the "darkness" had not told the whole story.

Despite the subtle hints and implications of men such as Hume and Turgot which boded well for the future study of periods such as the Middle Ages, it would be hard to imagine, nevertheless, how any large-scale interest in the Middle Ages would have developed and survived in the generally hostile atmosphere of the Enlightenment. It was the romantic movement coming at the turn of the XIXth century which acted as midwife to the real birth of medieval studies.

The romantic movement by almost everyone's definition was of short duration.⁵⁴ Occupying at most only the first

⁵⁴Wallace K. Ferguson dates it from c. 1780-c. 1830, The Renaissance in Historical Thought: Five Centuries of

half of the XIXth century, the romantic period seems important to the medievalist today not so much for its positive contributions to Western thought, but rather for the somewhat negative contribution it made to historical scholarship by snapping the rigid classifications and biases of the Enlightenment. For the biases of the rationalists, the romanticists, of course, substituted their own with the important difference that their biases were weighed in favor of the Middle Ages. The romantic picture of the Middle Ages was no more true than that of the Enlightenment. However, it could only encourage medieval studies whereas the Enlightenment view of the medieval period as barbaric and despicable could only result in the frame of mind exemplified by one XIXth century scholar's attitude: "I know nothing of those ages which know nothing."⁵⁵ The romantic's glasses may have been too rose-tinted to present an accurate view, but at least they chose to look at the Middle Ages. Where the rationalists ignored, the romantics

Interpretation (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1948), p. 113, n. 1. Ferguson's book is an excellent guide to the historical development of the concept of the Middle Ages as well as of the Renaissance. Throughout the last five centuries each period has been defined in terms of the other and, thus, in tracing the vicissitudes of the development of the notion of the Renaissance, Ferguson was often led to consider the Middle Ages in tandem with the later period. Chapters V ("The Romantic Reaction") and XI ("The Revolt of the Medievalists") were most pertinent and helpful for this study.

⁵⁵Anonymous, quoted by S. R. Maitland, The Dark Ages: A Series of Essays Intended to Illustrate the State of Religion and Literature in the Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh, and Twelfth Centuries (3rd edition; London: Francis and John Rivington, 1853), p. 1.

attempted to understand.

The romantic movement defined itself as the antithesis of the Enlightenment and the rationalist view of the universe. Wallace K. Ferguson has succinctly stated the main aspects of the romantic revolt and outlined its own historical tenets:

The men of the late eighteenth century were beginning to lose faith in the utilitarian and mechanistic philosophy of the Enlightenment, with its exclusive emphasis on reason and natural laws, even before the failure of the French Revolution proclaimed the bankruptcy of rationalism; but, that event turned the rationalists, a bewildered generation, to a more earnest search for a substitute. They found what they sought, according to their various characters, in idealistic philosophy, in religion, in a more profound feeling for subjective morality, in personal identification with the state, the nation, the church, or some other corporate social group, or in the nostalgic study of their national past. Convinced that reason was not enough, the Romanticists were thrown back upon instinct and faith, upon 'the logic of higher sentiment.'⁵⁶

* * * * *

Medieval civilization attracted the Romanticists by those very qualities that had repelled their predecessors, they idealized what the rationalists and the humanists had condemned, and with equal exaggeration. They gloried in the eccentricity, formlessness, and naïveté of medieval art. They loved the childlike simplicity and piety of medieval painting, and like young Goethe, they found in the Gothic cathedrals a 'titanic' quality of vital originality, free from the cramping effects of classical rules. Where the rationalists had seen only ignorant and superstitious barbarism, the Romanticists perceived noble simplicity, pure, uncomplicated emotions, and intuitive faiths.⁵⁷

The Middle Ages which emerged from such presuppositions is

⁵⁶The Renaissance in Historical Thought: Five Centuries of Interpretation, pp. 115-116.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 120.

reminiscent of the Brueghals' many representations of peasant scenes full of a kind of rustic merriment and pastoral cheerfulness - true enough perhaps for what they intended to portray, but a terribly inaccurate and lopsided account of the entire Middle Ages.

Important though the romanticists may have been in the history of historical scholarship, they produced no serious evaluation of medieval education and learning. Their emphases hardly ran in that direction. Stirred by an almost mystical view of history, the romanticists reveled in the stories of a nation's heroic building or in a people's epic wanderings. Their subject was the "Folk" and particularly the Germanic folk groups who were endowed by the men of the early XIXth century with a variety of fantastic attributes.

For the romanticists, medieval education was worthy of consideration insofar as it was the means by which the new, youthful, pure, but as yet uncultured and barbaric, Germanic tribes were infused with the superior wisdom of Christianity and all that that implied. The pure Germanic spirit combined with the best of the culture of the worn-out, defeated, and decadent Romans was the basis, according to the romantics, of modern Europe. Considered in this light, education in the Middle Ages was an exciting and important element of the epic.

The most detailed and perhaps the most typical treatment of medieval education by a romantic appeared in Antoine Frédéric Ozanam's (1813-1853) Études germaniques. Two pieces especially concern us here. Both works dealt primarily with

the earlier Middle Ages and both, quite noticeably in comparison to the attitude of the Enlightenment, offered a favorable account of medieval intellectual life. In a short essay, "Des écoles et de l'instruction publique en Italie aux temps barbares,"⁵⁸ Ozanam attempted to show that Italy never succumbed to medieval darkness. There were schools in Italy and, what is more, unlike the remainder of Europe, Italy always enjoyed a flourishing program of lay education. In a summary paragraph, Ozanam stated his thesis thus:

On a dit que la lumière ne s'éteignit point aux plus mauvais temps du moyen âge, mais qu'elle se déplaça; et que du septième au onzième siècle, l'astre des lettres, couché sur l'Italie, se levait sur l'Irlande, l'Angleterre et l'Allemagne. Je puis ajouter maintenant que l'Italie eut une de ces nuits lumineuses où les dernières clartés du soir se prolongent jusqu'aux premières blancheurs du matin. D'un côté, le souvenir des écoles impériales se perpétuait dans l'enseignement laïque, qui subordonné la grammaire et la rhétorique à l'étude des lois qui entretient chez les Italiens la passion du droit et qui fonde pour cette science toute laïque, la puissante université de Bologne. D'un autre côté, la tradition des premiers siècles chrétiens se converse dans l'enseignement ecclésiastique: les lettres y trouvent asile à condition de servir la foi, de développer la vocation théologique des Italiens, et de leur assurer la palme de la philosophie scolastique. Nous avons vu l'instruction descendre du clergé et des corporations savantes jusque dans la multitude. Ce peuple, encore tout pénétré de l'antiquité, n'en peut oublier ni la gloire, ni les fables, ni la langue.⁵⁹

Ozanam's other treatise, "Les écoles,"⁶⁰ offered more insight into the romantic treatment of medieval education.

⁵⁸In La civilisation du cinquième siècle: introduction à une histoire de la civilisation aux temps barbares suivie d'un essai sur les écoles en Italie du Ve au XIIIe siècle, vol. II of Oeuvres complètes, 2nd ed., Paris: J. Lecoffre, 1862.

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 432-433.

⁶⁰La civilisation chrétienne, vol. IV, ibid., 1861.

Ozanam began this study with an examination of the late Roman schools and especially of Martianus Capella's De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii. The chief merit of Martianus' account ("une composition étrange") of the seven liberal arts was its mythical setting. This was exactly the kind of presentation needed to appeal to the imaginations of the barbarians who were destined to reopen the fallen schools of the Romans. The De Nuptiis satisfied their poetic instinct in a way that conjugations and syllogisms never could.

Among the already cultured groups, men of the stature of Boethius, Cassiodorus, and Isidore of Seville handed down the torch of ancient learning to each successive generation. Also, amidst the barbarism, the Gallo-Romans, out of pride for their own class and a desire to advance in the administrative ranks of the Merovingian court, maintained a love for learning and letters. This relatively optimistic picture of learning painted by Ozanam was at variance with a host of his predecessors who refused to accept any hint of learning in the Middle Ages. Ozanam, however, went even further and, in a passage which was to provoke much controversy, stated that the secular schools, modelled on those of the Romans, perpetuated themselves through the VIIth century⁶¹ which was traditionally the century at the heart of the "dark ages." For Ozanam even these schools eventually grew weaker with the

⁶¹Ibid., p. 451.

passage of time and the classic muses lost their last cult. The influence of the barbarians which had been the ruination of the Roman state also affected the Church and thereby learning altogether. In the VIIIth century what education there was available was quickly dissipated as the Saracenic invasions forced the clergy to become warriors, not scholars.⁶²

Charlemagne, for Ozanam as for others, was the pivotal agent who initiated Western civilization's slow emergence from ignorance. However, unlike previous historians, Ozanam's Charlemagne was not a solitary figure who rose up to halt the barbarization of Europe. For Ozanam (believing that God had created nothing solitary in nature) the way had been prepared for Charlemagne by almost three centuries of mounting chaos and confusion. In a similar way, Greece had been the scene of warfare and turmoil for two centuries before the advent of Alexander the Great. Rome, too, had been rent apart by civil discord in order to give birth to a Julius Caesar. These men, far from being innovators in their own right, summed up in themselves the aspirations of previous generations. They were, in effect, the embodiment of the spirit of the times which had been waiting for the fortunate moment and right person in which to express itself. It was not that Charlemagne was advantageously placed in a milieu favorable to his particular talents, a milieu perhaps in which all the ingredients for reform and progress awaited only a reformer and guiding

⁶²Ibid., pp. 528-529.

hand. Rather, Charlemagne somehow symbolized for Ozanam the unity of a people of whom he was the finest representative.

Au lieu d'une colonne isolée dans le désert, c'est la beffroi qui couronne une ville, au pied duquell'on arrive de toutes les partes, dont l'inévitable perspective se représente au détour de chaque rue, et dont la cloche règle le sommeil et le réveil d'un peuple.⁶³

Charlemagne's schools were not perfect: "le pédantisme mêle ses travers au premier enthousiasme des plaisirs d'esprit."⁶⁴ However, they were able to educate the barbarians under the form best suited to them. The imperfect was quite satisfactory for the far from perfect. Charlemagne's real achievement was to give birth to a spirit of intellectual activity which was to outlast his political and administrative accomplishments and which was eventually to take form as the medieval university.

Ozanam, aside from his view that the Roman schools persisted until the VIIth century, added nothing new to the history of medieval education. He is interesting today because of the romantic framework in which he cast his history and, particularly for this study, his account of medieval education.

There were, of course, historians of the "dark ages" school contemporary with Ozanam and the romantics. Henry Hallam (1777-1859) deserves mention here as he was among the chief XIXth century decriers of medieval intellectual life.

⁶³Ibid., p. 532.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 548.

A literary historian, his multi-volume works exercised and continue to exercise⁶⁵ a venerable influence. In his View of the State of Europe During the Middle Ages⁶⁶ Hallam described learning in the Middle Ages as backwards and made much of the medieval "poverty in arts." The whole period was, he wrote, "almost absolutely barren, and presents little but a catalogue of evils."⁶⁷ Like other works of its kind, the View of the State of Europe During the Middle Ages offered little perceptive analysis of its subject matter. The XIIth century revival was described by Hallam in these less than precise terms:

About the latter part of the eleventh century a greater ardour for intellectual pursuits began to show itself in Europe, which in the twelfth broke out into a flame. This was manifested in the numbers who repaired to the public academies or schools of philosophy.⁶⁸

Hallam's more famous and popular work, Introduction to the Literature of Europe in the Fifteenth, Sixteenth, and Seventeenth Centuries,⁶⁹ when it first appeared in the late 1830's was a biting denunciation of the Middle Ages. Reacting to adverse criticism, Hallam qualified some of his assertions in the footnotes to subsequent editions; however, the work

⁶⁵Howard Mumford Jones, "The Nature of Literary History," Journal of the History of Ideas, XXVIII (1967), 153-154.

⁶⁶Three volumes. New edition. London: John Murray, 1872.

⁶⁷Ibid., III, 269.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 240.

⁶⁹Three volumes. Fourth edition. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1854.

still remained the product of a man who despised the Middle Ages without coming to know them.

The age of the Hallams, the Voltaires, Robertsons, and the Wartons was, however, all but closed by mid-century. The impetus given medieval studies by the romantic movement and the intellectual demands of the late XIXth and XXth centuries made obsolete in the scholarly world any view of the Middle Ages which at its best said nothing of that period.

Three works appearing before 1850 can be pointed to as indicative that at last the Middle Ages and our concern here, medieval education, were coming into their own as fields of scholarly inquiry. On the popular level, Auguste Vallet de Viriville in his Histoire de l'instruction publique en Europe et principalement en France depuis le Christianisme jusqu'à nos jours presented to the public a handsome work in which a fair, though not overly enlightening, account of medieval education was given.⁷⁰ In his On the Origins of Universities and Academical Degrees⁷¹ Henry Malden likewise was content to offer little more than a summary of previous scholars' findings. Although not a historian by profession, Malden acted in the best traditions of historical scholarship when he undertook to correct his society's false notions of the history and development of the medieval universities. Malden, a member of the British Parliament, along with several other enlightened

⁷⁰Paris: Administration du Moyen Age et la Renaissance, 1849..

⁷¹London: John Taylor, 1835.

men of that body, was interested in chartering a new English university - the University of London. Their greatest opponent was the tradition which surrounded Oxford and Cambridge, England's ancient universities. The origins of those universities were so far out of sight that Malden and his comrades could gain little headway in combatting the opposition (and ignorance) of their antagonists who little thought that universities could be made by men. In order to foster worthwhile debate, while at the same time buttressing his case for the University of London, Malden read the continental authors on the subject of the universities (Conring, Itter, Heumann, Duboulay) and produced a compact pamphlet containing the outlines of the early universities. Again his findings were by no means novel and he is interesting today for the place that his work occupies in the general trend of writing about medieval education rather than for the work itself.

The third and most important work indicative of the new turn in the history of medieval historical writing in this half century was S. R. Maitland's already mentioned The Dark Ages. Maitland, grandfather of the legal historian, Frederic William Maitland, wrote the first work which directly challenged and debunked the tenets of the "dark ages" school of historical writers. Maitland's purpose was not to show that the "dark ages" were golden ages and to scorn modern technology and industry while admiring medieval virtue as some of the romantics had done.⁷² His aim was simply "to furnish some materials toward

forming a right judgment of the real state of learning, knowledge, and literature during the dark ages;⁷³ . . . to contradict falsehood, and to bate down exaggeration into at least something like the truth."⁷⁴ In so doing Maitland wrote a series of essays that make enjoyable and at some times almost humorous reading. With the confidence of a debater who knows all the weak spots in his opponent's argument, Maitland proceeded to tear apart the groundless generalizations that had formed the substance of the "dark age" historians' account of the Middle Ages. Maitland had little trouble in showing how uninformed, illogical, and at times blatantly dishonest his chosen opponents were.

William Robertson and his View of the Progress of Society were the main targets for Maitland's well-directed queries. Henry's History of England and Warton's literary history also provided ammunition for Maitland's pen. Basically, his technique was to question the graceful prose in which the "dark ages" theories were couched. Robertson had written of many charters which provided innumerable proofs of widespread medieval illiteracy. Probing this sweeping judgment, Maitland showed that

surely two instances in the eighth century, one in the ninth, and one in the twelfth, of men of rank who could not write - it does not appear, and really does not follow, that they could not read - form too slender a

⁷²Page 7. (The full citation for this work can be found on p. 57, n. 55, above.)

⁷³Ibid., p. 5.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 16.

ground for such broad assertions as Robertson has ventured to make respecting the state of letters.⁷⁵

Henry, in another "hack story" as Maitland called them, had proved that the clergy of the Xth century were as almost as illiterate as the laity by referring to one example "out of many:"

Meinwerc, Bishop of Paderborn, in this century, in reading the public prayers, used to say, - "Benedic Domine regibus et reginis mulis et mulabis (sic) tuis:--" instead of "famulis et famulabis; (sic)" which made it a very ludicrous petition.⁷⁶

In a delightful fifteen page disquisition on this one point Maitland demonstrated that Meinwerc was really no fool and that Henry's one example "out of many" was, at base, an absurd story.

As Maitland wrote in reaction to the writers of "dark age" history, there is little mention of medieval education in his work; however, Maitland deflated with ease the condemnations of medieval learning built up out of an instance of a monk's scraping a parchment containing a work of Tacitus or Livy in order to use the parchment to copy prayerbooks and out of the high value placed on some books which supposedly indicated their extreme scarcity. Maitland wrote a book which was as surprising for its day as it was ahead of its day. One appreciates The Dark Ages after having surveyed 400 years of literature which was almost without exception hostile to things medieval.

⁷⁶Ibid., p. 129, Maitland following Henry's History of England. (The sics appear in Maitland's text.)

PART TWO

THE HISTORY OF MEDIEVAL EDUCATION, 1850-1960'S

The impetus given medieval studies during the late XVIIIth century and the first half of the XIXth century manifested itself after 1850 in an ever-increasing amount of historical scholarship devoted to the Middle Ages. This trend could only have had a beneficial effect on the study of medieval education and culture. Unfortunately, however, although much brilliant work was produced, one must conclude that the over-all effect of increased attention directed toward the Middle Ages has largely been quantitatively beneficial for medieval studies. One can sense that although much has been written on the various aspects of medieval education, somehow historians have generally not got at the heart of the matter. Throughout the last century and more much of the huge body of literature on medieval education has dealt with the stories of particular institutions and their founders, with the books used in medieval schools, and with the question of who taught where and at what time. These are, no doubt, legitimate concerns but they serve to little enlighten us as to the deeper forces of medieval education, forces which run not only through education and learning, but throughout the Middle Ages itself.

The following examination of recent studies of medieval

education has been arranged according to several broad topical divisions which have suggested themselves in the reading of this literature. My purpose here is not so much to examine scholarly opinion on every phase of medieval educational activity. Rather, I am more interested in the general interpretations and the main thrusts that that opinion has taken.

CHAPTER I

GENERAL WORKS

At first glance, it appears quite difficult to designate a good general treatment of medieval education. General often meant popular and popular often meant more fiction than history, more rhetoric than scholarly criticism and synthesis.

A. T. Drane's (Mother Francis Raphael, O. S. D.) attempt in 1867 to provide a general history of medieval education in her Christian Schools and Scholars Or, Sketches of Education from the Christian Era to the Council of Trent¹ made much use of medieval source material, but her use of that material tended to the glorification of the Church and its saints rather than to the history of medieval schools and scholars. She concluded her unimaginative account by observing that it was a shame in her day that education more and more was coming under the aegis of the State rather than of the Church.

Another example of late XIXth century concern with medieval education can be found in an unsigned review of J. Bass Mullinger's The Schools of Charles the Great and the

¹New edition. London: Burns Oates and Washburne, 1924.

Restoration of Education in the Ninth Century which appeared in the April, 1880 number of The Edinburgh Review.² The review hardly gave notice to Mullinger's book but it did provide an insight into the general notion of medieval education. The reviewer endowed the Franks with all the stereotyped Germanic qualities ("When their warlike tendencies were checked by the 'Roman Peace' their intellectual appetites were all the more excited"³) and wrote his medieval history from the point of view of the XIXth century: "The University of Bordeaux in the fourth century was, we may suppose, maintained on the principles of the modern board school; we might even imagine from the silence of Ausonius on the subject, that all denominational teaching was sternly forbidden in it."⁴ In this account, learning steadily declined (unlike Ozanam, the reviewer thought Martianus Capella's book an "encyclopedia of declining knowledge"⁵), until it reached its nadir with Gregory of Tours who was, of course, "both a witness to it and an example of its effects."⁶ The ultimate cause of this decline was Clovis' compact with the Church. Education became the prerogative of the Church and thus became narrow and clerical. The sole cause of the

²American edition, CLI, (1880), 195-211.

³Ibid., 196.

⁴Ibid., 197.

⁵Ibid., 201.

⁶Ibid., 204.

revival was Charlemagne who "at the critical epoch of the foundation of the revived Roman Empire,"⁷ made education a function and servant of the State and wrested it from the "Priestly orders."

Just as anti-clerical influences were still to be found in historical scholarship, an occasional advocate of medieval gloom was always available. Gabriel Compayré believed that once the Roman schools had closed "Christianity did not open others, and, after the fourth century, a profound night enveloped humanity."⁸ A vigorous opponent of Compayré's views was Brother Azarias (P. J. Mullany) who somewhat like Maitland, but with less scholarship and polish, undertook a personal crusade to restore the tarnished image of the Middle Ages. In his Essays Educational⁹ he directed his attack against the general histories and educational textbooks which, enjoying the largest audience, were often the worst account of medieval education. Brother Azarias' combative and rather graceless style ("Here is the sweet tid-bit on which our public school teachers have been chewing for the past ten years"¹⁰) hardly lent dignity and scholarship to his work, but one cannot help sympathizing with his cause in light of all the bad work which had been done in the history of medieval education.

⁷Ibid., 211.

⁸The History of Pedagogy, tr. W. H. Payne (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1890), p. 67.

⁹Chicago: D. H. McBride and Co., 1896.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 3.

A true contribution to the history of medieval education was made in 1906 with the publication of Paul Abelson's study, The Seven Liberal Arts: A Study in Mediaeval Culture.¹¹ This work is an excellent treatment of a subject which is at the heart of medieval education. A stimulating piece of scholarship, Abelson's study combined a thorough grounding in medieval sources with the best secondary works. In the process of examining the history of the liberal arts in the Middle Ages, Abelson exposed some of the most venerable preconceptions about education in the Middle Ages. Abelson's purpose in tracing the history of the liberal arts was "to discover how the inevitable spirit of change and adjustment interacted with the spirit of tradition of the Middle Ages in a single sphere of mediaeval life - the culture of the average educated man of the day."¹² What resulted from Abelson's investigation was a brilliant study not only of the liberal arts but of the men and milieu in which those arts were studied.

All the arts changed in content and application according to the demands the men of the Middle Ages made of them. Because Latin was essentially a foreign language, the study of grammar was perhaps most affected by the conditions of the Middle Ages. Medieval masters devised their

¹¹("Columbia University Teachers College Contributions to Education," no. 11), New York: Russell and Russell, Inc., 1965.

¹²Ibid., "Introduction."

own grammar manuals (based on folklore, riddles, and proverbs) in order to overcome the difficulties of the ancient manuals which were addressed to a Latin speaking world. Similiary, the other arts changed to meet the exigencies of medieval culture. Abelson's treatment of the much underrated study of the quadrivium restored proper perspective to that portion of the liberal arts. The question of whether or not the Middle Ages possessed little or much mathematical knowledge is educationally beside the point. The fact of the matter was "that the schools fulfilled their mission and transmitted all the mathematical knowledge they possessed to future generations, and that the student was obliged to master this knowledge before he took up the advanced study of philosophy."¹³

Abelson demonstrated that change, ingenuity and shifting emphases were all a part of medieval education and culture. His stress on the dynamism and creativity of the Middle Ages in the matter of the transmission of the arts made his book an extraordinary guide to this aspect of education in the Middle Ages.

Not as much can be said for A. F. Leach's The Schools of Medieval England,¹⁴ the first attempt at a history of

¹³Ibid., pp. 92-93.

¹⁴(The Antiquary's Books). Second edition. London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1916. This book enjoyed an authoritative position for more than half a century. For some recent criticism see, John Nelson Miner, "Schools and Literacy in Later Medieval England," British Journal of Educational Studies, XI (1962), 16-27.

English education before the time of the Reformation. Leach provided a service to the study of medieval education by constantly emphasizing that not all the education provided Englishmen during the Middle Ages was at the hands of the monks. There was a significant amount of education, he showed, which was fostered by non-monastic elements in society. However, Leach overdid his point somewhat and seemed at times to bend over backward in order to cut English monasticism down to size, as it were. As Leach would have it, the primary English educational institutions throughout the Middle Ages were the public, or grammar, schools.¹⁵ The models and the source for these schools were not the Church schools at all

but the schools of heathendom, the schools of Athens and Alexandria, of Rome, of Lyons, of Vienne. They were in fact the very same 'heathen' or 'pagan' or, in other words, Graeco-Roman institutions, in which, Horace and Juvenal, Jerome and St. Augustine had learnt the scansion of hexameters and the accredited methods of speech-making and argument.¹⁶

If it is at all possible to point to one figure who, more than any other, has influenced modern medieval studies that one figure would be Charles Homer Haskins. Haskins in a number of very readable, yet erudite, books and articles suggested a fresh, realistic appraisal of medieval thought. Strictly, only one of Haskins' works is of concern for this study, The Rise of the Universities.¹⁷

¹⁵Ibid., p. 2.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 13.

¹⁷(The Colver Lecture, Brown University, 1923) New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1923. See p.126, below.

However, Haskins also offered some pertinent observations concerning medieval education in his more general works. In the first issue of Speculum, Haskins contributed an article which was a foretaste of his later classic, The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century. In "The Spread of Ideas in the Middle Ages,"¹³ he studied the problem of the communication of ideas in medieval society. In noting that previous historians had offered rather far-fetched accounts of the transmission of ideas (e.g., Volkgeist, Zeitgeist) Haskins called for a more realistic approach to the question. For him, ideas were generated in and transmitted by a handful of institutions which, acting as high energy cells, not only transmitted their ideas to each other, but, in addition, influenced each other in the formulation of those ideas:

. . . the spread of ideas in the Middle Ages is only in part a history of slow diffusion through the resisting medium of local habit and custom. It is chiefly concerned with the relations of scattered centres of another sort, stations of high tension, if you like, communicating with other stations of the same type with comparatively little reference to distance or to the nature of the intervening space. Such centres, representing different social strata, consisted chiefly of monasteries and cathedrals, courts, towns, and universities.¹⁹

With this article it seemed as though the first step had been taken in bringing the intellectual and educational history of the Middle Ages down to earth. The consideration of the development of medieval thought and especially of

¹³I (1926), 19-30.

¹⁹Ibid., 20-21.

education could no longer resolve itself in an account of the mysterious racial qualities of a people or of the equally vague celebration of the spirit of the times or of one man - be he Charlemagne or Abelard. It now became necessary to turn to those "stations of high tension", as Haskins aptly described them, in order to understand their development and activity in relation to each other.

Haskins' The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century²⁰ did so many good things for the study of the Middle Ages. Judging by some of the literature surveyed in this study, there was a desperate need for this scholarly and stimulating work. Although primarily concentrating on the XIIth century, Haskins emphasized the change and vitality evident throughout much of the medieval period. Nowhere is this more apparent in his book than in the last chapter, "The Beginnings of the Universities." The medieval university was in itself a new creation without precedent in history. The very fact that it came to be during the Middle Ages attests to the ability of medieval society and institutions not only to evolve with time but also to establish new patterns of growth. Haskins described the universities as the end product of an intellectual and institutional revolution centered on the reception, not passive to be sure, of the "new knowledge" from the East.²¹ The

²⁰(Meridian Books) Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1957.

²¹Ibid., p. 368.

institutional revolution involved the application of the guild system to educational practices which had been radically altered by the dialectical revolution and which in the end produced a new institution - the university.

The momentum given medieval studies by Haskins and other medievalists instrumental in the founding of the Mediaeval Academy rapidly bore fruit if we can judge from the amount of research done by American medievalists in the field of medieval education. Enough attention was directed toward education and learning in the Middle Ages from our shores to warrant a twenty-four page review and critique of that research by Professor Gray Cowan Boyce in 1947. In his "American Studies in Medieval Education,"²² Professor Boyce not only presented an incisive, terse, and perceptive survey of the literature, but, going further, he pointed to the lacunae in the American treatment of medieval education. He also made a special plea for an adequate survey of medieval education ("rationally organized, based upon a deep knowledge and adequate control of fact, written with clarity and precision"²³) intended for the use of students of education. For too long, Professor Boyce noted, medievalists had been content seemingly to write only for themselves and not for the audience most in

²²Progress of Medieval and Renaissance Studies in the United States and Canada, Bulletin no. 19 (1947), 6-30.

²³Ibid., 6.

need of the benefits of their scholarship.

The biases of American medievalists have been quite noticeable: the universities, especially the one at Paris, has attracted the large share of attention directed toward the Middle Ages; little or no significant contributions have been made to the history of the lower schools and hardly any attention has been given to the German studia and to Spain.²⁴

In 1940, Lynn Thorndike published a short article on the lower schools which challenged the notion that there was only a system of higher education throughout the Middle Ages and that all education was dominated by the clergy.²⁵ Although the article was excellent as far as it went (Professor Thorndike had little trouble substantiating his thesis "that in the period of developed mediaeval culture elementary and even secondary education was fairly widespread"), it provided a good example of Professor Boyce's contention that American medievalists had left the field of non-university education and instruction practically untouched. Perhaps we Americans with our supposed penchants for bigness, organization, and administration, combined with a sort of parochialism that sees in the medieval universities some resemblance to our own universities, have been attracted by the obvious charms which the

²⁴Ibid., 7.

²⁵"Elementary and Secondary Education in the Middle Ages," Speculum, XV (1940), 400-408.

study of these universities hold over other medieval educational institutions: the parish, monastic, and cathedral schools.

The best recent general treatment of medieval education, especially during the later period, was Philippe Delhaye's "L'organisation scolaire au XIIe siècle."²⁶ Delhaye's study began with the Carolingian educational reforms and is an excellent guide to the vicissitudes experienced by the monastic schools (both interior and exterior) and the cathedral schools during the Xth, XIth, and XIIth centuries. During this period whatever education was provided by the monks was replaced by that of the cathedral schools and the regular and secular clergy. The crucial development of the XIIth century was the liberalization of the policy governing the necessary licentia docendi. Not only did this mean that more masters could be licensed to teach, but, in addition, these masters gained a measure of independence from the cathedral canons and the cathedral scholastic who had previously governed the issuance of the license. With this freedom came experimentation in course programs and the emergence of a new corporation of masters, the university, separate from the cathedral chapter. It was not long before these new corporations replaced the cathedral school as the primary educational institution of the Middle Ages:

La faveur des étudiants n'a pas été longue à se porter

²⁶Traditio, V (1947), 211-268.

vers les écoles libres des maîtres abrégés; les écoles capitulaires se sont trouvés très vite en infériorité. Un programme plus vaste, une surveillance moins stricte, un souci constant de se conquérir la faveur du public étudiantin devaient nécessairement attirer la jeunesse.²⁷

The period that Haskins, Delhaye and others chose to study in the history of medieval education was, of course, a crucial one. With the development of the university medieval education came to maturity and made a unique contribution to the history of Western civilization. However, despite the fact that scholars have long recognized the pivotal nature of the XIth and XIIth century period, they have not produced a general study of the conditions which led to the universities. There are innumerable discussions of the development of the town and its impact on education and, similarly, of the development of dialectic and Abelard's contribution to the evolution of the university. But almost all of these have been undertaken from the point of view of the universities. It may be only a small point but, nevertheless, one is not satisfied with an account of education before the University of Paris which looks ahead to the University and neglects to study the earlier period on its own terms.²⁸

²⁷Ibid., 268.

²⁸Stephen D'Irsay had made explicit the tacit approach to this period in education history (see below, p. 151). The one general work which does do justice to the "pre-university period is La renaissance du XIIe siècle: les écoles et l'enseignement (see below, p. 155).

CHAPTER II

EDUCATION IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

The history of education and learning during this period has suffered from two inter-related factors: the period has largely been neglected by historians more intent on the study of the universities and when the period has been studied, it has almost inevitably been in anticipation of the later universities. The result has been a rather meager collection of historical monographs devoted to the 700 years of this period most of which, by this date, are somewhat old and in need of revision.

The period of transition from classical to medieval civilization has attracted considerable attention from those interested in the educational history of the early Middle Ages. The focal point of this period has been the confrontation between the imperial and Christian educational systems. Rather than a replacement of one system by the other, what actually occurred was the co-existence of the two systems for a not inconsiderable period. What this period of transition has meant for education has been variously interpreted. In the main, classicists have bemoaned the supplanting of the Roman system by the Christian with its supposedly anti-classical attitude while medieval-

ists and partisans of Christianity have noted that the Roman educational system was decadent and hollow anyway and that the infusion of Christian principles, morals, and aims was needed in order to revitalize education and make it meaningful.

A good treatment of this whole period can be found in Theodore Haarhoff's Schools of Gaul: A Study of Pagan and Christian Education in the Last Century of the Western Empire.¹ Haarhoff was quite sensitive to the fact that his work was the first to consider education in the IVth and Vth centuries. Despite his belief that the "immense fabric of Roman education" continued to endure to his own day irrespective of the shifting scenes of Roman, barbarian, pagan, and Christian education,² Haarhoff provided a creditable example of the work yet to be done in this area.

The crucial point in the transition from imperial to Christian education came in the Vth century when the Church received from the emperors the educational authority which had formerly been the province of the state alone.³ The Romanization of Christianity had put any over-night change in the educational program out of the question.

¹London: Oxford University Press, 1920. To a lesser degree, but more suggestively, H. I. Marrou has recently studied this period. See his closing pages in A History of Education in Antiquity, tr. George Lamb (New York: The New American Library, 1964), pp. 419-465.

²Ibid., vii.

³Ibid., p. 155.

Nevertheless by the end of the Vth century the number of rhetorical schools in Gaul was on the wane. The Church's influence though was not entirely "negative." Unlike the classical and imperial schools, the schools of the Church attempted to educate the masses in some sense of the notion of education. In this way the Church reached out to the man ignored by the Romans.

The system of Gallo-Roman and Christian education disintegrated during the Vth century as much from the invasions as, Haarhoff noted, from certain internal weaknesses within the system itself. The schools themselves killed any true spirit of education. The rhetorical emphasis of the old Roman system neglected the ultimate goal of knowledge, the search for truth, and thus failed because it aimed not for the best truth, but rather for goods of secondary importance - polish, style, and external refinement.⁴ The Church was also to blame for the death of the old tradition.. Exigencies of the period forced the Church to become reactionary and zealously narrow: "By limiting the meaning of 'divina' to dogma, the Church imposed fetters on the seeker after truth which, though not very prominent in our period became exceedingly galling in the times that followed."⁵

⁴Ibid., p. 249-256.

⁵Ibid., p. 260. Amédée Thierry had some bitter words for the Church's failure to rescue the literary forms and spirit of the schools of "la vieille société romain" when the Church was the only vital and youthful element in a moribund world. "La littérature profane en Gaule au

With the passing of the old system, education entered the Middle Ages and we can infer from Haarhoff's description of the "Decline of Education" that medieval education meant for him the abandonment of the search for truth in favor of the secure complacency of dogma, the dulling of the spirit of inquiry by the willingness to accept and believe. Haarhoff wrote as a classicist firmly convinced that the Roman rhetorical tradition, when at its best, was (and is, apparently) without equal as an educational model. Although this bias prevented him from appreciating education in the early Middle Ages, it did not prevent him from compiling a scholarly and well-documented account of the last days of the old ways.

Somewhat in Haarhoff's vein, an earlier work sought to determine how much and in what manner the classics influenced medieval learning after the IVth and Vth century period of transition. Maurice Roger's L'enseignement des lettres classiques d'Ausone à Alcuin: Introduction à l'histoire des écoles carolingiennes,⁶ although some of its conclusions have been revised, remains the single most comprehensive and perceptive consideration of the classics in the early Middle Ages.

Ausonius, the IVth century Roman poet, and Alcuin, the VIIIth century Carolingian monk, were for Roger types - types at apposite ends of a revolution which changed the

IVe siècle: les grandes écoles--Ausone et Rutilius," Revue des Deux Mondes, H, CV (1873), 793-814.

⁶Paris: Alphonse Picard et Fils, 1905.

world. This revolution, which saw power and leadership in the Western world gradually transferred from the Romans to the Franks, also had its effect on education: classical education gave way to Christian. Like most revolutions, however, a good deal of the old order of things remained. Classical letters, after considerable debate took their place in the Christian scheme of instruction. However, what kind of place was this?

In order to answer this question, Roger examined the thought of Alcuin who, though original in the choice and nature of his borrowings, was essentially a compiler and therefore a pre-eminent witness to the thought of his age and milieu.⁷ For Alcuin, wisdom was attained by prayer and the help of God. From this, one can begin to perceive that the classics placed in a Christian setting received a radically different emphasis than they had in their original setting. Roger attributed this to a fundamental divergence in the classical and Christian outlooks:

La sagesse antique laisse à la science un champ illimité; la sagesse chrétienne, telle que l'entend Alcuin, lui attribue un objet limité qui est de parvenir à l'intelligence d'un texte arrêté, immuable, sacré, jusque dans la lettre. C'est là une différence essentielle, qui va peser lourdement sur toute l'éducation, pendant le moyen âge et même beaucoup au delà.⁸

Christian wisdom, then, had both its goal and limit in the sacred scriptures. Christian instruction ultimately

⁷Ibid., p. 441.

⁸Ibid., pp. 443-444.

led to the absorption and comprehension of the lectio divina which, being divine, admitted of no equal or rival for the attention of the Christian student. The question can now be repeated more urgently: of what possible use was antique learning, particularly the classics, to the Christians? Roger poignantly framed his answer and summarized the course of early medieval intellectual history thus:

Cinq cents ans après [Ausonius], une grande révolution s'est accomplie, la plus grande qu'ait connue notre Occident. Un monde nouveau s'élève dans les conditions qui diffèrent absolument des celles du monde ancien. La culture littéraire, esthétique et morale va-t-elle, y occuper une plus grande place? Cette société, fondée sur des croyances spiritualistes beaucoup plus accentuées, qu'elle porte même jusqu'aux exagérations du mysticisme et de l'ascétisme, va-t-elle donner aux sciences excitatrices de l'esprit un rôle prépondérant? Rien de semblable ne nous apparaît. C'est encore à un but d'utilité étroite qu'elles sont limitées; on ne les conserve, on ne les tolère que comme un appareil très secondaire, non pas même d'étude, mais de préparation à l'étude. C'est une simple propédeutique. Les lettres ne servent plus d'obtenir des places dans la hiérarchie impériale, elles servent à mettre le clerc en état d'aborder la seule science vraie, la théologie.⁹

The true place, then, of the classics in medieval education was as a stepping-stone to more important and meaningful concerns. The classics were considered always as means, never as ends. They provided images, vocabulary, and examples which the Christian could borrow and use in the explication and service of the faith. Perhaps there did occur local instances in which the purely secondary

⁹Ibid., p. 444.

nature of classical studies was forgotten. However, as Roger described such occurrences, they were rare deviations from the general attitude and principle mentioned above and in no way implied an attempt at the restoration of antiquity.¹⁰

In the second chapter of L'enseignement des lettres classiques d'Ausone à Alcuin Roger challenged Frederic Ozanam's belief that Gallo-Roman schools survived until the end of the VIIth century. For Roger the last traces of Gallo-Roman education did not survive the invasions of the Vth century (A. D. 406). By the decade 420-430, there was no longer any question that these schools existed. Roger, in his turn, has been challenged on this point by the foremost contemporary student of medieval education - Pierre Riché.

M. Riché, in a short essay, "La survivance des écoles publiques en Gaule au Ve siècle,"¹¹ attempted to restore the proper perspective to the history of this transitional period in ancient-medieval culture by questioning what he held to be exaggerations in Roger's thesis. Roger, in challenging Ozanam's assertion that vestiges of antique education remained until the end of the VIIth century in Gaul, overshot the mark in the opposite extreme, Riché wrote. This, Riché graciously conceded, was easy enough

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 447-448.

¹¹Le Moyen-Age: revue d'histoire et de philologie, LXIII, (1957), 421-436.

to do given the extravagance of Ozanam's claim.

However, Roger's exaggeration can not be attributed solely to an excess of exuberance. There was a certain methodological flaw in his argument which, when examined, betrayed his thesis of a Vth century closing of all the antique schools. The flaw was Roger's argument ex silentio which Riché warned had little value in any situation and "il en a encore moins pour une époque aussi pauvre en documents que la Ve siècle."¹²

It was Riché's contention that the existence of at least one official Gallo-Roman school could be documented as late as 474. Building his case on an examination of certain texts (notably the letters of Sidonius Apollinarius and Avitus), Riché demonstrated that the masters teaching at the end of the Vth century in such municipal centers as Bordeaux, Vienne, Clermont, and Lyon differed little, according to contemporary description, from the masters praised by Ausonius in the previous century:

"Leur école pouvait être encore ouverte à tous, et leur fonction, retribuée par les municipalités, du moins rien ne nous interdit de le supposer."¹³ Going beyond this proof by implication, Riché turned to a letter from Sidonius Apollinarius to Claudien Mamertus (which Roger had missed) that established the definite existence of a municipal school in 474. This discovery indicated to Riché that

¹²Ibid., 422.

¹³Ibid., 428.

municipal school systems survived beyond the invasions, but more fundamentally it indicated something of the very nature of this period:

Ainsi, là où le system municipal résiste, l'école publique peut continuer son existence. Les municipalités avaient tout intérêt à préserver ce qui symbolisent le mieux la superiorité des Romains en face des barbares germaniques. Mais cela ne s'est pas produit dans toutes les villes. Certains centres urbains privilégiés ont pu, tels des buttes-témoins, résister à l'érosion barbare, d'autres se sont disloqués plus rapidement. L'histoire des institutions de l'époque "barbare" est bien souvent l'histoire de cas particulier.¹⁴

There was no dramatic, sudden, and complete closing of the Gallo-Roman schools. Barbarian influences by no means completely blanketed Europe. Rather, as Riché has shown, the critical area of confrontation between Gallo-Roman and barbarian resembled a checkerboard pattern. Throughout the Vth century if the schools had fallen in one locale, it was highly probable that they remained open in another.

In a later work, M. Riché expanded this point. His Education et culture dans l'occident barbare: VIe-VIIIe siècles,¹⁵ which resulted from his perceptive insights into medieval education and his brilliant analysis of the main themes of early medieval intellectual history, is the most outstanding work on this subject. It is outstanding for two reasons. First, Riché's intimate knowledge of early medieval culture has enabled him to write

¹⁴Ibid., 436.

¹⁵("Patristica Sorbonensia," no.4), Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1962.

with authority on almost every major aspect of that culture. In Education et culture dans l'occident barbare, the reader is offered not only a more comprehensive view of the interaction between antique and Christian culture than that hinted at in "La survivance des écoles publiques en Gaule au V^e siècle," but, and this is the second point, the entire work serves to underscore the main achievement of that interaction: the creation of a new culture and educational system peculiarly medieval and Christian.

The critical areas of confrontation between barbarian and antique culture ~~were~~ indeed of a checkerboard pattern. Despite the barbarian invasions large blocs of the Mediterranean world remained in the antique tradition: Gaul until the beginning of the VIth century, Italy until the VIIth century, and Africa until the advance of Islam. The antique system of education essentially survived in such men as Gregory the Great, Cassiodorus, and Isidore of Seville and his VIIth century disciples. The Anglo-Saxon and Irish monastic movements perhaps most tellingly exemplified this co-existence of antique and medieval cultural elements:

A leur exemple, des clercs et des moines d'Occident sont restés fidèles à la forme classique dans leurs poésies et dans leurs discours, mais gênés par leur première instruction, ils ont été incapables de créer une véritable culture chrétienne dont la Bible eut été la base.¹⁶

A truly Christian culture, however, emerged and was

¹⁶Ibid., p. 549.

propagated in the critical period from the end of the VIIth century to the middle of the VIIIth century. This new culture no longer bore within it the antique-Christian antinomy of the earlier period but was strictly medieval and strictly based on the study of the divina pagina. The monastic element was the important catalyst in this new development. By the beginning of the VIIIth century, the monks were more ascetic and missionary than literary in the classical sense. Monastic wisdom certainly evinced some classical aspects, primarily the study of grammar and mathematics, but these were put into an entirely new setting: "La science, monastique, . . . eut pour but essentiel l'étude de la Bible et la célébration de la liturgie, dans laquelle 'se concilient l'amour des lettres et le désir de Dieu.'"¹⁷ It was this particular culture which formed

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 549-550. The quote is from Jean Leclercq's The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture (New York: The New American Library, 1962). Dom Leclercq's stimulating work is fundamental for an understanding of the monastic ethos during this period. For centuries, the chief centers of intellectual activity were the rural monasteries. In the monasteries, however, it would not be too unfair to say that educational facilities and intellectual life in general was of minor importance. The center of monastic life was really the opus Dei. Intellectual activities were really only a concession to the practical aspects of the monks' prayer-life: they had to be able to compute the dates of important holy-days, they had to have an orderly daily chronology, they had to be able to chant in a manner pleasing to God, they had to be able, obviously, to read and to understand Latin. In any event, the monasteries never made learning an end in itself. Their schools isolated in the countryside served only a small number of "students." It is striking to note, perhaps, that the word most often used when monks speak of education and learning is some form of "nourishment" or "to nourish." A monk nourishes his "students" and they in turn are referred to as ones who are nourished.

the bases for the various renaissances which began in the period 680-700 - renaissances which were peculiarly medieval and which culminated in the most famous renaissance of the early Middle Ages, that of the Carolingians. This latter renaissance Riché urges us to regard not so much as a point of departure for later intellectual and cultural movements, but rather as a brilliant culmination of a critical period in Western civilization, a crucial period of transition in which that civilization

est passé de l'éducation antique à l'éducation médiévale, [and in which] la lettre romain avait pu laisser la place au clerc du Moyen Age.¹⁸

Concomitant with the interaction between the antique and Christian cultures and the subsequent development of a unique medieval culture, another pattern was emerging: the growth and spread of Church education. Education after the Vth century largely meant Church education and the history of medieval education became thereafter the history of the education fostered, in its various aspects, by the Church. All general works and most specific works give some consideration to the Church's role in medieval education.

An illuminating background study of the Church's "official" position in regard to education in the Middle Ages has been provided by Ellen Perry Pride. In an article in Church History, Professor Pride undertook to investigate a much debated aspect of medieval education: the nature

¹⁸Ibid., p. 20

of the actual role played by the Church in education. In her "Ecclesiastical Legislation on Education, A. D. 300-1200,"¹⁹ she concentrated solely on the institutional policies of the Church as expressed in papal pronouncements and Church councils. Her findings would have surprised those historians who made much over the Church's absolute control over education. In reality, the import of Church pronouncements rarely extended beyond exhortations for an educated clergy: ". . . the councils usually contented themselves with laying down the broad general principle that an educated clergy was desirable. With the exception of the one at Vaison (529), they made no specific mention of schools until spurred by Charlemagne's direction."²⁰

With only one exception in the Xth century, no official pronouncements were made by the Church concerning education or learning until the XIIth century and by then the pronouncements of the Church were probuletic:

By the time of Alexander III (1159-1181), when the Church first seems deeply interested, the activities of the many teachers and scholars had already reached remarkable proportions; their associations had assumed many of their customary rights, and the course of the higher studies had been determined. Any action of the pope or councils served merely to crown the accomplished fact.²¹

Professor Pride held that the Clunaic and other reform movements affecting the papacy during the XIth and

¹⁹Church History, XII (1943), 235-254.

²⁰Ibid., 245.

²¹Ibid., 252.

XIIth centuries accounted for the seeming indifference of the Church to the "vanities" of education. When the Church did act, it usually re-acted as, for example, against the dialectical spirit of the new learning. In essence, the official position of the Church was not as blue-printed and as organized as some historians had claimed. In reiterating that the tenor of papal and conciliar policy toward education was of a vague sort and consisted chiefly of perennial recommendations for greater educational efforts, Professor Pride made a key observation in describing the Church councils. They, she noted, "were composed not of educational specialists, but of executives with many problems, living in an age where there was little demand for teaching. They showed themselves ahead of their time in doing even that much."²²

In turning to the content of Christian education in the early Middle Ages, we may note the only work on the relationship between the Church Fathers and medieval education. Unfortunately, the title of the Rev. Frank P. Cassidy's work, The Molders of the Medieval Mind: The Influence of the Fathers of the Church on the Medieval Schoolmen,²³ promised more than its author delivered. Father Cassidy, rather than demonstrating the educational influence of the Fathers on medieval education, or even

²²Ibid., 245.

²³Port Washington, New York: Kennikat Press, Ind., 1966. (originally, 1944)

on the medieval schoolmen, was content merely to outline and summarize the educational tracts of the Fathers. Even this sketch of an interesting subject is disappointing. Instead of a thorough historical analysis of patristic thought and its relation to medieval education, Father Cassidy has provided what amounted to a sermon on the glories of the medieval Catholic viewpoint.

One aspect of educational activity undertaken by the Church which has received little notice from historians is the role of the missionaries as educators. In at least the broad sense of the term, the missionaries were educators. In their proselytizing activity much effort was inevitably given to education. An investigation of that effort would promise to bring to light some interesting findings concerning a relatively neglected aspect of medieval education.

Only one specific study has considered the relationship between the missions and education and even that has done so indirectly. Putnam Fennell Jones in his "The Gregorian Missions and English Education,"²⁴ questioned A. F. Leach's contention²⁵ that English education, especially at Canterbury, in the time of Augustine, "the Apostle of England," was marked by secularity and semi-independence from Rome. Leach had made the seemingly fantastic statement that the model of England's first schools was not the

²⁴Speculum: III (1928), 335-348.

²⁵See above, pp. 76-77.

schools of the Church, but rather those of pagan antiquity. In seeking to substantiate his own thesis to the contrary, Jones tried to ascertain what educational purposes, if any, the Gregorian mission to England had and the nature of the education actually imparted by the missionaries.

A brief examination of the personalities and thought of Gregory, the architect of the English mission, and of his agent, Augustine, provided sufficient evidence to Jones that if there was an educational purpose to the mission, it was certainly neither secular nor semi-independent. Although an examination of Augustine's activities from 597 to his death in 604/605 indicates that the monks had little time for "additional enterprise," they must have certainly made some provision for education. Beginning in 644 with Ithamar of Rochester, native (and presumably educated) Englishmen were elevated to episcopal sees.²⁶ Granted, then, that some form of education was provided by the missionaries in the early VIIth century, what can be said of its nature? Again, hypothesizing from the personality and predilections of Gregory, Jones judged it to be the standard Benedictine education of the day²⁷ and thus concluded that the first English schools were exclusively religious in purpose and in method.²⁸

²⁶Jones, 342-345.

²⁷Ibid., 345.

²⁸Ibid., 348.

If the missionaries have not received their full due in the history of medieval education, there is yet another group of medieval churchmen whose role in education has been comparatively neglected. The cathedral schools have received some attention from historians, but as yet there has been no full scale study of the bishops who patronized and, in many cases, taught in these schools. One recent and specific essay, Sister Consuelo Maria Aherne, S. S. J.'s "Late Visigothic Bishops, Their Schools and the Transmission of Culture,"²⁹ focussed some attention on this question; however, a nine page article is hardly sufficient. Sister Consuelo's point was to emphasize the unique contribution, the transmission of culture from antiquity to the High Middle Ages, made by seven late Visigothic bishops: "A galaxy of enlightened bishops, inheritors and transmitters of the highly developed Hispano-Roman intellectual tradition, who graced the Church in seventh century Spain."³⁰

Her terse and well-written article was essentially a synthesis of the findings of previous historians on the cultural roles played by the bishops and thus, other than the synthesis itself, little new was added to the subject except some publicity for a chapter in the educational-cultural history of the Middle Ages as yet unwritten.

The institutional aspect of medieval education in

²⁹Traditio, XXII (1966), 435-444.

³⁰Ibid., 435.

the early period has received more attention and has fared better than both the missionaries and the bishops at the hands of scholars.

The palace schools, both those of the Merovingians and Carolingians in addition to the court schools of other dynasties, have not been the recipients of a comprehensive monographic study although they all have had their individual histories narrated in general educational histories and in accounts of the cultural aspects of a particular dynasty. We have already noted that the Carolingian palace schools loomed large in an earlier period's consideration of the origins of the universities.³¹ The Merovingian palace schools, less documented than the Carolingian's court schools and thus more of an enigma to historians, have consequently been the object of some debate. The debate seemed to be settled and the outlines of the palace schools of the Merovingians established in a series of articles by E. Vancandard at the turn of this century.

The series began with the appearance of "La scola du palais mérovingien,"³² in which M. Vancandard took the opportunity to dispute the long held thesis of Dom Pitra (in Histoire de saint Leger, évêque d'Autun et martyr) and Fustel de Coulanges (in La monarchie franque) that the existence of an "école littéraire" at the court of the Mero-

³¹See above, pp. 29-37, 49-51.

³²Révue des Questions Historiques, n.s., XVII (LXI of the collection) (1897), 490-502.

vingian kings could be proved by an examination of the saints' Lives of the VIth and VIIth centuries. M. Vancandard's reading of the relevant texts led him to believe that rather than being a center of literary studies, the palace school was essentially a training ground for court fonctionnaires and bureaucrats. There may have been some knowledge of letters required even for these positions; however, "Le palais était une pépinière de comtes, de ducs, de domestiques, et non une école de lettres: les maîtres étaient des fonctionnaires et non des grammairiens et des dialecticiens."³³

The focal point of the disagreement between Vancandard and Dom Pitra and Fustel de Coulanges was the meaning to be attributed to the word scola which appeared over and over again in the texts. For the latter, scola referred to a "school" and, in particular, to a literary school in the old tradition. Vancandard demonstrated however that scola in Merovingian times had come to have a different and more comprehensive meaning than it had had previously. Instead of simply a "school," scola had come to connote a branch of court organization under which a complex of activities, primarily administrative and bureaucratic, was subsumed. Along with such tasks as the minting of coinage for the realm, the scola also had a "school" in which future fonctionnaires in the scola were trained. A more exact description of the scola and its specialized

³³Ibid., 497.

vocational training program can not be gleaned from the texts: "En tous cas, ce qui est dur, c'est que la scola palatine des temps mérovingiens n'a rien de commun avec une école littéraire."³⁴

The Carolingian palace schools and especially the educational reforms undertaken by Charlemagne and his successors have attracted some attention in their own right but more often as the primary effect and witness to the Carolingian revival or renaissance. Indeed, all histories of the Middle Ages usually consider the Carolingian educational revival and the rise of the universities as the foremost events in that period's intellectual history. Little specific attention, however, has been given to Carolingian education in its own right. J. Bass Mullinger in his The Schools of Charles the Great and the Restoration of Education in the Ninth Century,³⁵ which first appeared in 1877, produced perhaps the standard study for this important period in the history of medieval education although the work is old and shows the biases of its age.³⁶

³⁴Ibid., 502. Subsequent articles served to maintain Vancandard's thesis against proponents of the palace school as a literary center. See M. Vancandard's rejoinders, "Encore un mot sur la scola du palais mérovingien," ibid., n.s., XVIII (LXII of the collection) (1897), 546-551; "Un dernier mot sur l'école du palais mérovingien," ibid., n.s., XXXII (LXXVI of the collection), (1904), 549-553.

³⁵New York: G. E. Stechert and Company, 1932.

³⁶Mullinger managed to touch all the bases in his account of Carolingian education. Yet, the factual narrative somehow, does get at the heart of the matter. For Mullinger, Carolingian education, rather than occupying a unique chapter in the history of medieval education exemplified a confluence of ideals endemic in Western thought,

A better, more recent treatment of Carolingian education can be found in the second half of M. L. W. Laistner's Thought and Letters in Western Europe³⁷ Although Laistner was more concerned with detailing the substance of the Carolingian renaissance than with education alone his remarks on Carolingian education are illuminating. Unlike many others who have turned to this period, Laistner treated education within the larger context of Carolingian policy, especially religious policy. Carolingian education becomes more meaningful when understood as an outgrowth of Charles' concern to assure the purity of the faith and the ability of the clergy to perform their function in society than when understood merely as an interlude in the "dark ages" or as a first step, via the palace school, toward the university. Aside from Laistner's narrative of the emphases of Carolingian education and of the luminaries who fostered that education, his interpretation of the place of Carolingian education in the total stream of medieval history is, perhaps, more interesting. As with so many Carolingian

a set of ideals which the XIXth century was fond of finding in all "good" things:

the traditions, handed down from republican and imperial Rome, of law and order, of reverence for authority and the established order of things; the more independent and vigorous intellectual characteristics of Teutonism; the inquiring, restless, and often unruly Celtic spirit, touched and quickened by Hellenic thought.

372nd edition. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1957.

innovations and achievements, there is always a note of failure:

Compared . . . with conditions in the preceding centuries the extent to which education had by 814 become available was truly astonishing. It is unhappily true also that the phenomenon was ephemeral.³⁸

But in the case of Carolingian education, Laistner saw an element of continuity which traversed the "transitional" Xth century and "perpetuated sufficient of Carolingian learning to serve as the foundation for the more vigorous minds of the eleventh and twelfth centuries."³⁹ If this is so, a reassessment of the Xth century will have to be made on at least two levels. The implications of Laistner's thesis demand that we ask if the Xth century was really intellectually fertile. Secondly, if it was, despite all that we have traditionally held about that century, we must ask how much of the intellectual life of the Xth century was a continuation of Carolingian themes and, how much, if any, was a response to the circumstances and a product of the resources of the Xth century.

One fundamental work which dealt with the post-Carolingian period touched on some of the questions later posed by Laistner. However, Leon Maître's Les écoles épiscopales et monastiques en occident avant les universités (788-1180),⁴⁰ in the end, disappoints. It must be

³⁸Ibid., p. 202.

³⁹Ibid., p. 388.

⁴⁰("Archives de la France Monastique," vol. XXVI). Deuxième édition réfondue. Liguge: Abbaye Saint-Martin; Paris: A. Picard et Fils, 1924. (Originally, 1866)

admitted though that we cannot begin the study of medieval education without consulting Maître's survey of the monastic and cathedral schools from the time of the Carolingians to the first universities.

Maître's treatment of the cathedral and monastic centers of learning fell into two main sections. He, first, listed and described in century by century fashion the principal schools in each ecclesiastical province. Having described the most important schools, in the second section of his work he described the condition of the masters and students and noted the course of studies pursued.

The first section is a veritable Baedeker's to the chief centers of learning throughout ten metropolitan sees during the four centuries which concerned Maître. The most salient fact concerning these four centuries which emerged from Maître's study was the very noticeable "épanouissement" of the monastic and cathedral schools which began in the XIth century and reached its peak in the XIIth century. The reasons for this burst of vitality during this period lay, one suspects, at the very roots of medieval society in general. A whole complex of phenomena bears witness to the fact that the Xth and, even more so, the XIth and XIIth centuries were times of radical change throughout medieval society. What I am suggesting is that the dynamic stirrings that we can note in medieval education, as well as in art, literature, architecture, religion, and even in medieval politics, are less sui generis (as some descriptions of these

movements would lead one to believe) and more reactions to a fundamental shift or transformation in medieval society and therefore medieval culture. This is not quite the place to explore more fully this fascinating question. But I do want to indicate part of the reason why in the final analysis I think Maître's account of the situation to be somewhat superficial.

Maître explained the revival of schools by falling back on the theory that the men of the Middle Ages expected the world to come to an end in the year 1,000. With such an expectation, the medieval man could hardly be expected to do much during the Xth century except to await the fated moment. An education, particularly, would be of no avail in light of the impending end of things. Once the awaited moment passed without event however, there burst out a revival which today serves to explain, among other things, revived educational activity in the XIth century.

Maître was cognizant of the objections to milleniarism and even quoted an opinion voiced in 1850 contrary to his own.⁴¹ However, the fact that Adson de Montier-en-Der and Abbo of Fleury had published refutations of the milleniarists lent weight, in Maître's opinion, to Raoul Glaber's "incontestable" authority that the approaching end of the world was accepted "parmi le peuple." But, if

⁴¹Ibid., p. 64. The opinion was that of M. Digot, Recherches sur les écoles épiscopales et monastiques de la province de Trèves.

the end of the world was held to be imminent among the people - so much so that it caused a supposedly noticeable period of dormancy and then revival throughout Europe (or at least within the ten metropolitan sees comprising the intellectual capitals of the medieval period) - one would expect that we would have a vast amount of evidence, either pro or con, indicative of the impact of this belief on Europe. What the evidence Maître cited does prove is that there may have been some here or there preparing for the end of the world in the Xth century, but certainly not enough to explain a widespread intellectual and cultural revolution.

Likewise in his account of the XIIth century renaissance, Maître seemed to have ignored some of the fundamental explanations and considerations and to have attributed the whole movement to a small and secondary, although perhaps contributive, aspect of the cultural renaissance of the XIIth century. For Maître, the emergence and flourishing of the religious orders in the XIth century led to an intense rivalry among them which manifested itself in increased ardor and zeal for studies.⁴² Again, this explanation seems somewhat inadequate to account for a movement as widespread (not only geographically, but especially intellectually) as the renaissance of the XIIth century.

In the second section of Les écoles épiscopales et monastiques, Maître pointed out that the internal organ=

⁴²Ibid., p. 94.

ization of the various schools followed a general pattern with no strictly uniform system applicable among them. In describing the origins of a common organizational system in the XIth century, his explanation again glossed over root causes of some of the most important developments in medieval educational history. Maître noted that as a reaction to the emancipation of the bourgeoisie and the concomitant multiplication of error, the Church, exercising her accustomed teaching authority, took the regulation of education into her own hands by demanding that teachers obtain a license to teach. In this way, the Church, Maître wrote, had some control over education while at the same time organizing the cathedral school structure.⁴³ However, there are two oversights in this explanation of the institution of the licetia docendi. For one thing, it was not "the Church" which required the licentia of the masters, but rather the bishops acting within their dioceses. There is a difference. The bishops regulated the teaching profession for reasons of their own and were often in conflict with the Papacy in so doing.⁴⁴ To say simply "the Church" overlooks much of the question. Secondly, the bishops were motivated to control the teaching profession not so much because of the unorthodox views of the bourgeoisie, although these there certainly were, but rather because

⁴³Ibid., p. 120.

⁴⁴Professor Gaines Post has illumined this whole question, see below, pp. 130-132.

education had become by the XIth century a rather profitable monopoly of the bishoprics. The fact of the matter was though that the cathedral schools and their canons could not meet the demands being made for education in the XIth and XIIth centuries. By requiring the licentia docendi, the cathedral chapters were able to provide more education while at the same time having control over it and gaining some revenue from it. Again, to say simply that the licentia docendi was a safeguard against doctrinal error is an oversimplification.

Maitre's book, when it was first published over a century ago, was a remarkable achievement and is still useful. It remains the only serious consideration of the monastic and cathedral schools during a crucial period in their history. Today we know much more than Maitre did about the framework in which that history was made.

One recent specialized article which concentrated on a particular century, the nefarious Xth century which Baronius notarized as the age of blood and iron, hinted, with Laistner, at how that framework has changed. Professor Luitpold Wallach in his brief contribution to a Symposium on the Tenth Century, entitled "Education and Culture in the Tenth Century,"⁴⁵ indicated that perhaps our indices for measuring the degree of education and culture in any one period are somewhat in need of revision. The Xth century

⁴⁵Medievalia et Humanistica, IX (1955), 18-22.

is one which has been traditionally depicted as a cultural desert by intellectual historians. Yet, as Professor Wallach pointed out, the true state of affairs, far from being bleak, was less than dismal and even showed some signs of advancement and improvement:

Despite the destruction, wrought by wars, of numerous seats of learning, and despite the general decline of culture, the process of education was never completely interrupted. Established schools, monastic, episcopal, and rural, continued to function everywhere. And new educational institutions were erected in newly missionized sections of the Slavic East and in the South-East of Europe.⁴⁶

In addition to helping exonerate the Xth century of the charge of having been "dark," Professor Wallach also indicated a more radical and exciting development in the framework within which medieval education had theretofore been viewed. For generations, medieval education has meant exclusively the education fostered by the Church. Although this has been no doubt rightly so, Professor Wallach noted that this kind of education, at best, only affected a small segment of the entire population. Citing recent work by two German scholars,⁴⁷ Professor Wallach objected to the usual conclusion that is often drawn from the realization of the small impact made by the Church's educational system on Europe at large:

⁴⁶Ibid., 18.

⁴⁷J. Sofer, "Die Differenzierung der romanischen Sprachen," Die Sprache: Zeitschrift für Sprachwissenschaft, II (1950), 23-38; W. von Wartburg, Die Entstehung der romanischen Völker. Tübingen, 1951.

But to call the populace illiterate because it lacked the particular type of education sponsored by the Church would be in error. After all, the entire Latin educational system appears like a small superstratum imposed on a huge substratum of Romanic and Germanic peoples, who by the tenth century possessed languages and cultures which had already produced during the preceding century a literary expression of their own.⁴⁸

Although it was an elitist group, educated by the clergy in the Church schools, which guided the fate of medieval Europe, an understanding of "popular" education would perhaps go a long way toward illuminating a heretofore rather dark corner of the Middle Ages: the history of the education of the "huge substratum."

⁴⁸"Education and Culture in the Tenth Century," 20.

CHAPTER III

SPECIFIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

When Heumann compiled his bibliography of educational histories, not one work appeared which had as its subject any type of educational institution other than the universities or academies founded during the Renaissance. In fact, interest in non-university educational institutions is only of comparatively recent date. It is difficult to account for this neglect, except perhaps to say that it simply indicates the lack of interest in the subject. Of the scores of centers of learning and education, no more than a handful have been studied at any length.

The schools of Chartres, second only to those of Paris, have been fortunate in attracting the interest of several scholars. Chartres warrants such interest. Long a rival of Paris for primacy among the schools of northern France, Chartres was an important center of neo-Platonic and scientific studies.

Chartres found its historian almost three quarters of a century ago when Jules Alexandre Clerval published his Les écoles de Chartres au moyen-âge du Ve au XVIe siècles.¹ Charles Homer Hastings rightly designated Clerval's

book as the best treatment of a particular cathedral school² and with justifiable pride Clerval himself indicated why:

Nous avons équisse avec amour tous les détails de leur organisation. Nous avons retrouvé la trace de leurs maîtres, de leurs élèves, de leurs programmes, de leurs livres, et nous les avons mis en lumière avec tout le soin qui nous a été possible. Nous ne croyons pas qu'aucune autre école ont jusqu'ici une histoire aussi complète que celle-ci, plus remplie de faits précis.³

Until the XIth century, Chartres germinated. Its schools educated adequately and it would be wrong to say that the school lay dormant. It did lie however in the shadow of its more famous neighbors, Reims and Fleury. In the world of the cathedral school fame came and went with a particular master and a school experienced lean or fat seasons, as it were, depending on the calibre of the men teaching at the time. Before the XIth century, Chartres had established the groundwork for a fine cathedral school:

elle a ses évêques, ses chancelliers, ses maîtres, ses étudiants; elle enseigne avec éclat, elle possède outre les livres du médecine et de chant, tous les auteurs classiques des arts libéraux. Vienne un maître éminent, et elle est prête à prendre rang, à côté, sinon au-dessus, des plus grandes écoles.⁴

¹Paris: Alphonse Picard et Fils, 1895. Chartres' most recent historian, Raymond Klibansky ("The School of Chartres," Twelfth-Century Europe and the Foundations of Modern Society, edd. Gaines Post, Robert Reynolds, Marshall Clagett Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1961, 3-14) was concerned not with the school there but with the function assigned to science in the work of Thierry of Chartres.

²The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century, p. 397.

³Clerval, vi.

⁴Ibid., p. 28.

The eminent master came to Chartres in the person of the celebrated Bishop Fulbert.

Under Fulbert, Chartres began to attract students from other episcopal centers. Reims especially was affected by Chartres' new found brilliance. Chartres itself was of course affected by the large numbers of students who came to study under Fulbert. Clerval, basing his research on contemporary documents, was able to reconstruct a roster of Fulbert's disciples which included more than fifty names of scholars who came from all points on the compass and as far away as Cologne to study at Chartres.

Chartres' prestige and fame were enhanced under Fulbert's successor, Ives of Chartres, during the first half of the XIIth century despite the proximity and attraction exercised by Paris' schools. However, unfortunately for the Chartrain schools, Paris soon presented an irresistible attraction for students and by the second half of the XIIth century had completely eclipsed Chartres. The schools at Chartres still remained, of course, but their role in the intellectual history of the Middle Ages became secondary to that of the universities: "elles descendent peu à peu au rang d'écoles locales, préparatoires aux Universités et aux Functions ecclésiastiques."⁵

Clerval's work was an excellent compendium of detail relating to Chartres and its schools. Because he did not

⁵Ibid., p. 273.

attempt to address his study to more fundamental questions of medieval education - such as the movement first to centers like Chartres and then later, and finally, to Paris - which played such an important part in the history of all the schools, his work is somewhat lacking. Recent studies have indicated that Clerval's narrowness may have led him to misinterpret certain aspects of Chartres' history as an educational center. One such study, Loren C. MacKinney's Bishop Fulbert and Education at the School of Chartres⁶ demonstrated that Clerval had depended more on legend than on fact when describing Fulbert's activities as an educator.

In Bishop Fulbert and Education at the School of Chartres, Professor MacKinney proposed to set the record straight. Fulbert's activities and influence as a teacher had really been magnified out of true proportion ever since his contemporaries eulogized him. Clerval with his long list of Fulbertian disciples was only the last and perhaps best in a long series of scholars who had attributed to Fulbert every intellectual advance in France and the Rhineland, be it literary, scientific, or theological, during the XIth century. Professor MacKinney suggested a limited, if not more realistic, appraisal of Fulbert's importance:

In the interest of historical objectivity, it is well to differentiate carefully between Fulbert's benign

⁶("Texts and Studies in the History of Mediaeval Education," no. VI) Notre Dame, Indiana: the Mediaeval Institute, University of Notre Dame, 1957.

reputation throughout northern France and his actual pedagogical activities at Chartres; also between his general influence as an outstanding bishop and his teaching of learned subjects. A rigid analysis in keeping with the available evidence reveals a Fulbert whose pedagogical influence was narrower than that of Gerbert. Fulbert was not the head of an institution of higher education in the modern sense of the term, but rather a busy bishop, only a portion of whose functions were pedagogical. Aside from his enviable reputation as an episcopal administrator, he was known chiefly as an orthodox theologian, and his actual sphere of teaching influence was limited. There is, we believe, no valid evidence to the effect that he dominated educational circles outside the Ile de France, or that he was necessarily the inspirer of all scientific and literary achievements of his so-called 'disciples' in distant regions such as the Low Countries and the Rhinelands. In many cases he seems to have been merely the most pious or most famous of several teachers, and Chartres merely one of several schools that had a part in the migratory education of a wandering scholar.⁷

Fulbert, then, was more an administrator than a teacher. The trend in all the schools of the XIth and XIIth centuries, on the whole, was to relegate the teaching duties of the cathedral to a specially designated individual. Rarely, at this date, would we find the bishops personally providing the backbone of instruction in the cathedral. There is another sense though in which the bishops provided education and thus "taught" and it is this sense which MacKinney thought more accurately described Fulbert's role: he was the bishop of Chartres and thus all the activities of that see might be said to originate from and be guided by him although he need not have engaged in all the activities emanating from the cathedral.

⁷Ibid., pp. 12-13.

Reims, often Chartres' greatest competitor during the Middle Ages, has been the only other cathedral school which has received recent study. In two articles devoted to Reims' schools, Professor John R. Williams unfolded their XIth and early XIIth century history. In his "The Cathedral School of Rheims in the Eleventh Century," he traced the fortunes of the school in the period immediately after Gerbert, whom many believe represented the zenith of educational activity at Reims.⁸ Gerbert's fame and his work at Reims might have been expected to carry over some momentum into the XIth century. However, as Professor Williams showed, the opposite was more the case. The school in the XIth century lacked distinction and, in fact, for the historian becomes an "elusive entity."⁹ For two and a half decades during the second half of the century, under the Archbishoprics of Gervase (1055-1067) and Marasses I (1068-1080), the school regained some of its former prestige. At one point in the early 1070's there were four masters at Reims - a fact attesting to its renewed vitality. However, with the passing of the last of these masters the school again fell back into obscurity. The most probable explanation for this was the already mentioned quirk of Cathedral school existence: beginning in the late XIth century potential students for Reims were going instead to Laon

⁸Speculum, XXIX, (1954), 661-677.

⁹Ibid., 672.

where Anselm and Ralph of Laon lectured until 1117. The students followed the masters.

Reims flourished once again when Laon lost Anselm to death and Anselm's most brilliant pupil, Alberic, came to Reims in the early XIIth century. The period of Alberic's magistracy at Reims formed the basis for Professor Williams' second study of the schools there. In his "The Cathedral School of Reims in the Time of Master Alberic, 1118-1136,"¹⁰ Professor Williams again demonstrated his intimate knowledge of the individuals and history of Reims' schools. Alberic restored to the school some of the lustre it had had under Gerbert and again under the four masters who taught a half-century after Gerbert. However, Alberic was interesting to Professor Williams chiefly as a theologian. As a former pupil of Anselm, Alberic was the last outpost, the last remnant of the traditional approach to theology immediately before the advent of Abelard. As Professor Williams put it, "Alberic was the representative of an obsolescent method."¹¹

For eighteen years at Reims Alberic continued to comment on divina pagina according to the pattern bequeathed him by Anselm. The pattern itself was soon to be altered, yet the interest and enthusiasm he communicated to his international clientele of students was to prove an important stimulus to the advancement of theological scholarship. Miss Beryl Smalley, in her excellent work on the Bible in the Middle Ages, traces the progress of theological studies from eleventh century Paris, to Laon under Anselm, and thence back to Paris. Could it be that the road back to Paris passed through the Reims of Master Alberic?"¹²

¹⁰Traditio, XX (1964), 93-114.

¹¹Ibid., 113.

Professor Williams' answer would be that it did.

Some specific studies have been made of schools in the post-university period. These studies have concentrated for the most part on the colleges which grew up as adjuncts to the universities. One such college which has been the object of a scholarly study was Paris' Ave Maria College. In his history of this institution, Student Life in Ave Maria College, Mediaeval Paris: History and Chartulary of the College,¹³ Astrik L. Gabriel provided not only a narrative of the college's history from its founding, but also a general introduction to the Parisian colleges of the early XIVth century. His study recreated the studies and pattern of life of the young students of grammar and the arts who lived at the college. The neighborhood, the architecture of its buildings and its internal organization were all pieced together from a variety of documents.

Gray Cowan Boyce, in addition to investigating the non-university milieu, ventured into an even more untrammelled field when he studied the pre-university schools at Erfurt. In "Erfurt Schools and Scholars in the Thirteenth Century,"¹⁴ Professor Boyce presented a study both of the town of Erfurt and its schools. He found in central

¹²Ibid., 113-114.

¹³("Publications in Mediaeval Studies," no. 14), Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1955.

¹⁴Speculum, XXIV, (1949), 1-18.

Germany an intellectual community which served as the meeting place for men of varied backgrounds and interests.¹⁵

Possibly of more interest for this study than what he had to say of Erfurt's schools were Professor Boyce's remarks on the changing nature of the historian's approach to medieval education:

Much of the literature describing educational activities of an earlier day seems at times unnecessarily weighted, for too often the story is merely of constitutional quibbles or scholastic jargon that only the specialist can swallow and hope to digest. There is meant here no lack of respect for much fine work that has already been done. . . . Yet today our interests take a new turn. If we are not the less concerned about matters that were vital for them, we are somewhat more interested in the mediaeval school and scholar as parts of the social pattern of their times. Pictured in full relation to the society of which they were such a vital part, the mediaeval school and scholar can become subjects of infinite variety and irresistible attraction.¹⁶

¹⁵Ibid., 13.

¹⁶Ibid., 2.

CHAPTER IV

THE UNIVERSITIES

It has already been indicated that the universities, peculiarly medieval institutions, have been the major recipients of scholarly attention since the end of the Renaissance. This pattern changed little in the period from 1850 to the present. However, the form that it took did.

Some works such as Simon Somerville Laurie's The Rise and Early Constitution of Universities With a Survey of Mediaeval Education¹ and Gabriel Compayré's Abelard and the Origin and Early History of the Universities² contained much that was already hackneyed in the history of the universities but, and this indicated that the form of university histories was changing, they showed some interest in questions other than the sterile search for a founding date for the university or the meaningless sermonizing over the dogmatism of the Church in the early Middle Ages.

Laurie's work, essentially a textbook for students

¹("International Education Series") New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1891.

²("The Great Educators") New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1893.

of education, has little to recommend it. He did, however, link the origins of the universities to the rise of the towns and the bourgeoisie although all that this meant for him was that at long last a secular spirit had risen up against the long dominant clerical orders.³ Again, another trenchant point hinted at by Laurie was that the vast corpus of new knowledge which came into the West from the East demanded specialization - specialization which only a university could make effective. In fact, Laurie's definition of a university rested heavily on the notion of specialization: "They [the universities] were specialized schools, as opposed to the schools of Arts, and they were open to all without restrictions as studia publica or generalia, as opposed to the more restricted ecclesiastical schools which were under a 'Rule.'"⁴

In his work, Compayré highlighted the initial "specializer" in the development of the university: Abelard, who more than anyone else differentiated theology from philosophy. For Compayré, Abelard was to be credited with the founding of the University of Paris or, at least, with the "great intellectual movement" which led to it.⁵ However, Compayré's endorsement of Abelard as the prime agent in the founding of the university was subject to an

³Laurie, pp. 95-97.

⁴Ibid., p. 101.

⁵Compayré, Abelard and the Origin and Early History of the Universities, pp. 5-10.

important qualification:

However important the role of Abelard may have been, I have no thought to attributing to a single man, or an individual influence, an academic revolution so considerable as that of the foundation of the universities of the Middle Ages. The most brilliant personality can do nothing if the society in which it finds itself is not propitious, if circumstances do not second its action.⁶

Here was a hint of concern for the universities which looked beyond the universities and its masters and students to the larger context of the Middle Ages themselves which were ultimately the true "origins" of those institutions. Compayré, however, did not expand upon his cautionary note. His book remained a competent, though standard treatment of the universities in the Middle Ages.

A more important and influential treatment of the universities was Hastings Rashdall's The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages⁷ which first appeared in 1895. Rashdall has been criticized for not saying enough and, also, for saying some things wrongly. Nevertheless, it has remained the book which everyone consults when beginning the study of the medieval universities. The Universities of Europe has been re-edited and re-issued since 1895⁸,

⁶Ibid., p. 24.

⁷Two volumes. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1895.

⁸Three volumes. New edition. Edited by F. M. Powicke and A. B. Emden. London: Oxford University Press, 1936. Professor Powicke best described the major fault of the original work:

"The chief defect of Rashdall's Universities in Europe in the Middle Ages, to my mind - an inevitable defect - is that it fails to convey an impression of

but even in its 1895 form, it is a landmark in the history of medieval education.

The appearance of Rashdall's work owed itself to, and indeed was made possible by, the pioneering work of Heinrich Denifle whose Die Entstehung des Universitäten des Mittelalters bis 1400 (the only volume to appear in a projected five volume series) and collection of sources compiled with the aid of M. Chatelain, Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis, provided a firm base for Rashdall's own study. Rashdall went, however, beyond the limits of university history narrated by Fr. Denifle. Rashdall's plan was to trace the full history of the three archetypal universities, Bologna, Paris, and Oxford, and to give shorter notices of the many national universities which were founded in the wake of these institutions. In achieving that plan, Rashdall produced a concise, readable, and mature point of departure for the study of the medieval university.

At every turn in his work, especially in volume one which considered the period of origins, Rashdall dealt

depth. I mean depth as a dimension, not as a metaphor for intellectual thoroughness. His picture of medieval Paris has extension but not depth. Hence it conveys little sense of coherence, of a closely knit, if turbulent, society actually alive and carried along by its own impetus. Yet we cannot realise that the significance of a medieval University if we do not go beyond a classification of its activities and a summary description of its interests."

"Presidential Address: 'Some Problems in the History of the Medieval University,'" Transactions of the Royal Historical Society (Fourth Series), XVII (1934), 4.

the deathblow to all the venerable myths which, from the XVIth century, had accompanied the history of medieval universities. Rashdall realized that his book was a pioneering effort in its own right⁹ but could little realize how extensively his initial effort would aid future historians. The reason for the popularity of his work lies primarily in its sheer completeness.

In addition to giving a flat "no" to the tales of Alcuin's founding of the University of Paris and to restoring some perspective to Abelard's true role in the establishment of that university, Rashdall gave his readers in one book a detailed history of the major universities, the national universities of Italy, Spain, France, Germany, and Scotland, and even, in an appendix, the "paper universities", while all the while maintaining proper perspective between university history and medieval history at large. Despite its errors of omission and commission, the scholarship and magnitude of the enterprise evinced in the The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages, make it, especially as revised, the unsurpassed general history of the universities.

If there has been any general work which approximates Rashdall's for a broad understanding of the medieval university, it is Charles Homer Haskins' quite different

⁹The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages (1895), I, v. "When I began to work at the medieval Universities, no really critical book had appeared on the subject as a whole or on any large section of it."

The Rise of the Universities.¹⁰ Originally a lecture delivered in 1923, in printed form The Rise of the Universities is of pamphlet length in comparison to Rashdall's monumental work. Haskins' work comes unencumbered with footnotes and is written in a more pleasing, almost popular style. However, if The Rise of the Universities had none of the weightiness of Rashdall's tomes, it did exhibit the same scholarly familiarity with the subject matter. In some respects, Haskins' condensation better lends itself to an understanding of the university movement than Rashdall's critical study of origins, constitutions and the like. This much in a leisurely, pleasant, and small book one rarely finds.

The unenviable distinction of having produced the worst general history of the medieval university falls to Nathan Schachner for his The Mediaeval Universities.¹¹ This work is poor not only for the errors of fact and judgment which the author abounded in, but because of his popular (in the pejorative sense), sleezy, reportorial approach to the whole topic: an approach which admirably conveyed the single valid point made by the author, namely

¹⁰Full citation, note 17, p. 77 above.

¹¹New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1938.
Of this work, Professor Boyce commented (see above, p. 80):
"The work is not worthy of the space here accorded it, but in educational practice the bad scholar frequently needs more attention than the worthy student who follows the rules."
"American Studies in Medieval Education," 11.

his lack of any ability and knowledge to write a serious treatment of the medieval university. One would be tempted to handle this particular work in a sarcastic vein were it not for the sad fact that such works have provided fuel for needless tragedy in the past. A bad book is hardly a topic for humor.

Several general works have appeared since the Second World War which have added little to the history of the medieval university. They have, however, by condensing the findings of scholars such as Denifle and Rashdall, given that history a wider reading public. Two such general works deserve mention.

In 1961, Lowrie J. Daly's The Medieval University: 1200-1400¹² was published. Intended primarily for "college students and teachers who in the course of their work have need of information about medieval universities,"¹³ Daly did not attempt a history beyond a general description based on the standard texts. Helene Wieruszowski's The Medieval University: Masters, Students, Learning¹⁴ based on Rashdall's and Stephen D'Irsay's work, is in the same vein as The Medieval University: 1200-1400. Although both were perhaps too general, they did have the advantage of being able to tersely summarize the more prolix findings

¹²New York: Sheed and Ward, 1961.

¹³Ibid., vii.

¹⁴("An Anvil Original") Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company, Inc., 1966.

of their predecessors. Perhaps with these works, Professor Boyce's call for an "adequate survey - rationally organized, based upon a deep knowledge and adequate control of fact, written with clarity and precision,"¹⁵ has been answered.

Many good works of special nature have contributed to our knowledge of the medieval university. One such work, Louis Paetow's The Arts Course at Mediaeval Universities With Special Reference to Grammar and Rhetoric¹⁶ sought to determine the roots of the humanists' animus against medieval education. More specifically, it sought to determine why medieval men within their flourishing universities gave little consideration to the classics. The answer, Paetow discovered, was simply that the classics did not interest them as much as other studies. The two pillars of classical studies, grammar and rhetoric, mirror this preoccupation with non-classical interests. Grammar in the medieval university was relegated to the somewhat perfunctory position of an entrance requirement to higher studies. The requirement was satisfied by the reading of contemporary grammars - not those of Donatus and Priscian. Rhetoric "suffered" even during the Middle Ages and became essentially the medieval business course. It was concerned with the art of writing well and ornately. Given this general neglect of the pillars of classical education

¹⁵See above, p. 80. "American Studies in Education," 6.

¹⁶("University Studies of the University of Illinois," III, no. 7) Champaign, Illinois, 1910.

Professor Postow was able to conclude that in one sense at least the universities "retarded the revival of learning."¹⁷

The majority of specialized works trained on university history have emphasized the legal and constitutional aspects of the medieval university. Two American scholars, Gaines Post and Pearl Kibre, have been especially prolific in this regard.

Professor Post's interest in the medieval university was early reflected in his Harvard doctoral dissertation entitled "The Papacy and the Rise of the Universities." Many of his subsequent articles on the university were expansions of chapters of this work. A key chapter appeared in 1929 under the title "Alexander III, the Licentia Docendi and the Rise of the Universities."¹⁸ The issue of the licentia was a crucial one in the development of the university and its importance had been recognized by historians other than Professor Post. As early as 1876 it received extensive scholarly treatment from Georges Bourbon¹⁹ and in 1931 it provided the pivot of Louis Halphen's study of the universities during a crucial period in their history, the XIIIth century.²⁰

¹⁷Ibid., p. 92.

¹⁸In Anniversary Essays in Mediaeval History by Students of Charles Homer Maskins Presented on His Completion of Forty Years of Teaching, edd. Charles H. Taylor and John L. LaMonte (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1927), 255-277.

¹⁹"La licence d'enseigner et le rôle de l'écolâtre au moyen âge," Revue des Questions Historiques, LIX (1876), 513-553.

In his study of the licentiate, Post was concerned to determine whether Pope Alexander III's ruling on the licentia docendi, a ruling which broke the cathedral scholasticus' monopoly of the license, proved a causative factor in the rise of the universities in the XIIth century. Rashdall had stated that the universities would never have grown without Alexander's intervention in the matter of the license.

Professor Post's findings, however, were to the contrary. The Third Lateran Council's ruling affected only cathedral schools. Only one university arose from a cathedral school in the XIIth century, Paris, and thus this particular case was the focus for Professor Post's investigations. At Paris Alexander's decrees had little effect. Paris was a rich town and trade in the license was profitable. The scholastic, the bishop's educational agent, was not restricting the distribution of the license before 1179 and thus the pope's liberal decrees were not really needed at Paris:

The movements of the century were more powerful than papal decrees, and the intellectual renaissance, whatever its causes, resulted in the concentration of masters and students at Paris in spite of fees for the licentia docendi and lack of statutes for examinations of the candidates for the license. The masters were already a de facto corporation when they obtained positive privileges from the papacy in the thirteenth

20"Les universités au XIIIe siècle," Revue Historique, CLXVI (1930), 216-238; ibid., CLXVII (1930), 1-15. Another study of this same crucial period with, however, a somewhat different conclusion is P. Mandonnet, O. P., "La crise scolaire au début du XIIIe siècle et la fondation de l'ordre des frères-prêcheurs," Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique, XV (1914), 34-49.

century. . . . In a word, the teachers at Paris developed into an organization, into the University of Masters without privileges, in spite of minor hindrances such as fees and the qualification of competency, as a result of the advantages offered by the city and of the intellectual and guild movements of the twelfth century. In his regulation of the licentia docendi Alexander III did not directly influence either adversely or favorably the rise of the University.²¹

In another article, "Master's Salaries and Student-Fees in the Mediaeval Universities,"²² Professor Post examined yet another implication of the papal decrees affecting education. Again, with the question of whether the masters were prohibited by the Church from charging for their services, Professor Post found Church legislation to be of minimal import. The ultimate source of the master's livelihood remained fees collected from their students despite some theological arguments to the effect that God's wisdom could not be an object of commerce.

Pearl Kibre's attention has been directed to the organizational aspects of the medieval university. In a series of works published by the Mediaeval Academy of America, Professor Kibre presented an erudite and comprehensive examination of the basic elements of university structure. One of these elements, the "nations" within the universities was the basis of a study in 1948. In The Nations in Mediaeval Uni-

²¹"Alexander III, the Licentia Docendi and the Rise of the Universities," 275-276.

²²Speculum, VII (1932), 181-198. Another study of the legal-constitutional aspect of university history contributed by Professor Post, "Parisian Masters as a Corporation," ibid., IX (1934), 421-445, was unavailable to me.

versities²³ Professor Kibre illumined the solution which arose in the university community to some of the problems attendant upon a large university grouping of students and masters from various lands. The system that evolved was that of the nations or the semi-autonomous associations of masters and students grouped according to national origin. It is this particular institution-within-an-institution which Professor Kibre's study examined and while it overwhelms one with detail and its almost mechanical view of the medieval university, this study, nevertheless, accomplishes its aims and is essential for an understanding of this particular facet of the university.

Professor Kibre's study of the nations was followed by an investigation of the special status accorded scholars throughout the Middle Ages. This second study of the "rights, privileges, and immunities" guaranteed all modern diploma bearers maintained the high degree of scholarship and comprehensiveness evinced in the earlier study. A good introduction to Scholarly Privileges in the Middle Ages: the Rights, Privileges, and Immunities of Scholars and Universities at Bologna, Paris and Oxford²⁴ is the earlier "Scholarly Privileges: Their Roman Origins and Medieval Expression."²⁵ This article contained in germ the

²³("Mediaeval Academy of America Publications," no. 49), Cambridge, Mass.: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1943.

²⁴("Mediaeval Academy of America Publications," no. 72), Cambridge, Mass.: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1962.

conclusions of the later, longer work. Aside from indicating that scholars throughout Western history have enjoyed some kind of special status and preferential treatment (at least in theory), Professor Kibre showed that these privileges and immunities were largely determined by the social exigencies of the times. Grants of privileges to scholars were given in answer to specific requests and thus no generalization, beyond this one, is possible. More than anything else perhaps, a study of the privileges and grants made to the scholars indicates that the universities were not really separate entities revolving in an orbit all their own. The medieval scholar as a representative of a unique social class was defined in terms of the exigencies of his lived situation. In giving emphasis to that situation, and the responses made to it, as detailed in both the article "Scholarly Privileges: Their Roman Origins and Medieval Expression" and Scholarly Privileges in the Middle Ages, Professor Kibre has made a stimulating and intelligible contribution to our knowledge of university life.

Some studies of the university have bordered on the antiquarian. Dorothy Louise Mackay published a note in 1932 of what must be the first record of a university's attempt to recruit a student body. In her "Advertising a Medieval University,"²⁶ she brought the attention of the

²⁵The American Historical Review, LIX (1954), 543-567.

²⁶Ibid., XXXVII (1932), 515-516.

scholarly world to a previously unknown letter which was circulated by Charles I (who revived and enlarged the University of Naples) in 1272 to the universities of Paris and Orleans with the intention of attracting students and masters from these places to come to Naples. In a somewhat longer article, R. J. Mitchell, after combing through the fifteenth century records of the University of Bologna, produced a chronological listing, without comment or conclusion, of fifty English law students present at Bologna during that century.²⁷

Before closing this section on the medieval universities, some mention is due those works which have especially focused on the University of Paris. While there are not a great many works which have concentrated on Paris' university, it should both be noted that Paris has received the lion's share of the general literature and that what studies have been made of a particular university in recent years have been made almost exclusively of the University of Paris.²⁸

²⁷"English Law Students at Bologna in the Fifteenth Century," The English Historical Review, LI (1936), 270-287.

²⁸Only one recent work has been encountered which had as its subject a university other than that at Paris. Cyril Eugene Smith's The University of Toulouse in the Middle Ages: its Origins and Growth to 1500 A. D. (Milwaukee: The Marquette University Press, 1958) is an excellent study of a somewhat unique university. Unlike other XIIth and XIIIth century universities, Toulouse can point to the date and circumstances of its foundation. The date was 1229 and the circumstance was the Treaty of Paris which ended the wars against the Albigensian heretics. Explicit provision was made in the treaty to establish fourteen masters at Toulouse as a bastion of orthodoxy in

Calling attention to a neglected aspect of that university, Charles Gross undertook to recount the political influence exercised by the university in the Middle Ages. It is to be regretted that his short article, "The Political Influence of the University of Paris in the Middle Ages,"²⁹ did not fill the gap he indicated. After noting that the University of Paris enjoyed a political role unparalleled by the Italian, German, and English universities and that the "learned doctors of France" seemingly preferred party strife to scholastic disputation and, further, that the University acted as an organ of state at times rather than as a school of learning,³⁰ Professor Gross confined his remarks to a two decade period in the university's "medieval" history: the years 1405-1422 during which time the reign of Charles VI witnessed struggles between the Burgundian and Armagnac factions. His account of the University's political role was, at that, somewhat vague and generalized. One wonders whether the University even had a political function when Professor Gross noted that the chief reason for its political activity during Charles VI's reign was because Charles himself was quite mad and

Langue-doc, the former Albigensian stronghold. Thus, the University of Toulouse was the first "man-made" institution of its kind: "Before the thirteenth century it had apparently not occurred to kings and princes that institutions of higher learning could be artificially propagated." (32).

²⁹The American Historical Review, VI (1901), 440-445.

³⁰Ibid., 440.

because the realm was split asunder by factional strife. Did the University exercise political influence only during such periods of national debilitation (which would indicate that its political influence was of a limited, temporary sort) or was the University in some manner politically influential throughout its history? Better yet, we might ask as to the nature and extent of the political influence of all the universities as well as of that at Paris. The lacunae in our knowledge of this aspect of medieval educational history yet remains.

A stimulating and subtle study of the Parisian milieu which had important ramifications for the understanding of the intellectual tradition of the West was Mary M. McLaughlin's "Paris Masters of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries and Ideas of Intellectual Freedom."³¹ For many the mere mention of intellectual freedom during the Middle Ages is an anomaly. However as Professor McLaughlin demonstrated in her article, it was a lively issue to the men at Paris in the XIIIth and XIVth centuries. Essentially, the question of intellectual freedom at Paris during those centuries revolved about the key issues which had been raised throughout the Middle Ages: the conflict between faith and reason, the pursuit of "truth" as opposed to the "light of reason," the autonomy of philosophy from theology, the relationship between science and metaphysics. However,

³¹Church History, XXIV (1955), 195-207.

for certain masters at Paris these issues were no longer theoretical considerations. Actively engaged as teachers of large numbers of students, their notion of intellectual freedom developed from their preoccupation with their functions as teachers.³²

The choice which the master had to make was one between philosophy and theology, two branches of knowledge which in the universities were rapidly redefining themselves. Men such as Siger of Brabant, John Buridan and Peter Olivi chose philosophy. But this choice was not simply one between two academic disciplines. The choice to follow the light of reason wherever she might lead rather than to pursue an already established truth was made on the ground of "the right of the teacher to discuss his materials regardless of their truth."³³ The appeal was made not to the subjective notion of an individual's right in conscience to discuss whatever he willed, but rather to the objective notion that his function as a teacher intellectually demanded that he discuss matters contrary to "truth." Thus, intellectual freedom in XIIIth and XIVth century Paris did not represent the acceptance of heretical opinion or the endorsement of free-thought. Truth was not abandoned wholesale for reason. Rather, men who still clung to the faith and continued to uphold it fought for the freedom and liberty of the teacher, the freedom and

³²Ibid., 195.

³³Ibid., 199.

liberty to go beyond the "truth" as it were. This freedom eventually led not only to accentuated emphasis on reason but to an entirely new intellectual trend in the West. As the teaching of John Buridan exemplified, the texts of Aristotle were no longer the limits of human knowledge. Instead, man's reason was now trained on "the whole moving universe."³⁴

³⁴Ibid., 200. (A final though less pertinent study of Paris was H. C. Barnard's interesting "The Messageries of the University of Paris," British Journal of Educational Studies, IV [1955], 49-56. "Messageries" were the post-men of the medieval who answered the needs for communication between the university and the scholars' home-towns.)

CHAPTER V

LITERACY AND THE QUESTION OF LAY INSTRUCTION

Thus far, we have been concerned mainly with the educational opportunities available to Churchmen of one sort or another. But what of the laity? Were they condemned to a condition of general ignorance as a superficial examination of medieval education led many to believe? Or were the laity educated to some degree? The question of the intellectual status of this "huge substratum" of medieval society is an important and fascinating one. However, the question has not been studied in a manner fully equivalent to its complexity. For the most part, the criteria that have been used to define an educated laity have been much the same as those used to define a typically educated medieval cleric. This is no doubt a valid procedure, but the question immediately raises itself as to the possibility of any kind of education other than that in the Latin tradition. One wonders whether the ability to read and write Latin was necessarily the only hallmark of an educated person in the Middle Ages. For many, facility with Latin has been the chief pivot upon which the discussion of education offered to the laity in the Middle Ages has turned. Perhaps, though, there is a

broader aspect to the question of popular education.

In an address before the International Congress of Historical Studies in 1913 entitled Monastic Schools in the Middle Ages, G. G. Coulton asked the basic question whether the monasteries extended their instructional activity to those beyond their walls, that is, to the laity.¹ Over three centuries of historical scholarship had created what Coulton thought to be a false picture of the monks as educators. The monastic schools had come to be viewed as the bedrock educational institutions of the Middle Ages from which the universities developed. In truth, though, very few instances can be found of monastic education offered to those other than the monastery's oblates. It was a rather exclusive affair with only two general exceptions to the monastic strictures against the education of "outsiders". In a missionary situation, the monks kept school primarily for young heathen nobles. Secondly, the monasteries often received king's sons whom they educated and returned to the world. Beyond these exceptions, the educational work of the monasteries in the world was practically nil.

But, apparently, the laity became educated in some fashion. In a doctoral dissertation prepared at the Catholic University of America, Patrick Joseph McCormick examined "the nature and extent of the provisions made in the

¹("Medieval Studies," no. X) London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent, and Co., Ltd., 1913.

early Middle Ages for the education of the laity."² The provisions for lay education revealed themselves to Father McCormick as "possibilities" for education open to those not preparing for the clerical or religious life. That there actually was a program of lay education which availed itself of these possibilities was not demonstrated in Father McCormick's somewhat general study. The work itself relied heavily on secondary works and while it covered the principal educational centers during each medieval century, it shed no new light on the study of lay education.

Definite proof of lay education of some sort was exhibited in James Westfall Thompson's The Literacy of the Laity in the Middle Ages.³ Literacy was defined by Thompson as "the knowledge and use of the Latin language."⁴ Using this criterion, it was with ease that Thompson proved the widespread belief in medieval lay illiteracy to have been a gross exaggeration. His book was a veritable catalogue of literate medieval laymen who could read and write Latin. Most of these men were nobles. While Thompson was not concerned to account for their literacy, he did establish the framework within which the future discussion of lay education was to remain.

²Education of the Laity in the Early Middle Ages (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic Education Press, 1912), p. 5.

³("University of California Studies in Education," vol. 9), New York: Burt Franklin, 1960.

⁴Ibid., v.

A key element in that discussion was contributed by Henri Pirenne who in this instance, as in others, exhibited his provocative scholarship. His article, "De l'état de l'instruction des laïques a l'époque mérovingienne,"⁵ was another argument within the whole fabric of his famous thesis, the "Pirenne thesis." For Pirenne, the Middle Ages really began during the reign of the Carolingians when Europe was cut off from the East by the advance of Islam. Until that point, Europe had retained its "romanitas." However, after this epoch, Europe, thrown on its own resources, defined itself no longer according to "romanitas" but according to criteria peculiarly medieval. Whereas Roman Europe until the VIIth century was urban and commercial, medieval Europe was rural and agricultural. All sorts of contrasts were possible which indicated a radical break in the history of Europe during the period between the times of Mohammed and Charlemagne. In addition to charting the levels of gold and papyrus which came into the West before and after the Islamic invasions, Pirenne pointed to a violent change in the whole complexion of society which he could observe occurring between the Merovingian and Carolingian periods. Merovingian society, like that of Rome, was predominantly secular in nature; Carolingian society was more religious and less laic than that of its predecessor. Carolingian society was medieval.

⁵Revue Bénédictine, XLVI (1934), 165-177.

One proof of this was the relative amount of lay education in Carolingian and Merovingian times. Pirenne believed that education under the Carolingians had become the monopoly of the clerical class:

A part d'infimes exceptions, on peut dire que du IX^e au XII^e siècle, non seulement la formation intellectuelle mais même la simple pratique de la lecture et de l'écriture n'existerait plus en dehors du clergé et cela au point que dans toutes les langues européennes le mot "clerc" a fini par désigner celui qui sait manier la plume.⁶

The contrast between this state of affairs and that of the Merovingian period Pirenne held to be marked. Instruction rather than being concentrated in the hands of the clergy was widespread among the Merovingian laity. This indicated a secular spirit in Merovingian times and thus the survival of the Roman spirit in Western Europe. There certainly was illiteracy in the Merovingian state among the laymen, but the more important fact of Merovingian history and society for Pirenne was the existence of an antique lay spirit in that society as exemplified by the comparative prevalence of lay education.

Pirenne's entire explanation of the origins of the Middle Ages has been challenged on its many fronts. While not attacking the "Pirenne thesis" as a whole, Pierre Riché took the opportunity in 1962 to question Pirenne's portrait of lay education in the post-invasion period. The title of Riché's study, "Recherches sur l'instruction de laïcs du IX^e au XII^e siècle"⁷ In addition to proving that

⁶Ibid., 165.

there were more educated laymen during the IXth, Xth, and XIth centuries, than the "infimes exceptions" noted by Pirenne, Riché introduced a new concept to the study of medieval lay education.

In studying the Lives of the saints and other personalities of this period, Riché uncovered some indirect evidence of lay instruction: the hagiographer or biographer "sans le vouloir il se fait historien de la culture."⁸ In these various lives we read of many children who received the rudiments of an education from their parents or from an individual instructor within the community; The lives of Abelard and Guibert de Nogent revealed two famous instances in which children were instructed by their parents. Apparently, then, there was some form of instruction among the laity in the Carolingian and post-Carolingian period.

A more crucial point made by Riché, however, was his re-interpretation of the traditional formula used to describe the intellectual status of the laity during the post-Carolingian centuries: laicus=illitteratus. The laity were certainly illiterate - but they were so in their own terms and, thus, not necessarily uninstructed:

Dans le vocabulaire classique, illitteratus signifie celui qui ne connaît pas ses lettres, l'analphabète. Il est donc synonyme d'idiotia. Or à la fin du XIe et au XIIe siècle, ce mot prend un sens parti-

⁷Cahiers de civilisation médiévale, Xe-XIIe siècles, V (1962), 175-182.

⁸Ibid., 177.

culier; illitteratus, c'est celui qui n'est pas
 étudié la litteratio; c'est à dire la grammaire latine.⁹

To say that a layman was illiterate in this period, as the sources frequently do, meant more that he did not have John of Salisbury's education than it did that he had no education. It meant that he had no access to Latin letters, not that he had no access to learning. This realization has forced historians to revise their notions concerning lay education.¹⁰ What is needed now, Riché wrote, is a more general work which studies the laity and its role in society in light of this new realization of its intellectual status during the High Middle Ages. Perhaps the most important instruction in the Middle Ages was given to the clerics in the Latin tradition; perhaps the most significant instruction for the Middle Ages was given to the laity.

⁹Ibid., 180.

¹⁰Jean Gimpel in a stimulating cultural history indicated that there was more intellectual affinity between the medieval layman and the lettered individual than there is today between the "intellectual" and the so-called "man-in-the-street." After describing the significance of the frescoes and stained glass windows in cathedrals as educational devices and not merely as works of art as we are prone to view them, M. Gimpel noted:

Ce qui rend cette époque émouvante et harmonieuse, c'est que l'homme lettré et le peuple avaient le même livre d'images; ils avaient reçu la même éducation, la seule différence étant une différence de degré. Quelques siècles plus tard, il en va autrement. L'homme lettré de la Renaissance, en cultivant à l'excès l'antiquité, va faire sculpter et peindre des scènes mythologiques absolument incompréhensibles au peuple. L'introduction des humanités va couper, pour plusieurs siècles, le peuple des gens lettrés; cette coupure ne s'est pas complètement refermée aujourd'hui en Europe occidentale.

Les bâtisseurs de cathédrales ("Collections microcosme: les temps qui court," no. 11; Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1958), p. 49.

CONCLUSION

The general pattern which has emerged from the above review of historical scholarship on the subject of medieval education almost escapes characterization. Much of what has appeared has been both perceptive and stimulating. Much, though has been poor, redundant, or simply beside the point. Then, too, although historical scholarship has been weighed in favor of the universities, there has been much diversity in the material we have examined. Yet, through all of this, through the good and the not so good, through all the various aspects of medieval education which have come under scholarly scrutiny, one characteristic has seemed to emerge. To use Professor Powicke's phrase, it has lacked "depth."

In concluding this study, I would like to discuss somewhat further this lack of depth which is characteristic of the generality of historical work on medieval education and to mention several works indicative of a fresh approach to and a deeper understanding of medieval education.

The study of medieval education has manifested its lack of depth by its superficiality. Somehow, despite much good work which has been done, one receives the impression that only rarely have historians sensed the deeper undercurrents influencing and shaping the various forms that

education took in the Middle Ages. But, one might interject, were there really "deeper undercurrents" anyway, and if there were, what were they? The answer to this question resolves itself in a fundamental belief that man only partially creates his own history. Much of man's history is already created for him and it is his creative, sometimes accidental, shaping of that underlying history that results in history in the total significance of that concept. Man does not find himself placed in a nothingness out of which he defines himself and fashions his history. Rather, man is placed in a world and it is in interaction with that world, accepting some of it, rejecting some of it, moving all the while with it, that man's history is created. Man in dialogue with the world is history. Abelard, removed from the very unique world and set of circumstances in which he moved, becomes an historical cipher. His importance, and our understanding of his importance, lies in the fact that Abelard found himself in a very particular world in which he wrote a particular chapter in history by his reaction to that world. Similarly, medieval education did not develop in a void but was party to a whole set of other developments which characterized the Middle Ages. These other developments, social, political, economic, demographic, ideological, were the underlying currents which fashioned and influenced medieval education and which have been largely ignored by historians.

Historians have studied the changes in the medieval curricula, have watched the steady decline of the monastic school, have charted the course of the somewhat mercurial cathedral schools, have attended with much interest the birth of the universities, and have, in that institution's later years, dissected it in order to understand its workings and machinations. Almost all of this has been done within a vacuum, or at least within the confines of the particular university or school studied. What is needed is a broader, more fundamental approach to medieval education.

Professor F. M. Powicke's "Presidential Address" before the Royal Historical Society has already been alluded to in conjunction with the remarks he made concerning Hastings Rashdall's The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages.¹ In that same address, Professor Powicke noted that among the chief problems in the history of the medieval university, and here we might add in the history of medieval education in general, has been the failure of historians to consider the university as a social structure within the context of medieval society. The omission of the university as such was most glaring, for Professor Powicke, in Ernst Troeltsch's Die Soziallehren der Christlichen Kirchen in which no mention of that institution occurred.

In his address, Professor Powicke called for a multi-dimensional understanding of the Universities' acti-

¹See p. 124, n.. 8.

vity and place in the Middle Ages. One level of that understanding was hinted at in Stephen D'Irsay's treatment of the early history of the universities. D'Irsay's book, Histoire des universités françaises et étrangères des origines à nos jours,² should be read in conjunction with Rashdall's volumes on the universities. Where Rashdall is more complete and factual than D'Irsay, D'Irsay compensates for the deficiencies of a largely factual account. Unfortunately, D'Irsay studied the cathedral and monastic centers as "les écoles préuniversitaires," but his treatment of the origins of the university movement remains nevertheless stimulating and suggestive.

For D'Irsay, the history of the universities reveals itself under two aspects: as an idea and as an institution. The history of the origins of the universities is that of an idea becoming institutionalized. Indeed, to become organized is the fate of all movements of thought:

Le destin commun de toute pensée est d'être condamnée au mutisme, à moins qu'elle ne puisse se réaliser dans les apparences matérielles; on ne voit la lumière que par son reflet sur l'objet éclairé.

L'histoire de universités est un aspect de cette même aventure, sombre, et partant glorieuse, de cette transformation de l'idée solitaire en pensée commune, organisée; c'est l'histoire de l'âme cherchant à s'exprimer à travers la matière brute, la séconant, la subjuguant. Dans les universités . . . l'esprit humain, toujours impatient de se donner, a trouvé un moyen admirable d'expression et de propagation.³

This somewhat ethereal account of the university

²Two volumes. Paris: Editions Auguste Picard, 1933.

³Ibid., vol. I: "Moyen Age et Renaissance," 1.

as an aspect of the human spirit becoming the university as an institution becomes more meaningful when D'Irsay described the key element in this process of greater and greater centralization. The pre-university centers of learning gave witness to the fact that learning and knowledge in the High Middle Ages were vitally linked to another centralizing tendency, urbanization:

Les villes attirent peu à peu les maîtres et la jeunesse; la vie intellectuelle se développe surtout dans des centres importants; Metz et Soissons, Tours et Orléans, Utrecht et Liège, Chartres, Reims et Paris. Ces villes sont en étroite interdépendance, les migrations d'erudits atteignent des proportions de plus en plus grandes et le monde scolaire présente déjà cette uniformité caractéristique qui le distingue jusqu'au XI^{ve} siècle. La vie intellectuelle ne peut pas subsister seule; la vie littéraire, politique, et même la vie d'affaires participent au développement de la vie urbaine.⁴

Thus, the educational and intellectual movements of the later Middle Ages defined themselves in a particular ambiance, that of the cities. Nowhere can this relationship between intellect and urbanization be better seen than in the career of Abelard. In his wonderful essay on Abelard, Johan Huizinga brought together all the forces which motivated and formed Abelard's milieu.⁵ The resulting portrait Huizinga drew of the XIIth century, a portrait of "new forms of mental activity and social life" surpassed that of Charles Homer Haskins' The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century with its emphasis on the re-birth of classical

⁴Ibid., I, 51.

⁵"Abelard," Men and Ideas: History, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, pp. 178-195.

forms. For Huizinga nothing really was reborn: "It was a ripening, a coming of age." As such, the XIIth century was characterized by unrest, turbulence, and disturbance. Into that age came Abelard, himself a turbulent figure.

Abelard came to the cities. In the cities were the schools and in the schools were the only places where men, essentially like Abelard, could exercise their profession. In this world which was coming of age and at the same time grappling with the new-found learning of antiquity which was coming into the West in a larger and larger stream, tremendous prestige was the reward of the man who dedicated himself to teaching:

In a more primeval society the word falls on a virgin soil thirsting after fecundity, it convinces and commands, it banishes and binds, in short, it effectuates. The authority of the few masters who have a command of it is extraordinarily great. Every master is more or less of a wonder. He knows, he has secrets that he will reveal to us if we propitiate him.⁶

The link between these masters and the cities formed a social class unique in history: the intellectual. The intellectual was a thinker by trade. He was an artisan of the things of the mind and it was in the cities that he was born and in which he plyed his trade. Jacques Le Goff, in order to emphasize the significance of the relationship between the urban and intellectual movements of the XIIth century, began his fascinating study, Les intellectuels au moyen âge, with the words, "Au début il

⁶Ibid., p. 183.

y eut les villes."⁷

In the beginning the intellectual needed two things: he needed to teach and he needed the ambiance that the cities provided in order to teach. He was no longer a monastery or cathedral scholastic, but an "intellectual" whose livelihood was his teaching ability. Abelard, the "first professor"⁸ was the type of this class and in a way he was the leavening ingredient which gave rise to this unique, city-oriented group.

In time, the intellectuals abandoned teaching for the comforts of patronage, abandoned the cities for the country, in a word, abandoned the life of a "universitaire" for that of a humanist. While they taught in the schools, however, medieval education underwent a radical change. This change can only be understood in light of the complex of forces which led to the formation of the intellectual. These forces manifested themselves in the rise of the cities. The growth of the cities, in turn, was symptomatic of the quickening tempo and expansion of activity on several fronts. By their cognizance of these developments which are intimately linked to the history of education, D'Irsay, Huizinga, and Le Goff point to a more rewarding treatment of this particular period, the XIIth century, in medieval intellectual history.

⁷("Collections microcosme: les temps qui court," no. 3; Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1957), p. 9.

⁸Ibid., p. 40.

Might not this broader perspective be applied to earlier periods? Would it not be fruitful to attempt to relate the broader movements of history, the sociological, the economic, the demographic, to the history of education and ideas in periods other than the High Middle Ages? Thus far little work has been done to correlate the effect on education that movements of new kinds of people into the schools with new kinds of ideas born of a changing milieu had. It was these movements which produced the culture that is characteristic of the High Middle Ages - movements which were in process before the XIIth century and which would, one might suppose, have had their first intellectual impact in the schools.

The best general guide to an understanding of medieval education within the larger context of the Middle Ages is the co-operative work by G. Paré, A. Brunet, P. Tremblay entitled, La renaissance du XIIe siècle: les écoles et l'enseignement.⁹ In recasting G. Robert's earlier Les écoles et l'enseignement de la théologie pendant la première moitié du XIIe siècle, the authors took advantage of the progress which had been made during the twenty year interval between the appearance of Robert's work and their own in the history of civilization and in economic and social history in order to correct the "unreal" and "deformed abstraction" that the history of education, studied

⁹("Publications de l'Institut d'Etudes Médiévales d'Ottawa," no. III), Paris: Libraire Philosophique, J. Vrin; Ottawa: Institut d'Etudes Médiévales, 1933.

apart from civilization as a whole, had become.¹⁰ Their enterprise was both a success and a good indication that the pulse of medieval education could better be felt by taking account of the world outside the schools. As new economic and social conditions imposed themselves on medieval society, the schools reacted in their turn. Nowhere could this better be seen than in the development of the cathedral school which was in a real sense the intermediary between the monastic school and the university:

On peut prévoir quels déplacements géographiques des centres culturels vont suivre pareils mouvements sociaux, et il sera aisé d'observer le transfert des écoles et de leur attirail, des monastères aux centres urbains: leur prospérité suivra la prospérité de la "commune". Mais ce n'est là que le signe extérieur de la transformation spirituelle. Car, en s'ouvrant aux classes nouvelles, école et culture vont changer d'esprit, en changeant de population. Esprit d'insatiable et audacieuse curiosité, y compris dans le domaine des disciplines sacrées, malgré la résistance des réformes monastiques; esprit d'indépendance, qui ouvre à l'étudiant, que la règle d'obéissance ne lie plus, les écoles du maître de son choix, et l'incite à la liberté des opinions en même temps qu'aux turbulences de la rue; esprit séculier, sinon laïc--car tous ces gens sont évidemment des "clercs"--, qui laisse libre cours à leurs goûts littéraires et détache leur recherche scientifique d'une tutelle religieuse indiscrete; esprit de concurrence et d'association à la fois, car les maîtres seront sujets aux rivalités, aux jalousies, aux discussions passionnées sur la place publique, en même temps qu'ils sentiront peu à peu la nécessité de s'entendre pour tenir leurs droits et privilèges, y compris contre les "bourgeois," dont ils émanent. Nous sommes décidément sortis du monastère.¹¹

The monastery schools were left to their rural isolation and the episcopal schools in turn gave way to

¹⁰Ibid., p. 7.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 20-21.

the universities. Each of these transitions in medieval education marked a transition within the Middle Ages itself. The understanding of these transitions in themselves and in relation to other transitions in medieval education would be more intelligible than heretofore if approached in the manner suggested by the few works noted here.

Throughout this study several areas of investigation have suggested themselves which, if examined, give promise of illuminating these important transitions in medieval culture and education. The approach typified by the few works mentioned above can generally be designated as the "sociocultural" approach to historical movements. Unfortunately as the above works indicate, this approach when applied to the Middle Ages has generally been reserved for the late or High Middle Ages. The sociocultural perspective has largely been trained on those more spectacular achievements of the Middle Ages (e.g., the rise of the universities, the revival of towns, trade, and urban life in general, the early development of the intellectual as a new social group) with which our modern world finds itself more prone to identify. Granted that this certainly is an important and exciting development in historical scholarship and that much yet remains to be done in these specific areas of late medieval culture,¹² the question

¹²Notably, one senses that there is a need for more detailed studies of these matters. The works cited above emphasize the relationship between social movements and cultural-intellectual trends but rarely do they go beyond

might well be put whether this approach might be fruitfully employed for the study of earlier periods. Might not a sociocultural study of an earlier period in medieval history prepare us to understand the accomplishments of that more spectacular period, the XIIth and XIIIth centuries?

One area of study seems to especially lend itself to a sociocultural examination of the earlier Middle Ages. It has already been indicated that the medieval bishop was an important cultural and educational agent.¹³ Other than Sister Consuelo Maria Aherne's brief study, there has been no recent consideration of the intellectual and cultural role of the medieval bishops. This social group, whose importance throughout the Middle Ages on a variety of fronts needs no substantiation here, then, offers itself as an interesting and worthy subject for further study. It goes without saying that the cathedral schools owed their existence in some way or another to the medieval bishop. More than this though the medieval bishop was often an important patron of art and learning outside the school walls.

In order to provide the basis for a meaningful study a general theme must be limited in some way in order

the general. If the revival of urban life had an important effect on medieval educational and intellectual life, one would like to know in a more specific manner how and why this was so. It will not do to say merely that the urban "spirit" was a more potent force for intellectual expansion than the rural and agrarian "spirit" and that the rebirth of commerce and trade somehow quickened mental activity in a way that agrarian concerns had not.

¹³See above, p. 100.

to be both manageable and coherent. Once the medieval bishop has been isolated as a social group exercising important and profound influence on the intellectual and cultural life of the Middle Ages, under what specific conditions shall that group be studied? More specifically, what chronological and geographical divisions seem both appropriate and valid for a study of the cultural activities of the medieval episcopacy? To be both appropriate and valid, such divisions must be inherently significant and not arbitrary. The chronological division must have a terminus a quo and a terminus ad quem which embrace a period which is somehow a significant cultural unit. The geographical limit must embrace an area of a more or less common cultural pattern, yet an area whose cultural unity is not born of isolation.

The period from approximately the late IXth century to the beginning of the XIIth century, roughly from A. D. 900 to 1100, seems to bear the marks of a culturally meaningful chronological entity. Of course, for many this entity has represented the slough of despond coming after the failure of the Carolingian experiment. Centuries of blood and iron as they have been termed, they are usually associated with the feudalization of European society - a feudalization which has usually implied social chaos, interminable civil war, political instability and all the ignorance and cultural barbarism traditionally attendant upon such conditions.

But from another perspective this period can be regarded as culturally constructive and significant. It begins with the apparent demise of the Carolingian Renaissance and ends with the more significant XIIth century Renaissance. It is not too much to say that between those two cultural peaks a new world, at least a new Europe, had been fashioned. John Scotus Erigena, the greatest luminary of the Carolingian renaissance, had little effect on his own milieu. In fact, it was not until the XIIth century that his thought exerted any real influence. On the other hand, Abelard, coming at the beginning of the XIIth century, was able to initiate an intellectual revolution of far-reaching consequence. Much of Erigena's and Abelard's accomplishment (and lack of accomplishment) can of course be ascribed to their personal talents. But no little measure of their relative success or failure can be attributed to their sociocultural milieux. One senses in John Scotus Erigena's life that his intellect and creative powers operated in a relatively sterile or, at least, culturally ambiguous ambience. Peter Abelard's career would have been equally circumscribed had he been placed in John Scotus Erigena's world. But Abelard's Europe was a different Europe from that of his predecessor. Abelard was fortunate to have lived and moved in an ambience amenable to his genius and talents. His accomplishments bear witness to the fact that Western Europe was ready for him in a way which it was not for Erigena. Obviously, then,

something rather vital and intellectually important occurred during the period between the renaissance of the VIIIth and early IXth century and the renaissance of the XIIth century. Might not a study of the cultural activity of the episcopacy during this period illuminate the nature and history of this transformation of society - a study which seeks not only to record the specific intellectual-cultural activities of the Bishops (e.g., encouraging translations, patronizing the arts, building buildings) but which in addition seeks to discover whether the bishops as a social group mirrored in some way the larger social movements of the IXth, Xth, and XIth centuries in their cultural activity?

The region roughly between the Loire and the Rhine rivers provides an interesting and important area in which to examine the sociocultural role of the bishops during the period just prior to the High Middle Ages. This geographical entity exhibited sufficient cultural and social unity to warrant designating it as a significant geographical entity while at the same time exhibiting a fluidity that made this area receptive to new social patterns and ideas. F. L. Ganshof has said of this region:

Nous entendons donc ici une région qui fut le coeur de la monarchie franque, et qui présente incontestablement de ce chef une réelle unité d'institutions et de structure sociale. Sous l'action d'autres facteurs, la vie économique a revêtu là des formes relativement uniformes; en ce qui concerne l'art également, une certaine unité s'observe. Ces caractères communs, soit dit en passant, ne doivent pas nous abuser sur les différences et les oppositions quelquefois pro-

fondées que l'on relève à l'intérieur des mêmes frontières: d'une part, dans les domaines déjà mentionnés, d'autre part--et surtout--du point de vue des phénomènes politiques, culturels, ethniques, et des régimes linguistiques.¹⁴

Another study which was unavailable to me until only recently and thus has not received the attention which it truly merits in the body of this paper, further warrants the choice of this general area as a significant geographical entity for further study. Emile Lesne in his Les écoles de la fin du VIII^e siècle à la fin du XII^e¹⁵ picked up the thread of medieval intellectual history where M. Roger left off.¹⁶ M. Lesne was concerned to show that as the result of the Carolingian educational reforms, there was a notable revival of schools during the IXth, Xth, and XIth centuries and that the main theme of this revival was the interaction of the Carolingian organizational and regulatory decrees vis-a-vis education and the spontaneous initiatives and improvisations born of the exigencies of the period which together molded education in the post-Carolingian era.¹⁷

In the second section of his work, "La carte et

¹⁴Étude sur le développement des villes entre Loire et Rhin au moyen âge (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1943), p. 7.

¹⁵Volume V of Histoire de la propriété ecclésiastique en France. ("Mémoires et Traavaux publiés par des professeurs des facultés catholiques de Lille," fasc. L). Lille: Facultés Catholiques, 1940.

¹⁶See above, p. 87.

¹⁷Lesne, p. 45.

l'histoire des écoles du milieu du IX^e siècle à la fin du XII^e,"¹⁸ M. Lesne examined every French school for which records were available according to geographical regions. In addition to finding that a great deal of variety manifested itself in the schools throughout the breadth of France, M. Lesne concluded that

les régions de la Loire, de la Seine, de l'Escaut, de la Meuse et du Rhin ont été au cours de toute cette période les plus favorisées dans la diffusion des études; c'est dans ces contrées que sont mentionnées le plus souvent et en plus grand nombre les écoles, celles notamment qui ont compte le plus de maîtres et d'élèves, et qui ont obtenu la plus haute renommée.¹⁹

Once a general theme has been somewhat refined by considerations of time and place, some attention should be given to the theoretical framework in which the theme will be studied. Some remarks have already been made concerning the advantages and the possibilities of a socio-cultural approach to the cultural and intellectual activities of the episcopacy in Northern France during the IXth, Xth, and XIth centuries. This is not the proper place to expand upon those remarks. Inevitably, the best framework to be employed will be suggested by a reading of the sources and not by a set of preconceived suppositions. Suffice it to say here that the theoretical literature, primarily of a sociological nature, surveyed substantiates the general validity and significance of a sociocultural study of the medieval episcopacy.²⁰

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 44-423.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 414.

²⁰See, Karl Mannheim, "The Problem of the Intelligentsia, An Inquiry into its Past and Present Role," Part Two of Essays on the Sociology of Culture, edd. Ernest Mannheim and Paul Kecskemeti (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), 91-170. Pp. 121-159, "The Historical Role of the Intelligentsia," are especially pertinent and enlightening. See also Pitirim A. Sorokin, Social and Cultural Mobility (London: The Free Press of Glencoe Collier-Macmillan Ltd., 1959). The appendix to this work ("Genesis, Multiplication, Mobility, and Diffusion of Sociocultural Phenomena in Space," 549-640) is a reprint of chapter V from volume IV of Professor Sorokin's Social and Cultural Dynamics. It provides some good insights for the historian concerning the problem of cultural change and the relationship between mobility, defined sociologically, and the diffusion of culture.

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