THEMES AND OBJECTIVES IN FRENCH MILITARY LITERATURE OF THE XVIth. CENTURY

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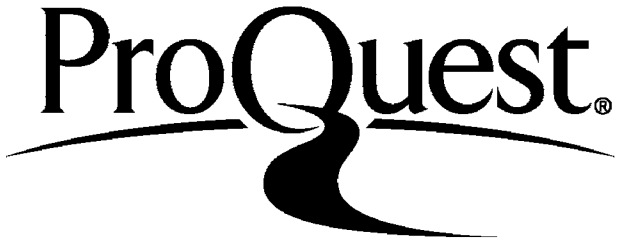

This study of French Military Literature in the XVIth. century concentrates upon a restricted number of writers whose works all present different facets of the same theme, that of warfare. All the writers in this study were themselves soldiers. At this period, the French militia was run, though not actually controlled, by members of the lesser nobility, under Royal jurisdiction, though they often had little influence at Court. Generally, it was the less exalted who took up their pens.

It is an object of this study to discover why the members of a class normally illiterate and considering itself above the mechanical art of writing took to literature in these years. In view of their similar background, is it possible to discern the germination of a military school of literature? The frequent recurrence of basic themes and the manner of their handling by these writers justify the attempt at a literary assessment of their work.

French Military Literature of this period was affected by external factors: the changes in warfare, the civil wars in France, and the uncertain state of recorded history. These writers had to adjust their code of ethics when coming to terms with the spreading use of fire-arms, the employment of force in settling matters of conscience. They had to decide for themselves what it was legitimate to include in their own version of history.

The examination of their work has been divided into two sections: the first traces the development of military literature through medieval

and renaissance works, placing XVIth. century French works in their own context; the second is devoted to a comparison of objectives and thematic material in them. There follows a tentative evaluation of military literature as it emerges from a study of representative works.

INDEX

I

Military History to the end of the XVth. century

In early times, whenever a great person died, his illiterate relatives would enlist the services of a biographer to record his life and deeds. Such was the case at the death of Charlemagne who had done much to foster the extension of education at his court. The scholar who set about recording Charlemagne's life for posterity was Einhard, and in his Vita Karoli he followed the example of Suetonius, a latin biographer studied in the library at Aix. This 'approved' biography was merely a eulogy of the emperor; throughout, events and persons were classified according to whether they were good or bad, and the historical matter was presented as a chain of cause and effect. The work was therefore unindividual, and we know nothing of Charlemagne's private motives nor of the true nature of life under his rule. As history, such a work is highly suspect: it propounded the thesis that Charlemagne was a hero; it was written at the request of Charlemagne's court and was thus biased in order to draw a flattering portrait; and it ended with an enconium in which all Charlemagne's heroic qualities were proclaimed. Yet this IXth. century work was at the head of a torrent of encomiastic literature which flowed throughout the Middle Ages(1); a very similar work, the Histoire de Bayart of 1527, is considered in Chapter II. It is unfortunate that the prospect of material reward for favourable biographies should have so coloured historical productions of the early Middle Ages, but it is natural enough: "... from the first half of the XIIth. century onwards....the historian...moves from the monastery to the Court... The age of

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(1) See Blanchard W. Bates: Literary Portraiture in the Historical Narrative of the French Renaissance, New York, 1945.

patrons has arrived... It was, perhaps, easier for the chronicler, for kings and great men not unnaturally wish their deeds and conquests to be handed down to posterity and for this they would be willing to pay."(1) Rhymed chronicles, such as Gaimar's Estoire des Engleis, were written to command and sometimes reached enormous proportions (2). Henry II commissioned Wace to write up the histories of his predecessors, the Dukes of Normandy, with consequent bias against all who had stood in the way of their progress. Perhaps it is not unreasonable to see in these works a propagandist intention and reminiscences of the heroic literature of the 'chansons de geste', in which the characters were half-historical and half-legendary. History and legend were never far apart in any case, and we recall that it is to Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia that we principally owe the legend of King Arthur: Wace, a professional historian, be it noted, added many details to this legend in his translation, of which that of the Round Table itself is not the least.

More scrupulous in its treatment of the mental attitude of the Teutonic knights towards the Fourth Crusade is the Conquête de Constantinople by Geoffroy de Villehardouin (c.1160 - c.1213). It marks a departure from previous practice not only in its understanding of attitudes and the motivation lurking beneath the surface of events, but also in its abandonment of octosyllabic couplets for the narration of history. It is considered to be the first work in good French prose. Villehardouin was both a historian and a

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(1) J. Crosland: Medieval French Literature, Oxford, 1956, p.195. Chapter VIII is a general review of medieval chroniclers and historians.

(2) La Vie de Guillaume le Maréchal, one of the last, ran to 19,000 lines; see ibid., p.201

participant in the events he described: thus, his claim to competence in this field must be rated highly. Froissart, on the other hand, seems to have been a minor person with no influence on affairs, though it is certain that he knew the central figures of his tales. His work was international in reflecting events and characters on both sides of the Channel during the XIVth. century. He was strongest in his descriptions of battles and pageantry, but there was a lack of comment on the motives behind each military action. Yet he was noteworthy in advancing the narration by the inclusion of dialogue; his Chroniques are colourful and entertaining, and resemble the work of Brantôme in their story-book presentation of history. But there was another aspect of his work: he set out to record "deeds of heroism and nobility, so many examples of courtesy and fair-dealing in war."(1), in order to incite the hearts of young knights to deeds of prowess. Thus a didactic motive crept in. One may also detect the snobbery of the 'parvenu' who aped the nobility in their contempt of the common man. Froissart embraced the already decadent concept of chivalry and forgot all other standards of conduct (2). He rarely raised the voice of criticism except to protest at the cruelty of a slaughter at Limoges after the Battle of Poitiers (1356) and to note a sense of decay at the court of Richard II.

Criticism was more to the fore in the Arbre des Batailles of Honoré Bonet which, it is assumed, was written about the year 1386 (3).

(1) R. L. Kilgour: The Decline of Chivalry, Harvard, 1937, p.66

(2) ibid., p.58.

(3) M.J.D. Cockle (in A Bibliography of English military books up to 1642 and of Contemporary foreign works, London, 1900) assigns Bonet's book a place as one of the very first works on the Art Military to be printed at Paris, in 1493, ref.504. Dr.G.Dickinson appears to have found a copy printed at Lyon in 1477: see her edition of Fourquevaux's Instructions, Athlone Press, 1954, bibliography.

Bonet was a cleric, that is to say, a member of the class usually despised by the more active nobility, and he discussed warfare from an academic point of view. His work is not a chronicle, but it contains many elements which form at least part of later chronicles: Bonet cited the Roman soldier as the ideal on which to model the soldier of his day. Future writers were to refer time and time again to the excellence of the Roman Army. Bonet further discussed the comparative morality of assuming the offensive and the defensive in battle, a matter already dealt with by Aristotle, and he stressed the importance of discipline. So much is to be expected of a monastic with some knowledge of the ancient authorities on warfare; but Bonet was a modern also, and spoke out against the 'chivalrous' method of warfare then obtaining. He deplored the slaughter of the humble peasant who provided food for the nobility to eat; he spoke up for the rights of non-combatants, and criticised the knighthood for its love of luxury. More important still, he realised that the 'chivalrous' quest for personal glory could be no part of international warfare: "The knight who leaves the line of battle to engage in single combat against the express orders of his commander ought to be beheaded. This thirst for single combat comes from a desire to show courage, but it is bad discipline."(1) Those XVIth. century writers who were to condemn the practice of duelling had very similar arguments in their favour. In addition, Bonet wrote a work entitled L'Apparicion Maistre Jehan de Meun (1398) which was surprisingly up to date: it was a satire on the misconduct of war in the Western World as seen through the eyes of a Saracen. It must be remembered that the Turkish menace was only just beginning to stir

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(1) Quoted in R. L. Kilgour, op.cit., pp.167-8.

again in the forward push which was to culminate in the fall of Constantinople in 1453. Again, though an academic work (1), it demonstrated Bonet's consciousness of contemporary matters: among the objects of his criticism were the Great Schism, the heaviness of contemporary armour, and the tendency of the nobility to belittle the combative abilities of the peasant class. His two works must then be considered as 'littérature engagée': the criticisms were intended to be taken seriously and the abuses were to be corrected, so that Bonet's intention was anything but bookish. Here, again, was a parallel with XVIth. century military writers, most of whom could not have borne the thought that their work was without practical relevance. Bonet's modernity was realised by the writers of the Renaissance, and his influence extended to Bodin, Calvin, Rabelais, Erasmus, Pasquier and Montaigne (2).

The contribution of Alain Chartier to the literature of warfare is contained in four works: the Livre des Quatre Dames (1416), the Quadriloque Invectif, the Débat Patriotique and a latin work which is normally referred to as Le Curial. Chartier marked the separation between chivalry and the cult of courtly love: the former was debased, in his opinion, whilst the latter was idealised. Chartier did not inform the reader very deeply on the warfare of his time, but painted a picture of those who waged war as the standards of chivalry declined. The code of chivalry had been demoted to mere heraldry, a mere science of decoration, the province of learned scholars and heralds-at-arms. In the meantime,

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(1) It contains references to Valerius Maximus, Vegetius and Cato Maior.

(2) See G. Dickinson: Instructions sur le Faict de la Guerre of Raymond de Beccarie de Pavie sieur de Fourquevaux, Athlone Press, 1954, Chapter IV.

soldiers were lazy, used to luxury and the pursuit of pleasure: in wartime, they displayed no chivalrous virtue. They looted captured property with more regard for the acquisition of booty than of honour. The haughty nobles refused to follow orders from those whom they believed could not be their superiors. It is not to be wondered at, then, if Chartier asserted that these nobles were inefficient soldiers and that they had no hand in the eventual expulsion of the English invader from France: this was performed instead by the 'routiers' - ruthless bands of hired soldiers whose effectiveness derived from their discipline and zeal for warfare. Chartier devalued the concept that military glory depended upon one's illustrious lineage and substituted the contention that it was to be hard-won on the field of battle. He praised the Roman military virtues, and idealised the state run on military lines - as when, in Le Curial, he lamented that sycophants were now the most successful in obtaining the royal favour, and not soldiers. We must assume, then, that Chartier was no opponent of warfare: he was only anxious to see that it was well prosecuted. (1)

Chartier was a literary figure rather than a political one, but the seriousness of his call to patriotism is beyond doubt. On the other hand, Antoine de la Sale's Petit Jehan de Saintré (1456) bordered on satire to an extent which made it difficult to tell whether it should be taken as a true manual of knighthood or as a sharp criticism of prevailing trends. It describes the successes of Jehan, a XIVth. century knight, who progressed from success in the

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(1) Chartier's objections to chivalry are examined by Kilgour, op.cit., P.194 et seq.

lists to the defeat and execution of the Grand Turk himself in an expedition which was closely modelled on the Nicopolis adventure of 1396. So much is a reflection of works recounting the lives of heroes: but in the second part, Jehan is toppled from his pedestal by his ~~wife's~~ mistress' affair with Damp Abbez, a monk who voices pertinent criticisms of chivalry, whilst the knights give currency to the various standing jokes against themselves. Chivalry and Jehan are here degraded to the point of ridicule: though the love of virtuous ladies is posited as the guiding principle of moral perfection, as in chivalrous lore, it is emphasized that at Court one's success depends much more upon one's personal splendour than upon one's virtue. Consequently, the work's high-sounding principles are hollow, and one is at a loss to decide whether its burden is humorous or instructive.

Another manual of knighthood, Bueil's Le Jouvencel (1466) can, however, be taken more seriously. We know enough about the work and its author to testify that its background at least is rooted in warfare. Jean de Bueil served under the short-lived command of Joan of Arc, and was a sufficiently-trusted soldier, for "One of his public appearances was in the King's council, in 1471, when he told the King that armies and methods of warfare had changed so much since his days of active fighting that he no longer felt competent to advise on military matters..." (1). It was indeed a modest noble who would admit his own incompetence in such a way at such an epoch; yet, it seems, in his day Bueil was no incompetent, for his work was "a panorama of war as it actually existed in the first half of the XVth. century:... Because of the large number of real episodes incorporated

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(1) ibid., p.316. A modern edition of Bueil's work is by Léon Lécestre, for the Société de l'Histoire de France, 1887.

in Le Jouvencel, the novel gives a picture of the military life of the times unsurpassed in its vividness. Chivalric pomp plays no part in this work; there is instead a sober picture of war, which has no time for knightly games."(1) Kilgour, who wrote this comment, was moved also to remark upon the modernity of this XVth. century work in which battles were analysed after being related and in which practical advice to the soldier abounded. Bueil took account of modern developments, not least in the matter of firearms, concerning which he supplied many details and instructions, and he cast off all traces of chivalrous pretence. Significantly, the military life was praised by Bueil, not for the glory it could confer upon the hero, but for its own sake.

The code of chivalry attracted much criticism during the XVth. century, and there was also a general clamour for military reform. Jean Juvénal des Ursins, Bishop of Beauvais, was a severe critic of chivalry (by which we must understand the nobility's prerogatives in warfare); however, he deplored the conduct of the mercenaries also and disapproved of the creation of a standing army to train in peacetime. This latter was a departure from feudal practice to which he took exception, being, as a bishop, a member of the feudal hierarchy. (2) Jean Meschinot's royal spectacles (3), whose lenses were to be Prudence and Justice, were indeed mounted upon Force but also upon Temperance: like Des Ursins, Meschinot objected to

(1) ibid., pp.315-7

(2) ibid., p.341

(3) Les Lunettes des Princes: the Bibliothèque Nationale has a copy dated 1493 which appears to be the earliest.

unnecessary violence, and particularly to the oppression of innocent peasants whose lands were ravaged by warring armies. Robert Gaguin's Le Débat du Labourer, du Prestre, et du Gendarme (1) preached a revival of chivalric values just as Meschinot invoked a return to religious principles, and joined with him also in deploring the practice of looting.

During the XVth. century, it was the Court of Burgundy which tried hardest to sustain the code of chivalry; but its efforts turned more upon the outward displays of virtue than upon true moral worth. The emptiness of the chivalrous ceremony at the court of Philippe le Bon found a well-meaning critic in Lannoy, whose book, with its title L'Instruction d'un jeune prince and its nostalgic recollections of Roman standards, would suggest that all was not as it should have been among the Burgundian leaders. In fact, the Burgundian court was very corrupt and its attitude towards women far from chivalrous; Lannoy recalled that the honour of chivalry derived originally from virtue - a fact that the Burgundians seemed to have lost sight of. Chastellain, though willing to undertake a defence of Philippe against Charles VII in a chivalric polemic, nevertheless asserted that the nobility was setting a poor example in matters in which it had formerly been the ideal of good conduct. (2) A decline in morality was accompanied by a decline in the numbers of those willing to offer themselves for chivalric combat in the old style. Lalaing related how he toured the land bearing his lady's 'emprise'

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(1) Written in 1484: Gaguin was a scholar who also produced a Compendium super Francorum gestis between 1490 and 1501, translated into French in 1514. It is one of the first French 'universal histories'.

(2) In Le Mirouer des Nobles hommes de France. His defence of Philippe le Bon is in his Exposition sur vérité mal prise. His complete works were published in Brussels, 1863-66, in 8 vols., by Kervyn de Lettenhove.

in search of the opportunity to acquire glory in a jousting contest. Such diversions must have been dismissed as pointless (1), for he only discovered one person willing to challenge him. This bastion of chivalry was ironically killed by a cannonball at the siege of Poucques in 1453, a sign of the new order of warfare.(2) The conduct of the nobility had changed to meet the climate of the times, and it seems that the oft-preached return to chivalric values would have been useless, for Charles le Téméraire, in his adherence to an anachronistic code, antagonised his court, and he lived to see the end of the Burgundian supremacy. The re-unification of France would have pleased Chastellain, who considered that the struggle between France and Burgundy was ridiculous since both were essentially parts of the same body. Such a view marked the burgeoning of a spirit of nationalism and the recognition that the general welfare should not be subject to private interests. In the XVIth. century, to say that rival factions were cutting their own throats in the Civil Wars because they were destroying their own country was to become a platitude. For Chastellain, too, the duty of a king was to keep the peace for his subjects and not to place too high a value upon the acquisition of military glory for himself. Had such views moved Charles VIII, Louis XII, or François I, France would have been spared the wars which were continuous after 1494.

The histories of the Burgundian chroniclers, Du Clercq, Monstrelet and Molinet,(3) are full of recitals of cruel warfare and treason which

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(1) Chastellain criticises jousting also.

(2) The Livre des faits du bon chevalier Lalaing is only partly autobiographical.

(3) Du Clercq : Mémoires 1448-67 ; Petitot, Paris, 1820;
Monstrelet : Chronique 1400-44 ; Soc. de l'Hist. de France, ed. Doüet d'Arcq, Paris, 1857-62;
Molinet : Les Faictz et Dictz, Paris, 1531.

foreshadow the Machiavellian concept of statecraft which was as yet unformulated. Du Clercq praised the development of artillery (1), whilst Monstrelet wrote expressly for those bearing arms. Yet their works demonstrate the truth that deeds of daring achieved less than trickery and diplomacy: the soldier's role in politics was, over the next century, to become a mere instrument in the hands of artful administrators, where formerly the court, the king and his advisers were principally soldiers themselves. It was precisely such diminution of the soldier's influence that Monluc later deplored.

Perhaps fittingly, no person gave us a better example of the fortune awaiting the man who abdicates honour by stooping to betrayal than did Philippe de Commynes: he made meteoric progress in the esteem of Charles le Téméraire at the court of Burgundy. Yet, after Peronne, sensing that the tide was about to turn, he defected to the French court, where he became confidant and adviser to Louis XI. Nevertheless, he could withstand the reverses of fate and he spent the last years of his life residing in one of his own former castles, renting it from its new owner. In the Mémoires which he wrote at this time there is no trace of chivalric virtue, not even a mention of Charles le Téméraire's fateful support of the outworn code.(2) Instead there is much cruelty, the worldly recognition that virtue was not always victorious. Commynes was a believer in careful planning, and he sneered at war and warriors as one who only considered war as a last resort. His disdain for the militia did not prejudice his understanding of military matters, however, and he expressed disapproval of the indiscipline of his time; he also praised the

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(1) On the other hand, Machiavelli severely underestimated the potential of artillery.

(2) Commynes (or Comines): Chronique et hystoire, Paris, 1524.

English longbowmen, whose day was now almost past.

The work of Commynes was important not only as evidence of a new order but also as a literary innovation, for, as history, it boasted a deeper penetration of persons and motives related to the events narrated. Rooted in the brutality of the XVth. century, it bridged the gap between history as it had been and the more perceptive histories written in the XVIth. century. It was published in 1523, and created a stir because it marked an advance on the 'official' histories being written at the time which had been published up to then; it was said that the Emperor Charles V always kept a copy close at hand in order to refer to it for guidance in statecraft. Here was proof that history had a practical application, and possibly also a precedent for the profusion of political and military handbooks appearing later in the century.

II

'Le Jouvencel' and the 'Histoire de Bayart'

Le Jouvencel belongs to 1466 and the Histoire de Bayart to 1527: yet the latter work is not so advanced, either in style or in subject, as the earlier one. Bueil wrote in mid-XVth. century of the type of experiences had in warfare of his time, and his 'jouvencel' was, by his standards, a modern warrior. On the other hand, the Loyal Serviteur wrote of Bayard, who was, although highly revered, an anachronism in his day. Kilgour points out that warfare had developed, and chivalry declined, to such an extent that 'Although a heroic figure like Bayard might pass across the scene, he was but a futile representative of a dying system.'(1) It may well be that our view of Bayard as the unbending and idealistic hero of chivalric lore is the result of the antiquated means by which he was portrayed in this most widely known of his biographies, written by one calling himself the 'Loyal Serviteur'(2) and which appeared under the title of La Tres Joyeuse Plaisante et Recreative Hystoire...des faiz gestes triumphes et prouesses du bon chevalier sans paour et sans reprouche, le gentil seigneur de Bayart in Paris in 1527.(3) This uncompromising title betrays the work as an encomium; the subject of the biography is de-personalised and the role of 'chevalier sans paour et sans reprouche' moulds him rather than represents him. It must be admitted that such a style had already

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(1) Kilgour, op.cit., p.417.

(2) This person is generally thought to have been one Jacques de Mailles, a servant of Bayard's.

(3) Bayard had died in 1524, and an earlier biography, Les Gestes, ensemble la Vie du preux Chevalier Bayard by Symphorien Champier appeared at Lyon in 1525; it does not appear to have been reprinted, until the edition by Payot, Paris, 1918.

become a cliché and was applied simultaneously to other famous martial persons (1), though this serves only to illustrate how the Serviteur fell back on to an established pattern in his efforts to describe this soldier.

If Bayard appears rather bloodless, we must remember that throughout the Middle Ages there had been a tradition of literary portraiture that accentuated the heroic rather than the human, so that personalities - when their lives had not been already amply distorted by legend and by 'borrowings' from the popular Classical sources - were classified according to whether they were virtuous or vicious in the context of the work. Evidence was then assembled in support of the assumed standpoint, a process known as rationalisation, and men became types. Occasionally one can justify this relegation of humanity to the tyranny of caricature by the necessity of keeping each portrait within limits dictated by the work, which may not have been connected solely with the characters: for example, the Chansons de Geste, with many events to describe and a host of characters to introduce, often supplied no details about the appearance of even the most famous, and just as frequently leave the character of each to be judged from his deeds. Alternatively, the 'chansonnier' would find a single adjective to qualify each person and repeat it frequently, as in the celebrated 'Rollant est proz, e Oliver est sage! (2)

It would be absurd to suggest that description in a work of 1527 was as limited as that in works of the XIth. and XIIth. centuries, yet, in the Bayart, we do not have the fully rounded portrait of a human.

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(1) e.g. Jean Bouchet: Panegyric du chevalier sans reproche, Louis de la Tremouille.

(2) La Chanson de Roland, ed. Whitehead, l. 1093.

A modern reader immediately senses from its title that this work is biased in favour of its central character, and knows that where there is bias there is also gross generalisation, distortion, and a lapse into caricature. There is very little that does not at once praise Bayard: the Serviteur said of him nothing more than that he was the most handsome, valiant, accomplished and modest knight who ever lived. He made even Bayard's enemies agree with this contention, and placed Bayard and his generous rivals on the very pinnacle of chivalry. Bayard's deeds were almost quaintly prodigious: single-handed, he guarded a bridge over the Garigliano for half-an-hour against two hundred Spaniards until help arrived (1); he captured sixty Albanians and thirty 'arbalestiers' on another occasion, though when the Serviteur tells us he did this alone, we have to understand that he was accompanied by thirty men and between eight and ten officers (2); he commanded the defence of Mezieres against the Imperial host for six weeks, compelling the besiegers to withdraw (3); he was so highly regarded by all parties that the Pope tried to tempt him to join forces with him (4), and was so well-endowed with knightly qualities that it fell to him to dub François Ier a knight (5). He had no lack of courage, it is true: of the Battle of Ravenna, the Serviteur said: 'Mais sur tous le bon chevalier fist choses non croyables [sic] car il arresta avecques vingt ou trente de ses hommes d'armes les Suysses sur le cul plus de deulx heures, tousjours combatant, et durant ce temps

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(1) See edition of O.H. Prior, Droz, 1927, Chapter 25.

(2) ibid, Ch. 36

(3) ibid. Ch. 63

(4) ibid. Ch. 57

(5) ibid. Ch. 60

luy fut tué deux chevaulx entre ses jambes.' (1). We are however enabled to judge his attitude to pain by his remark when wounded between the shoulder-blade and the collar-bone: 'Messeigneurs, ce n'est riens..' (2).

As might be expected, Bayard is presented as a man of high moral principle: whilst planning to secure the Pope's person, he means to do no mischief, declaring that 'il est un lieutenant de Dieu en terre, et le faire mourir d'une telle sorte, jamais ne m'y consentiroye.' (3) He protects defenceless women from avenging pillagers in his army (4), and has no special taste for wealth: 'Toute ma vie ay tousjours plus aymé beaucoup les gens que les escuz' (5). Nevertheless, he is not above having recourse to spies - an activity later frowned upon by Monluc (6); and, amidst the general atmosphere of chivalrous perfection, a jarring note is struck in Chapter 55 when, following his wound at Ravenna, he calls for the services of a prostitute during his convalescence. The Serviteur pleads 'assez povez entendre qu'il n'estoit pas sainct..' (7), but manages to turn the episode to good account, for the poor girl who is supplied pleads to be allowed to retain her maidenhead for her bridegroom with such urgency that Bayard makes no demands upon her and presents her with her fee as a dowry. Duty done, the Serviteur comments: '..et je croy que vous n'avez gueres leu en cronique ny hystoire d'une plus grande honnesteté.'

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(1) ibid, Ch. 55, p.215.

(2) ibid, p.216

(3) ibid, Ch. 45, p.160

(4) ibid, Ch. 50.

(5) ibid, Ch. 51, p.191.

(6) 'Le bon chevalier, qui ne plaignit jamais argent pour sçavoir que faisoient ses ennemys, avoit ses espies.': ibid, p.145.

(7) ibid, p.219.

Though the exploitation of women for sexual pleasure is hardly one of the tenets of that chivalry which Bayard is portrayed as upholding, the undercurrent of snobbery which invests the work helps to restore the crumbling medieval image which the Serviteur is so anxious to present. The work is conceived as a eulogy of Bayard, so it is unthinkable that any grain of praise should go to those who helped him to capture sixty Albanians and thirty arbalestiers in Chapter 36. There is never any mention of the common soldier's essential contribution in battle, no more than there is any special regard for details of the wars which are a constant background to the work. In the first half of the book, the only combats we witness are mere skirmishes involving Bayard and a few friends who seem to be preoccupied with acquiring personal glamour, in total disregard of their noble duty to king and country. Bayard's conduct in the affair with Don Alonso (1), and in the fight between thirteen French and thirteen German knights would nowadays be accounted a gross act of irresponsibility in one whose safety was very important to the war effort. Evidence of selfless considerations such as the foregoing of personal ambitions in the good cause is distinctly lacking, and at the death of Charles VIII, it is the Serviteur who sheds literary tears, not Bayard. In the context of chivalry, however, Bayard follows the true path when he declares that he regrets putting his opponent to death in single combat - and the most worthless opponent at that. (2) Though it is not explicit, here is the difference between the roles of nobility and of commonalty upon the battlefield; commoners fight to achieve victory or death: the nobles

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(1) ibid, Chapters 20, 21 and 22

(2) Don Alonso: see Ch. 22.

fight to enhance their reputation. Nothing could be more feudal: the commoners are little more than animals in the eyes of their leaders. Even so, one senses that the battlefield alone is not where Bayard hopes to win great victories: in addressing a band of young nobles setting off for la Myrandolle, he declares: 'Mes enfans, vous allez au service des dames; monstrez-vous gentils compaignons pour acquérir leur grace et faictes parler de vous. La place ou vous allez est trés bonne et forte, si le siege y vient vous aurez honneur a la garder.'(1) Not so comforting is his only speech to the common soldiers, before the advance of the Papal armies at La Bastide. The effect is demoralising rather than uplifting because he foresees a hard struggle.(2) In so saying, he showed himself an unworthy commander: Monluc would never have spoken so discouragingly to men who were about to lay down their lives if necessary - but then, his attitude toward the rank and file was much more considerate. Bayard merely thought that the commoners were unfit to associate with his kind, and when it was suggested during the assault on Padua that the cavalry (mainly composed of nobles) should dismount in order to fight better, he replied to the Emperor Maximilian: '..qu'il entend assez que leur dit maistre n'a point de gens en ses ordonnances qui ne soient gentilzhommes; de les mesler parmy gens de pied qui sont de petite condition, seroit peu fait d'estime d'eulx.'(3)

If Bayard is unequivocally cast as a chivalric hero, his biography cannot be taken as a whole to represent a single-minded

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(1) ibid, Ch. 41, p.145

(2) ibid, Ch.44, p.149 et seq. Unlike Monluc, he does not inspire his soldiers with a healthy disdain for their adversaries.

(3) ibid, Ch. 37, p.119. In fairness, one must add that Bayard is reported to have led 'his' men into battle, to encourage them, in Ch. 33. The practice of dismounting cavalry, however, was widespread, and thus Bayard was tactically out of date.

attempt to prove himself so. The Serviteur must have been distracted from his task by the growing popularity of history during the early XVIth. century, for he steered an uncertain course between two distinct trains of thought: on the one hand, he tried to give an account of Bayard's virtues, whilst, on the other, he supplied a wealth of comment on events running parallel to Bayard's life. There was little attempt to correlate the two narratives - whole chapters of war-narrative pass by with no mention of Bayard, whom we rejoin later, in pursuit of his private aims. It serves to indicate more pointedly his indifference to public welfare, though this cannot have been intentional. Chapters 28, 29 and 30 unravel the progress of the Venetian troubles of 1509, to which we return again in Chapter 40; we have no evidence of Bayard's interest in naval affairs, but we are treated to the account of a sea-borne engagement off Britanny in Chapter 56; Chapter 58, however, prepares us for Bayard's demise, though it is nothing more than a digression on the deaths of notables. The Serviteur offers the following in mitigation of such gratuitous intrusions upon his theme: 'Pour ce que ceste histoire est principallement fondée sur les vertus et prouesses du bon chevalier sans paour et sans reprouche, laisseray beaucoup de choses a desmesler s'ilz ne sont requises y estre mises; toutefois je veux en gros declairer ce qui advint durant deux ans en Ytalie...'(1) Without further ado, we are embarked upon an examination of the Italian troubles. We must assume that more such digression was spared us by the Serviteur because it was not 'required'; yet this does not seem to constitute a defence of his putting in extra material, even as mere background information. He included it because he wished to do so, and, to an extent, it may be regarded as representative of his own experience rather than of Bayard's.

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(1) ibid, Ch. 46, p.161.

It is noticeable that the Serviteur was careful not to intrude on the reader's notice whilst Bayard was in the forefront; it is only conjecture that leads us to think that the 'maistre d'hotel' who was among those speechifying over Bayard's moribund form in Chapter 65 was the Serviteur himself.

The alternation of an encomiastic biography with 'indigestible' history may point to the influence of histories then being published in France; however, it betrays a hand, if not unused to writing, at least confused in its approach. The Serviteur fell back upon the example of earlier works of literary portraiture, and, like them, used strings of superlatives; Bayard the man was intended to be portrayed by his deeds, supplemented by ex-cathedra statements of his virtues which litter the narrative and are brought together in Chapter 66. This in itself is a model of an 'authorised' eulogy of the Middle Ages, but follows the practice of the classical portraitist, Suetonius, who placed his encomia at the end of the work.(1) However, the Serviteur did not follow Livy's example in incorporating memorable harangues of Bayard into the account, choosing instead to pepper the biography with short remarks verbatim: these seem to be more personal than a stiff and formal collection of speeches would have been. At all events, the Serviteur's book exemplifies anthropocentrism - allegedly a characteristic of the Renaissance (2) - because it is couched as the portrait of a man and not a chronicle, at least in intention. Yet it subscribes to the ancient tradition whereby a man of means would disdain to write up his own life, giving the task instead to some menial. The Renaissance was to furnish examples of the need felt by most to protect their reputations by

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(1) Suetonius had been popular throughout the Middle Ages.

(2) See Blanchard Bates, op.cit.

performing this task for themselves. So, the Histoire de Bayart is a work which belongs to two quite different literary backgrounds: in a sense it looks both backwards and forwards, and we see modernity in its inclusion of history, its concern with the man Bayard, whilst noting the probably dominant features which classify it with a bygone age - its stilted characterisation, its feeble chivalry, its encomia.

All this does not prevent the work from possessing great literary interest.(1) The Serviteur attempted to provide literary tension, for example, in the approach to the Battle of Ravenna. We first hear of the conflict when a palmist predicts the death of the Duc de Nemours in Chapter 47. It is mentioned again in Chapter 51, when Bayard is recuperating from a wound: he is anxious to regain his strength in order to fight the Spaniards, and he forces himself to exercise his injured leg in order to grow accustomed to the pain. The conclusion of Chapter 53, moreover, leaves the reader with a feeling of suspense: 'Le lendemain y eut une plus aspre et cruelle /bataille/, et dont François et Espaignolz mauldiront la journee toute leur vie'.(2) Having reached the day of the battle, the Serviteur took his time over the courteous preliminaries (3), and, in Chapter 55, took us through the battle, the list of notable mortalities (each one suitably dispatched with an encomium) and the subsequent events surrounding Bayard up to his

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(1) There are some excellent thumbnail sketches, e.g. of the Duchess of Ferrara (Isabella d'Este, 1474-1539, marchioness of Mantua, patroness of Raphael, Mantegna and Romano, whose court life was greatly influenced by Castiglione: - see E.G. Gardner: Dukes and Poets of Ferrara, London, 1904): 'elle estoit belle, bonne, doulce et courtoise à toutes gens. Elle parloit espaignol, grec, ytalien, et françoys, quelque peu tres bon latin, et composoit en toutes ces langues.' Histoire de Bayart, ed. cit., p.165.

(2) ibid, p.203.

(3) ibid, pp.204 and 205.

virtuous refusal of the maiden.(1) This method of dealing with his material enabled the Serviteur to build up tension, leading to a climax after which the tension is gradually slackened off. Sadly, he contrived to do so only in this episode; the early chapters dealing with Bayard's childhood ought to be as effective, but are not; the final moments of the hero's life, in Chapters 64, 65 and 66, also lack vividness for the modern reader to whom the death of a central character is always the climax of a book and who does not expect the wooden funeral oration with which the work closes. Even worse, the Serviteur seemed able to make nothing of the scène in which Bayard granted Francois Ier his spurs: the matter is sewn up unceremoniously in one sentence.(2) Bayard's defence of Mézières, with a force of 1,000 men against an army of 35,000, saved central France from invasion and gave Francois Ier time in which to rally forces which expelled the Imperialists.(3) The facts speak for themselves; the Serviteur's account pours cold water on the truth. Half the chapter (4) is given over to the reception afforded to one of Bayard's letters from the besieged town of his allies; the rest gives no account of the struggles during the six-week siege, and, together with a summary of the considerable rewards bestowed upon Bayard by François, creates the erroneous impression that his defence of the town was effortless. Such mis-representation must force us to the view that Bayard may not have been exactly as his faithful retainer wished us to think.

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(1) ibid, p.219.

(2) ibid, Ch. 60.

(3) See the Nouvelle Biographie Générale, Firmin Didot, Paris, 1855, Vol. IV, p.857, column 2 for a summary of this action.

(4) Chapter 63.

The Serviteur enlivened his writing by the inclusion of much dialogue - for once, we hear what purports to be the very speech of the characters. Yet again, there are drawbacks: no speech is apparently quoted in full and what we have is probably a paraphrase of the original, at best. We can surmise so much from the fact that there is no indication in the speech of any character to suggest differences of stature or of nationality. There are infrequent attempts to render remarks in a foreign tongue, but these are extremely short and often grossly wrong. The Serviteur, however, made some use of humour, though its value can be said to derive from its rarity. Take, for example, this wry statement about what profit was gained in the Neapolitan campaign from 1494 to 1502:(1) 'Aucuns aussi en apporterent quelque chose dont ils se sentirent toute leur vie, ce fut une manière de maladie qui eut plusieurs noms: d'aucuns fut nommée le mal de Naples, la grosse verole, les autres l'ont appelée le mal françois et plusieurs autres noms a eu ladicte maladie, mais de moy je l'appelle le mal de celuy qui l'a.' (2) Equally dry is this remark which touches on the practice of entrusting one's valuables to a priest for safe keeping, in this case, before the assault on Padua: 'et pour cela ne fault faire nulle doubte que messeigneurs les curez n'eussent bien voulu que ceulx dont ilz avoient l'argent en garde feussent demourez a l'assault.'(3) One Jacquyn Caumont, consulting a fortune-teller and knowing more or less what to expect in his prediction, warns him: 'Je sçay que je ne suis pas cocu, car je n'ay poinct de femme.'(4)

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(1) Naples fell into French hands in September 1495, but was repossessed by the Spanish in December, 1502.

(2) ibid, p.44.

(3) ibid, Ch. 37, p.117.

(4) ibid, Ch. 47, p.169.

However, it is perhaps only humorous to modern minds to read the following, intended to illustrate the indomitable courage of Spanish soldiers: 'oncques gens ne firent plus de deffense que les Espaignolz, qui, encores n'ayant plus bras ne jambe entiere, mordoient leurs ennemys.'(1) Despite the virtue of the Serviteur's account, so great a hero as Bayard deserved better of posterity: reduced to a type of chivalrous legend, he does not appear as a rounded being in a century which was to furnish ultimately so many intimate portraits. (2)

Jean de Bueil (3) practically wrote his own memoirs in Le Jouvencel - Tringant, the contemporary commentator, supposes that it is autobiographical. It was Bueil's main concern, however, that the work was not sufficiently innovatory, for he declared in his Prologue: 'Et, s'aucuns voulloient arguer que je veuil faire de vieil bois nouvelle maison, pour ce que de longtemps ceulx qui ont escript les faix des Rommains,(6) les Cronicques de France (4) et les autres batailles du temps passe, ont mis suffisamment la manière en escript et la façon de soy gouverner à la guerre, par quoy ne seroit aucun besoing que j'en fisse mention, je respons à cest argument que qui ne cesseroit jamais de renouveller les sciences, si trouveroit-on tousjours quelque chose de nouveau...'(5) Despite the need to defend Le Jouvencel against the accusation that it was out-dated, Bueil's book has much that looks far ahead into the XVIth. century. Like the Histoire de Bayart, it joins together elements

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(1) ibid, Ch. 54, p.210.

(2) See also: Gaston Letonnelier: Etude critique sur le Loyal Serviteur et son histoire de Bayart, Grenoble, 1926.

(3) 1405-1477. Tringant's comments appear with the edition quoted at (5) below.

(4) Bueil here presumably means the Cronicques de St. Denis.

(5) Le Jouvencel, ed. Léon Lécestre, Société de l'Histoire de France, Paris, 1887, p.17.

(6) Les Faits des Romains (about the Civil War between Caesar and Pompey) was a popular prose account written in the first half of the XIII century.

of both old and new styles of portraiture and presentation.

Bueil must have been inhibited by the traditional aversion of the nobility for the menial task of writing: Le Jouvencel is set in a half-imaginary world of fictitious places: Crathor is a pseudonym for Orléans (1), and the jouvencel is Bueil himself; to further the illusion, the king is never named. In Chapter 25 of part two, the jouvencel marries the daughter of 'King Amydas' and presently (2) we find him seeing to the government of a fictional land named Amydoine, like some fairy king in legend. It may have been thought dishonourable to write one's autobiography: Bueil therefore cloaked his book in mystery and gave it the trappings of fiction in order to make it more acceptable. That Bueil was the author, if not the subject, of the book never seems to have been in doubt, so he would have incurred the odium of those about him who disdained the pursuit of literature, if indeed there were any, for the court of Burgundy was a centre of the arts; and, though he declined to act as a historian, it was not on the grounds that historical writing was beneath him, but on the contention that to include everything would take too long.(3)

The style of Le Jouvencel is frequently picturesque but Bueil's medieval economy provides only compressed portraits (which are also encomiastic) set against very sparsely-detailed backgrounds. Our first sight of the jouvencel (4), riding through the war-torn countryside, including a pretty digression about springtime, tells us nothing about

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(1) See ed. cit., footnote, p.220.

(2) ibid, p.153 and p.187.

(3) ibid, p.31.

(4) ibid, Ch. 1, Book one, pp.18-21.

the motivation behind the war which is going on as a kind of background throughout the narrative. A modern reader, however, for whom peace is the norm, and war the exception, finds the lack of explanation for these hostilities irritating: to the men of the XVth. century, war was indeed a constant background and a way of life. We are confirmed in this view very shortly by Bueil's warning about the perils of peace! (1)

The warlike content of the book is small if it is judged by the number of its accounts of fighting. Nevertheless, it is offered as a guide for those entering the profession of arms (2): more useful to the student of warfare is the advice which is freely given throughout the work. What recounting of actual experience there is has been closely disguised, and most of that takes place around Crathor. The need for the capture of the cattle - praised as a great victory in Chapter 3 of Book I - is not apparent, but it is certainly humorous.(3) Yet there is much that makes good sense: war is not an easy means of making a living and success is only obtained after much experience (4); this life is a vale of tears, but one must live honestly and in accordance with one's conscience (5); a leader must be able to use discretion (6); a setback may be the prompting which leads to better efforts (7), and so on. There are instructions for the fighting of

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(1) ibid, pp.26-27.

(2) ibid, p.5 (Table des chapitres) and p.175.

(3) ibid, p.24.

(4) ibid, p.15.

(5) Book two, p.118.

(6) ibid, p.130.

(7) ibid, p.74 et seq.

battles with infantry and with cavalry (1), whilst more moral discussions centre upon the righteousness of war (2), the calling of a knight (3), and the practice of duelling (4).

The character of the jouvencel is sketchily drawn: we are informed curtly, for example, the 'Le Jouvencel, qui estoit homme de guerre, ne pensa que à faire bonne chiere et entreprendre sur ses ennemis.'(5); elsewhere, the king labels him 'homme qui aime la guerre et le païz et justice.'(6) Perhaps for personal reasons, Bueil gives us no physical description of his hero; modesty does not prevent him from saying 'Et sans faulte chacun qui a veu le Jouvencel, dit bien que c'est ung homme pour soy faire une foys grant homme à la guerre..c'est ung homme d'or pour ce mestier.'(7) Immoderate praise is showered upon the jouvencel at every opportunity, in fact. With no examples to substantiate his claim, Bueil tells us in the second chapter of Book one (8) that 'il avoit très hault et très noble couraige, et estoit tousjours le premier à faire les entreprinses.' To couch this encomium in fictional terms, then, was for Bueil an act of modesty.

Other characters in the book are mere ciphers, with the exception of Jehan Bienassiz, a scholarly man who lectures (9) on the means of

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(1) ibid, Book two, Chapters 9 and 10.

(2) ibid, pp.120 and 121.

(3) ibid, Ch. 18.

(4) ibid, Ch. 21.

(5) ibid, p.118.

(6) ibid, p.7.

(7) ibid, Ch. 11.

(8) ibid, p.23.

(9) He does so in Chapters 16 and 17 of Book two.

prosecuting war by land and sea, citing both Vegetius (1) and modern examples such as the battles of Shrewsbury and Agincourt.(2) If Jehan is the archetypal 'good old man' whose advice the jouvencel is willing to take, then Nicolle's address on the subject of chivalry is no less than a sermon (3), in which references to the Bible and St. Augustine are coupled with allusions culled from Policrates and Boethius. Formally, this chapter is above reproach, and when put alongside the fictional trappings of the whole seems to indicate that Bueil did not lack practice in the art of writing. The book is divided formally into three sections, each of which has a sub-title which, it must be admitted, seems to bear little relation to the subject-matter. Moreover, each chapter is preceded by a wordy rubric (4) which is sometimes revived by way of conclusion, for example: 'Par ces choses est esprouvé ce que dit est au commencement de ce chappitre, c'est assavoir, que saigement entreprendre fait bien executer.'(5)

Evidence of Biblical reading is not absent: the Prologue opens with a recollection of Cain and Abel, the originators of earthly strife. Whilst acknowledging the Romans' warlike nature, Bueil propounds the thesis that the Jewish kingdom, from the time of Saul, prospered by its

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(1) This is not evidence of a new approach: Vegetius was the only Classical military authority known widely before the Renaissance. He was translated into French as early as 1284 by Jean de Meung.

(2) These battles took place in 1403, and 1415, respectively.

(3) Book two, Ch. 18.

(4) For some reason, in the edition specified, these rubrics are written in a more archaic French than the text itself.

(5) ibid, end of Ch. 7, book two. It may be rather farfetched to see each chapter as a sermon illustrating a text.

wars (1); meanwhile, he prophesies that divine retribution will ruin the achievements of those who undertake to fight for the wrong reasons.(2)

There is a grain of novelty about the tone which Bueil adopts when considering the morality of war, for he does not sanction all forms of combat. Sea warfare he considers particularly cruel: 'Si est cruelle chose telle bataille ou les hommes n'ont mye mort seulement par armes, mais par feu et par eaue perissent et, sans povoir fuir ne gauchir, ilz sont souventeffoys tous vifz et sains livrez à estre pasture aux poissons.'(3) Being a noble he is bound to agree that war is the only proper profession for a gentleman, for honour is gained thereby (4); and it is gained in enjoyable fashion (5). Less forward-looking is Bueil's coyness about developments in weaponry, for on the matter of Greek fire, which had terrorised the Crusaders and soldiers since Roman times, he declines to say more than this: '... comme telle chose à faire et enseigner, pour les maux qui s'en pourroyent ensuir, sont deffendues et excommuniées, n'est bon d'en mettre en livres ne plus plainement en reciter, pour ce que à chrestien n'est loisible de user de telles inhumanitez qui meismement sont contre tout droit de guerre.'(6) This unwillingness to commit seemingly dangerous knowledge to paper was long-standing; even Roger Bacon, in his Epistola de Secretis Operibus of 1249 chose to conceal many of his discoveries by the use of codes which were

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(1) Book one, Ch. 5, pp.50-51.

(2) Book two, Ch. 6, p.121.

(3) ibid, pp.56 and 57.

(4) Book one, Ch. 5, pp.43 and 44.

(5) Book two, Ch.14. This eulogy of war is important - see infra p.190. In that war is praised for its own sake, it is an innovation which foreshadows Montaigne.

(6) ibid, pp.57 and 58.

not finally cracked until the XIXth. century, in the belief that '... the common herd is unable to digest scientific facts which it scorns and misuses to the detriment of the wise ... It is madness to commit a secret to writing unless it be done so that it is even unintelligible to the most educated and the wisest.'(1) Bueil purses his lips similarly over a matter of treason (2), yet his logical consideration of conventional warfare looks ahead to the military treatises of the late XVIth. century. A matter he does not foresee, however, is the menace of the Turks, that constant preoccupation of Renaissance warriors. Le Jouvencel belongs to 1466, barely thirteen years after the Fall of Constantinople, but its author, by then over sixty years of age, does not mention the Ottomans even in parenthesis, whilst Antoine de la Sale, ten years before, had Jehan de Saintré kill the Grand Turk in the conclusion to part one of his book. Nor does Bueil foresee the devastating power of artillery: this is understandable, because the only relevant passage is based entirely upon Vegetius and deals with the rock-hurling 'ballistae' in the assault of towns.(3) However, Bueil's insistence upon the honour of the pursuit of arms together with his moral stand over Greek fire point to the attitude later adopted by authors such as Bouchet and Monluc. Indeed it is the Serviteur's silence on this topic which should surprise us, for, by Bayard's death, in 1524, the use of small arms was already having its effect.(4)

Le Jouvencel adds a grain of political interest to its practical theme: its praise of the profession of arms may have been effective

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(1) Quoted in: Robert Held: The Age of Firearms, Cassell, 1959, p.17.

(2) Le Jouvencel, ed. cit., p.220, Book three.

(3) ibid, Book two, Ch. 16, p.47.

(4) The French Army began to use firearms extensively during the 1520's, but they were behind the Italians in doing so.

propaganda. The old chivalry indeed possessed a political significance, that of the maintenance of Church and State, of which the remnant appears principally in Chapter 5 of Book one: '... moult il y a de virtus et de grans perfections en ceux qui sieuvent la guerre.'(1) The whole contention is given added point by the contrasting accusation that the court is no place for a young man to perfect himself.(2) Kings, too, are far from infallible: they are not divine, and are liable to arbitrary changes of heart (3); furthermore, their mutual distrust is the cause of all strife: 'La principalle cause des guerres et questions qui sont entre les princes et roix et pour la deffiance qu'ilz ont les ungs entre les autres. Les ungs l'ont pour paour d'estre deceupz; les autres l'ont pour ce qu'ilz veullent decepvoir et pour ce, ne pevent-ilz prendre foy ensemble, ne eulx entre amer.'(4) The ideal of mutual trust between antagonists which is embodied in this passage is evidently a chivalrous one which, presumably, the nobility were better qualified to practise. Bueil borrows a quotation from Chartier to support his contention that the nobility is 'called' to govern.(5)

Bueil may well have acquired some political insight from the Ancients, for it appears from constant reference to authors and figures of Antiquity that he was at least as well versed in Classical literature as any nobleman of his day. We have seen that he refers to 'ceulx qui ont escript les faix des Rommains'(6); those named in the book are Caesar, Livy,

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(1) ibid, Book one, p.52.

(2) ibid, p.55.

(3) ibid, p.47

(4) ibid, Book two, pp.257 and 258.

(5) ibid, p.30.

(6) see the prologue to Book one, p.17.

Hegesippus and Titus; later Latin authors cited are Boethius and St. Augustine. References are not used extensively to provide material in the description of battles, for instance, but serve to point a moral only as extra evidence. Alexander and Caesar are used to illustrate the point that it is idle to wage war for personal profit - their pleasures were short-lived.(1) The destructiveness of avarice is seen clearly in the tales of Romulus and Remus and of Jugurtha.(2) Fabius and Hannibal are invoked to prove that one should honour one's promises (3); Caesar and Marcellus illustrate humanity in warfare, whilst modesty and generosity are the bases of further extracts from Boethius, Titus and Hegesippus.(4) One must point out here that Bueil's use of these sources is totally different from the Serviteur's; he does not compare the jouvencel with the ancient heroes. Bayard, on the other hand, is an amalgam of heroes - for subtlety, he is the equal of Coriolanus; for daring, of Fabius Maximus; for strength, of Hector.(5) The Serviteur's procedure, as with the concluding encomium of which it forms a part, recalls Einhard's method in his portrayal of Charlemagne, which was to select a portrait of one of the Caesars written by Suetonius and rewrite it with facts taken from the life of the Frankish Emperor. In that it placed Charlemagne on a literary footing alongside the Roman emperors, it was intended as a compliment; so it was with Bayard. We have to remind ourselves, however, that Bueil's work was autobiographical in essence (6)

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(1) Book two, Ch. 6, p.121.

(2) ibid, p.128.

(3) ibid, Ch. 18, p.71.

(4) ibid, pp.72-5.

(5) Histoire de Bayart, ed. cit., Ch. 66: 'Des vertus qui estoient au bon chevalier sans paour et sans reprouche.'

(6) A 'key' to all the major identities appeared shortly after the publication of Le Jouvencel; see ed. cit., Vol. 1, pp.1-4.

Bueil was above self-praise of this order. There is no encomium of the Suetonian type, and Bueil does not describe the death of the jounvencel: the novel ends instead with further discussion of warfare.

Bueil, this time as the author, points to the object of his writing a number of times - and his object is always purely practical: 'J'ay peu veoir par l'espace de long temps plusieurs et diverses manieres de faire que les jeunes et nouveaux venus ne puent pas sçavoir de prime face.'(1) He intrudes to the extent of interviewing his own characters in Book one, Chapter 4, and, after the name 'Jouvencel' is conferred upon the hero, Bueil confesses: 'Et toutes ces choses advisay, regarday et retins, et dès lors proposay les rediger par escript pour demonstrer exemple aux autres.'(2) This, then, indicates the basic contrast between the Histoire de Bayart and Le Jouvencel, two works separated by almost sixty years: the earlier work is semi-autobiographical and practical, foreshadowing the works of the later XVIth. century; the later work is biographical and merely laudatory, as were the portraits of the Middle Ages.

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(1) Book one, p.15.

(2) ibid, p.38.

III

Classical and foreign influence up to Fourquevaux's 'Instructions sur le faict de la guerre', 1548

We have seen that Bueil had some limited recourse to Classical texts in order to illustrate points put forward in Le Jouvencel. He depended heavily upon Caesar and Livy for those references, but for the section dealing the Vegetius, whose principles are put forward by Jehan Bienassiz, he may have used either Jehan de Meung's translation of 1284, or of Christine de Pisan's adaptation, L'Art de chevalerie selon Vegece, written originally in 1412, but not printed until 1488. Vegetius was not only the first Classical military author to be printed in France, but also the most widely read and commentated throughout the Middle Ages.(1) The spread of printing aided the field of military literature as much as any other, and various treatises by obscure Classical authors saw the light of day before 1600, releasing a wealth of information about the organisation of the Roman army along with scholarly advice concerning tactics. A list of authors first printed then includes Greek historians such as Thucydides, the author of the Peloponnesian War. Written between 425 and 400 B.C., it is classed as one of the greatest histories of all time, and is notable in that the action proceeds by means of speeches which the various protagonists might have spoken. Of more military interest were works by Xenophon, Polybius and Sallust.(2) From the

(1) See M.J.D. Cockle: A Bibliography of English Military Books up to 1642 and of Contemporary Foreign Works, London, 1900 (limited edition of 250 copies), Preface. This is extremely helpful for the background of Classical publications before the XVIth. century. A modern edition of Meung's translation of Vegetius is that of the Société des Anciens Textes Français, 1897, edited by Ulysse Robert. Vegetius (A.D. 379 - 395) was a military writer under Theodosius I: his work is entitled Epitoma Rei Militaris.

(2) Xenophon (c.430-355 B.C.) wrote The Cavalry Commander; Polybius (c.202-120 B.C.) wrote five volumes of history which survive; we have only quotations from the remaining 35 volumes;
Sallust (86-35 B.C.) wrote on the Catiline Conspiracy and on the Jugurthine War, copying Thucydides in his inclusion of direct speech. A French translation appeared in 1528.

immediate post-Christian era there came works by Hyginus (1), Suetonius (2), Frontinus (3), Arrian (4), and Polyaenus (5): whilst from the period when the Roman Empire was under stress, and from amid the constant upheavals before the millenium came works by Hegesippus (6), Boethius (7),

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(1) Hyginus (c.64 B.C. 0 17 A.D.) was a friend of Ovid and the author of many books, now lost. For some reason, his name was adopted by authors discussing the question of land-use; the Hyginus who is of military importance was the IIIrd. century writer of De Munitionibus Castrorum.

(2) Suetonius (A.D. 70 - 160) was imperial secretary to Trajan, and an antiquarian whose fame rests upon his De Vita Caesarum and De Viris Illustribus which are anecdotal but not penetrating portraits. Einhard modelled his portrait of Charlemagne very appropriately on Suetonius's Domitian, the patron of scholarship.

(3) Frontinus (A.D. 40 - 103) wrote an Art of War, now lost, and, as a sequel, 3 volumes of Strategemata (ruses of warfare): these were reprinted and much used by XVIth. century militarists.

(4) Arrian (c.A.D. 95 - 175) was a Greek officer in the Roman army whose fame derived from his life of Alexander, entitled Anabasis, in Greek.

(5) Polyaenus (fl. IInd. century A.D.) was the author of another Strategemata dedicated to the Emperors Marcus Aurelius and Verus.

(6) Hegesippus is thought to be the author of De bello judaico et excidio urbis Hierosolymitanae, an adaptation of Josephus's Jewish War and probably belonging to the IVth. century.

(7) Boethius (c. A.D. 480 - 524) was a commentator of Aristotle - the Middle Ages derived practically all their knowledge of Aristotle from him - and the author of De Consolatione Philosophiae.

Maurice (1), Leo the Isaurian (2), and Constantine (3). In fact, the works of Hyginus, Arrian and Maurice did not appear in modern editions until the XVIIth. century (4); and while works continued to appear there was still a heavy dependence on Vegetius, whose ideas were very deeply rooted, and the works of Caesar and Livy which had been known throughout the Middle Ages. French translations of Caesar's Commentaries and of Livy's Decades appeared in Paris in 1485 and 1486-7, respectively. Suetonius's Lives of the Twelve Caesars was similarly translated in 1520. The influence of these all-important writers was very great, even upon such semi-literates as Monluc. So much is surprising in view of the changed conditions of warfare in the Renaissance, but commanders continued to keep ancient works on the Art Military by them to be read to them by their secretaries, irrelevant or not. ' .. a renewed interest in classical writings had encouraged the study of theories and practices inherited from the ancients and consecrated by long use and tradition;

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(1) Maurice (c. A.D. 539 - 602) was an Emperor of the East; the work on art military ascribed to him is probably an anonymous contemporary piece.

(2) Emperor Leo III is probably the author of the military treatise usually attributed to Leo VI (the Wise): Leo III is notable in having used Greek Fire, despite the prevalent view that it was un-Christian to do so, against the Saracens as a defence of Constantinople in 717 A.D.

(3) Constantine VII, son of Leo VI, Emperor (905 - 959) wrote works including De Thematibus (an account of military districts), and De Insidiis.

(4) Hyginus appeared after 1607; Arrian and Maurice were printed together at Upsala in 1664. A Latin version of Arrian was made in the early XV century by Vergerio for the Emperor Sigismund; a French version of a better translation (by Facio and Curlo) was printed in Paris in 1581, prepared by Vuitart.
Caesar was translated in the XIII century by Jean de Thuim; Livy, by Pierre Bersuire, c. 1360. Both of these versions were thus available in manuscript.

while at the same time a revolution was taking place with the development of powerful new weapons, hand fire-arms and artillery. So men went to battle, their heads filled with maxims from Frontinus and Vegetius, and a musket or arquebus in their hands. They might attempt to draw up their formations according to Aelian (1) or in the time-honoured simple way of vanguard, 'battle', and rear-guard; yet very early in the century they were quick to realise the importance of artillery and use it with considerable effect.'(2)

Vegetius's influence down the Middle Ages seems to have been constant, for not only was his book translated in 1284 by Jehan de Meung, but the translation itself was turned into verse by Jean Priorat and entitled Li Abrejance de l'ordre de chevalerie (3); in this form it was presumably more acceptable to the cultured taste of the XIIIth. century. Another latin version was prepared in 1285 by Colonna, entitled De Regimine Principum; it, too, was translated into the Italian vernacular in 1288. Throughout the following centuries, works entitled De Re Militari were appearing, their titles bearing witness both to their indebtedness to Vegetius and to their 'outmoded thinking'.(4) Under this blanket title, however, many new ideas might lurk, but its use did not lapse until the XVIth. century. Robert Valtur, an authority on artillery, much used and respected for over a century, used the title for his work

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(1) Aelian (fl. c. A.D. 200) wrote 14 books of Historical Miscellanies and 17 books of On the characteristics of animals.

(2) Dickinson, op.cit., Introduction, IV. For a general history of the development of warfare at this time, see Charles Oman: The History of the Art of War in the Middle Ages, London 1924, and The History of the Art of War in the Sixteenth Century, 1937.

(3) This, like many other verse renderings of prose works, is immensely long, consisting of 11,370 octosyllabic lines. See the edition of the Société des Anciens Textes Français, 1897.

(4) This opinion is Cockle's.

published at Verona in 1483 (1); and one Pierino Belli (1502-1575) brought out a De Re Militari et Bello Tractatus at Venice in 1567. The most famous adaptation of Vegetius into French at this time was that of Christine de Pisan - the late Professor Dickinson termed it 'a compilation'. There was no lack of adaptations, however, and one of them is even attributed to Louis XI, Le Rosier des guerres, published in Paris in 1521; whilst Fourquevaux includes Vegetius's name in the title of his work, which is not fundamentally compiled from ancient sources (2); it is almost as though Vegetius was a talisman indispensable to success in the field of military literature.

Adaptations of Caesar are also plentiful: Gabriel Symeon published his Caesar renouvellé in 1558 or 1559; there exists a manuscript Preceptes et advertissemens pour ceulx qui suyvent les armes by one Jehan de Bigue which is in fact a commentary of the first book of Caesar's De Bello Gallico.(3) Pierre de la Ramée produced a Liber de Caesaris militia in 1559 at Paris (4), and Henri, Duc de Rohan, renewed the subject as late as 1636 with his Le parfaict Capitaine. Autrement, l'abregé des... Commentaires de Cesar.(5) A host of other books merely compiled references to all the well-known classical authorities; most of them are

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(1) A French translation by Meigret appeared in 1555. It was eclipsed by the works of Rivault (1605) and Ufano (1613).

(2) Abel Lefranc: 'Un Réformateur Militaire au XVIème siècle.' in: Revue du Seizième Siècle, Vol. III (1915), pp.109-54; see p.110.

(3) This is number 25 in Dickinson's bibliography.

(4) This is number 525 in Cockle's bibliography.

(5) ibid, number 645.

platitudinous and unexciting, and also, it must be confessed, parasitic since lesser authors like Picaine (1) quote from greater authors like Fourquevaux, and, later, D'Espinay de Saint-Luc (2) comments on La Noue. In view of the pressures brought by the changes in warfare, it seems remarkable that few authors of military works bothered to deal with contemporary matters; an early exception is Emery de Sainte-Rose (3), who, though he draws principally upon the usual classical sources, alludes to contemporary matters, notably the Turkish menace, in Les ruses et cautelles de guerre.

In spite of the dependence upon such established authorities as Vegetius, authors began to write upon more specialised topics of warfare during the XVth. century. There exist manuscripts of works on artillery by Paolo Santini (of 1450) and by Lampo Birago (of 1454), predating Valtur's work by thirty years. One must not ignore the contribution of Da Vinci (4) who included an interest for the military within the compass of his genius, - but Da Vinci was a visionary in this field as in many others, and it is difficult to estimate the extent of his influence. In succeeding years, there appeared treatises on ballistics, principal among which was Tartaglia's Nova Scientia of 1537; there were also important works by the Spaniard Alaba (5), and the Italian Galileo, whilst there is evidence that another Spaniard, Escriva, wrote a tract on fortification, now lost. Other works on the art of defending emplacements are by Durer,

(1) This is number 28 in Dickinson's bibliography.

(2) ibid, number 31.

(3) ibid, number 7.

(4) Born 1452.

(5) Diego de Alaba y Viamont: El Perfeto Capitán, instruido en la disciplina militar y nueva ciencia de la artillería, Madrid, 1590.

Giangiacomo Leonardi (1), and Niccolò Machiavelli (2), who, in a work of 1526, gave us an account of the fortifications of Florence. Interest in earth-works and ramparts was a pointer to the type of war then waged: by the end of the 1520's, armies rarely met face-to-face in the field, and war had become a tedious succession of sieges. Consequently great emphasis was thrown upon the defence and provisioning of beleaguered strongholds. Thus, writers who specialised in a limited aspect of warfare were not indulging an academic whim, nor were they regurgitating the confused generalities of an ancient military literature about a style of combat which had long since disappeared. The content of their books was new and practical, reflecting the era in which the writer lived. Through Machiavelli, however, we see not only new means of warfare, but a new concept of warmongery allied to an amoral statecraft, for hitherto, war had been regarded as a necessary and fitting pursuit for princes and nobles: the remnants of chivalry were swept away, and Machiavelli saw war not as an end in itself but as one of the many tools in the hands of the unscrupulously ambitious prince. Machiavelli's two most important works in this field, Il Principe of 1513, and the Arte della Guerra, though very progressive, are a curious mixture of old and new ideas, and of misguided prophecy. He saw the need for unity beneath a powerful magnate (in this case, Cesare Borgia) in a country ravaged by anarchistic minor potentates and their hired bands of 'condottieri' (3); it was the

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(1) His manuscript is dated about 1550.

(2) 1469-1527.

(3) The condottieri were paid by the month. War was an expensive business and rates of pay were high - hence commanders were constantly meeting the embarrassment of being unable to pay their hired troops. In these circumstances, the condottieri would first apply to opposing side to see what hope there was of better employment before quitting the field altogether, intending to supplement their income by wholesale pillage. They were a great source of disorder.

main object of the Principe to encourage Borgia in giving a firm lead. Machiavelli was also sufficiently aware of the shifting state of warfare to realise that the most effective army was not all composed of infantry, nor of cavalry, nor of artillery, but of a mixture of the three. Yet 'the astute Florentine was so intoxicated with his readings in Livy and Vegetius, and so impressed with what he had seen of Swiss pikes and the Spanish sword-and-buckler men, that he had overvalued the power of infantry as compared with the other two arms.'(1) He did not foresee the importance of strongholds in war, nor the decline of the pitched battle - such mutual onslaughts became rare after Pavia (2): his worst mistake, however, was to deny the importance of artillery. 'In the archetypal battle described in his Arte della Guerra the guns are allowed to start the fighting with a loud salvo, but do not do overmuch mischief, and have no decisive influence on the result of the action.'(3) In view of Machiavelli's own experience of guns, such an indifference to artillery is understandable, for the early cannon were badly made and prone to explode; they were also clumsy to transport and had very limited range. Improvement only occurred during the XVIth. century, to which the first major successes in the field of ballistics really belong. Nevertheless, Oman records (4) that artillery was of some effect at the siege of Constantinople in 1453, at which one gigantic gun, called the Basilica, made its appearance. It was constructed of iron hoops and hurled

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(1) Oman, War .. in the Middle Ages, 1924, Vol. II, p.311. The crushing defeat of Emperor Maximilian's forces by the Swiss pikemen at Dornach in 1499 had created a stir in military circles comparable with the victory of the English bowmen over mounted French men-at-arms at Agincourt. For many years, the pikemen were thought to be invincible against other armour.

(2) Oman, War .. in the Sixteenth Century, 1937, p.28.

(3) Oman, War .. in the Middle Ages, 1924, Vol. II, p.311.

(4) ibid, p.357.

missiles 800 lbs. in weight: it blew itself to pieces after two days. Even in Machiavelli's own time, the power of guns was demonstrated, for Charles VIII had a fine stock of artillery at his entry to Italy in 1494, the like of which had never before been seen; whilst Robert de la Mark, seigneur de Fleurange, writing about the period of Louis XII and François Ier, mentions the use of artillery in many places, giving details of individual pieces (1), accounts of how the difficulty of moving guns in snow may be circumvented (2), and making the assertion that the French artillery was more effective than the Venetian at a combat near Rivolta in 1509.(3)

Machiavelli was important, then, for his logical and relevant exposition of contemporary warfare, seen not only from a military viewpoint but also from the political angle. He realised that war, in terms of diplomacy, is a disaster, and that its aims should ideally be attained by the more subtle arts of propaganda, persuasion and deceit, not unconnected with political assassination. But, in unavoidable conflicts, his ideal prince must be a masterly soldier as well as an admirable diplomat: wars were meant to be won and finished with, not to be protracted by those seeking an opportunity to glorify their reputations and acquire a kind of chivalrous honour which, for Machiavelli, did not exist outside the legendary romances. Chivalry henceforth should have no relevance to warfare, and though men of succeeding decades might bemoan the brutality and immorality of war or regret the good old days,

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(1) Mémoires du Jeune Adventureux (1499-1521), in Michaud and Poujoulat's collection, Vol. V, 1850, Chapter XLVIII, p.48, column A.

(2) ibid, Ch. XX.

(3) ibid, Ch. VII, p.14, column A.

there was no return to the old code. 'Although a heroic figure like Bayard might pass across the scene, he was but a futile representative of a dying system.'(1)

In any case, it must be pointed out that little or no specialised military literature was produced in France for most of the XVIth. century: all the innovatory works were either Italian or Spanish, and whatever the subject, this preponderance was overwhelming even into the XVIIth. century. The bibliography assembled by M.J.D. Cockle - confessedly incomplete - includes only 22 books of military practice either written in French or published in France before 1600, following the appearance of Fourquevaux's book of 1548; he adds a further 33 up to 1642, where his list ends. Professor Dickinson adds a further 21 titles to the list of French publications in the period up to 1600. However, Cockle lists in all some 440 works in Italian or Latin, for the most part, published outside France in the same period. Scarcely anything appeared in France before the 1540's, and a good deal of subsequent productions consisted of translations and adaptations of contemporary foreign books. Meigret's translation of Valtur's treatise appeared in 1555, complete with hints, tips and diagrams; the VIIIth. Dialoque of Bruccioli, entitled De l'office d'un cappitaine et chef d'exercite was translated by Paradin and published at Poitiers in 1551. An early work which proved very popular and ran to eleven editions within 37 years of its appearance was a translation of Battista della Valle's Livre contenant les appartenances aux Capitaines, of 1529. On the other hand, works like D'Amboise's Le Guidon des gens de guerre and Bytharne's Livre de guerre tant par mer que par terre, both of 1543, are classed by Dickinson as valueless

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(1) Kilgour, op.cit., p.417.

collections of generalisations and quotations. It was left to Raymond de Rouer, sieur de Fourquevaux, to provide a truly French treatise which could stand comparison with the best of foreign military literature.

IV

Raymond de Beccarie de Pavie, sieur de Fourquevaux

1511-1574

On the 24th July, 1534, François Ier broke with medieval practice by establishing seven legions of a standing army, divided among the principal regions of France, Burgundy, Champagne, Dauphiné with Provence, Guyenne, Languedoc, Normandy and Picardy. Thus, the military, from being exclusive to the nobility, became a paid profession. There arose criticism from those who thought it their noble prerogative to direct martial matters. To some extent, their censures were justified, for the companies were badly equipped and undisciplined; the officers were idle and ill-trained; more often than not they had been appointed for the wrong reasons. But at least the inadequacy of the 'ban' and 'arrière-ban' was acknowledged: the period of forty days' service which the king was entitled to demand of his nobles under the feudal levy was insufficient for the training and fielding of an army in the protracted campaigns of the XVIth. century, especially seeing that the pace of warfare had slowed down. Victory depended much less upon the short and violent combat than formerly, and the forty-day limit made nonsense of any attempt to starve the inhabitants of recalcitrant towns into submission, since most could last out for longer periods than the army felt obliged to stay. The king's action in creating a permanent defensive force was to put the army on an entirely new footing, whereby the lesser nobility did not exercise so much influence in the making of decisions, whilst the Marshals and Constables held more sway, being directly responsible to the king.

Parallel with the diminution of the nobles' feudal independence was the introduction of large numbers of peasant-soldiers into the formerly exclusive ranks of the army. There were many who thought that their

presence was degrading, and still more who thought that the ignobly born were incapable of the heroism demanded of a true soldier. Few seemed to appreciate that their position as nobles would remain intact as they assumed command over the menials, nor did they realise that, where most nobles had received military training from their youngest days, hardly any of the plebeian recruits had ever seen anything more dangerous than a pitch-fork and had never been taught how to use it in any but the most bucolic of manners. Raymond de Fourquevaux, however, realised that the peasant-soldier was likely to prove the backbone of the new army, and that he needed careful handling if he was to prove effective. 'Fourquevaux's book, compiled after 1536, was mainly written to perfect the levying and the training of these legionaries.'(1)

Fourquevaux had both academic and military leanings, a combination which was still unusual even during the first stirrings of humanism in France. He was born in 1511 at Toulouse and studied there: at the age of 19 he joined Lautrec's army which was aiding Clement VII against Charles V in Italy. He was wounded at the siege of Pavia and was also a captive in Spanish hands for a year after the siege of Naples. Thereafter, he returned to his studies at Toulouse, seeing further action between 1535 and 1538 in Savoy, and under the Dauphin in Piedmont. During the Truce of Monçon he began to work on his book, but upon the accession of the Dauphin as Henri II, in 1547, he assumed great importance as an adviser and made journeys to Ireland and Scotland to sound out opinion on a projected annexation of Scotland by France to form a bloc against the Protestant Edward of England. In 1550, he became governor of

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(1) Dickinson, op. cit., Introduction, p. xxxiii.

Narbonne, and was imprisoned after further action in Northern Italy at Florence for over a year. From 1565 until 1572 he was ambassador to Spain, and remained active until his death in 1574, investigating clerical reforms.(1) His career was thus a spectacular and varied one, embracing the military, academic and diplomatic spheres. Yet, though he succeeded in the hierarchy as it then existed, his work is essentially that of a reformer; his ideas are practical, and designed specifically to deal with the army as it existed under François Ier. Modesty, perhaps, or fear that his reforms might bring disgrace upon him prevented his acknowledging his own work, and it was assumed by many including Brantome that the book was by Guillaume du Bellay (2), whose career was strikingly similar to Fourquevaux's. It was the son of Fourquevaux who declared his father to be the true author of this popular work (3), which was published and translated all through the XVIth. century.(4)

The original title of Fourquevaux's book in its edition of 1548 was Instructions sur le faict de la guerre: the following year, Fourquevaux was more explicit, and added to this the words extraictes des livres de

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(1) Biographies of Fourquevaux appear both in Dickinson, op. cit., Introduction, Ch. V, and in Lefranc's article 'Un Réformateur Militaire au XVIème siècle', loc. cit., pp.116-8.

(2) This impression was a result of the note subscribed 'A.D.R.' facing page 1 recto of the 1548 edition: reference is made to the writings of du Bellay, in such a way that it is easy to assume that the Instructions were another product from his pen.

(3) See Lefranc, op. cit., pp.112-4.

(4) First edition Paris 1548, republished 1549 and 1553 and in 1592 at Lyon; Italian translations 1550 and 1571; Spanish translation 1566; German and Latin translations 1594.

Polybe, Frontin, Vegece, Cornazan (1), Machiavelle, et plusieurs autres bons auteurs. This title is slightly misleading in giving the reader to believe that the work is a mere compilation from classical and modern sources. Both Abel Lefranc and Professor Dickinson point out that this is not so: it made an 'original and valuable contribution in its information about the army under Francis I, its criticisms of contemporary military practice, and its various projects for reform.'(2) Lefranc reserved fulsome praise for the book: 'Ce volume...est assurément l'oeuvre d'un esprit supérieur, d'un organisateur militaire de premier ordre, d'un véritable précurseur des conceptions et des méthodes modernes dans l'art de la guerre.'(3) and the book is 'une vue d'ensemble de la plus large ampleur, un programme admirable de réformes techniques qui reste encore d'actualité (4), conçu et exposé par un homme de guerre d'une expérience consommée et que guide par ailleurs une clairvoyance impeccable.'(5) Lefranc's praise is understandable since he is trying to draw attention to the work; however, the contention that the Instructions were an original and independent work is somewhat compromised by a later assertion that no study of the influence exercised by the ancients on the humanist intellect could afford to neglect this writer.(6) Furthermore, that the Instructions may boast 'la plus large ampleur' is open to doubt, for Fourquevaux says little on the subjects of sieges, fortifications and artillery, all very important at his time.

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(1) Antonio Cornazzano, born c.1451 at (?) Piacenza, died c.1500 at Ferrara. He wrote a Sforziad about the exploits of Francesco Sforza, a De Re Militari, published at Venice in 1493, and a poem, Del arte militar, along with devotional and anecdotal works: see Dickinson, op.cit., p.cxxii.

(2) Dickinson, op.cit., p.lxxxii, and Chapter VI of her Introduction, ibid.

(3) Lefranc, loc. cit., p.110.

(4) Lefranc was writing at the very beginning of the Great War.

(5) ibid.

(6) ibid, p.154.

It is important to decide to what extent Fourquevaux in fact relied upon his 'bons auteurs' for material before we pass judgement on his originality. There is little evidence of borrowing from Vegetius, Polybius or Frontinus except in the rather academic discussion on the morality of war which begins the work. There is some reference to the way in which the extensive use of foreign mercenaries brought about the downfall of Rome after the IVth. century A.D.; and Fourguevaux expresses a wish that the new French army should be run on Roman lines - however, this was a wish frequently expressed in most quarters. Of far more importance are the frequent references made to modern examples. Fourquevaux's ideal soldier is no hero of antiquity, but the Connetable de Montmorency, to whom the book is dedicated. The use of the arquebus is illustrated by Fourquevaux's own experience at Turin and Bicocca; the 'scorched earth' policy is defended by a reference to Montmorency's retreat through Provence in 1536; whilst an archetypal battle is reviewed and analysed for the light it sheds upon tactics, made up of episodes from Fourquevaux's own experience. The use of a mock battle points to the influence of Machiavelli,(1) as does the section in which a commander is shown how to run a campaign so as to reflect greatest credit upon himself. Machiavelli and Fourquevaux were both diplomats of long standing and presumably were well aware of the art of disguising truth to advantage. The Instructions are deeply rooted in their period, and are a practical exhortation in favour of reform.

In 1532, François Ier had tried to set up the 'compagnies d'ordonnance', but the experiment had met with only partial success. Fourquevaux was outspoken on the reasons for this failure: he declared

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(1) Here, too, the artillery fires only one salvo and does hardly any damage.

that the nobility - his own colleagues - were lazy and irresponsible in their duty towards their king. Their discipline was lax, they misunderstood or preferred to ignore their instructions and protective duty towards the commoners (1), and they put their own persons at risk by insisting on leading the combat though their loss could be very serious to the course of the campaign.(2) Fourquevaux was of the opinion that warfare is not merely a gentlemanly occupation; it should not be undertaken where arbitration is likely to succeed - again, this is the diplomatist's view - and it should involve all national resources.(3) Fourquevaux would patriotically exclude all foreign mercenaries from French armies and, by improving conditions and training, raise an adequate number of native-born soldiers for the king; he even devised a system of catchment areas for the levying of the militia, and suggested a possible remedy for the scarcity of good and cheap horses.(4) The training which he envisaged was chiefly physical exercise to harden the soldier against the privations he would meet in campaign,(5) and he seemed to be preoccupied with an idealised soldier-figure, whom he drew thus: 'les yeux vifs et éveillés, la tête droite, l'estomac élevé, les épaules larges, les bras longs, les doigts forts, le ventre petit, les cuisses grosses, les jambes grêles et les pieds secs.'(6) Such a concern with health of the soldier is not surprising in view of the generally

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(1) Dickinson's edition, (facsimile of 1548 edition) p.1 recto.

(2) This last point invites comparison with Bayard.

(3) Cf. title of Book One: 'Comment le Roy devroit faire ses guerres atout la force de ses subiectz.': ed. cit., p.3 verso.

(4) ibid, p.23, recto and verso.

(5) ibid, Ch. VI.

(6) ibid, p.10 verso.

poor health of most commoners at the time.(1)

Strangely, however, Fourquevaux did not support the principle of the standing army which would be garrisoned in peacetime; he preferred that the common soldiers should learn a peacetime trade to which they could turn at the end of each campaign, as if to point out that war should be regarded as an exceptional event, and that the military profession should not be looked upon as a means to earn a living.(2) Here again, we must point out a departure from contemporary thought. Nevertheless, Fourquevaux heralded the opinion of many authorities when he pleaded that soldiers should be adequately paid so as to preclude the necessity to eke out an existence on the fruits of pillage.

Many writers were to repeat Fourquevaux's views on two further important topics. The 1530's saw the alliance between the Christian French and the Mohammedan Turks, and controversy raged on about this matter until the decline of Ottoman influence in Eastern Europe in the XVIIth. century. Like the majority, Fourquevaux condemned this alliance, saying that, of all war, that against the Turks was the most justifiable. Even the defence of the realm took second place behind it. The second point, on which there was to be much argument, concerned the rapid spread of artillery, (3) to which Fourquevaux took

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(1) The stringent list of physical attributes here calls to mind Rabelais's requirements for gentlemen wishing to apply for entrance to the Abbaye de Thélème.

(2) ed. cit., p.108 recto.

(3) 'In the 15th. and 16th. centuries, the word "artillery" was used for everything in the way of guns and equipment required for sieges, battles and the waging of war. (Some Italian treatises on artillery give details about sieges and fortifications.)' : Dickinson, op.cit., p.xlii.

exception on the grounds of morality and efficiency. His was, then, a precursor of many works on military matters in his century, notable for its practicality, and its modernity; and his suggestions must be reconsidered alongside the remarks of his successors: 'Il ouvre dignement la brillante série des écrivains militaires de la France moderne.'(1) Beside him, Monluc and Tavannes stand as reactionaries; La Noue is his worthy successor, adopting many of his views and his reformist standpoint. The judgement which Professor Dickinson applied to Fourquevaux might with all fairness be applied also to La Noue, for 'His call was for a return to the true religion to stem the inroad of the Turks and to bring men back to a better way of living. Thus, his book, while treating of military matters, is above all the work of a fervent patriot and a Christian ... Fourquevaux, however, is not content with adverse criticism. He offers his suggestions for reform, particularly of the infantry, and thereby adds to the value of his work.' (2)

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(1) Lefranc, loc.cit., p.154.

(2) Dickinson, op.cit., p.lxxxvi, Cf. Charles Oman, War .. in the Sixteenth Century, pp.397 and 399 for a similar eulogy of La Noue.

V

Popular History and the Du Bellay Memoirs

'L'histoire, comme les Arts et les Lettres, profita de l'ébranlement produit dans les esprits par la Renaissance. .. On mettait en lumière, par des éditions et surtout par des traductions, les ouvrages des historiens anciens.'(1) In addition to the influence of Caesar, Livy, Suetonius and Sallust, the publication of medieval and contemporary history had a profound effect on the early XVIth. century. The Chroniques de St. Denis appeared in 1476, Froissart's Récits in 1496, and the Chroniques Martiniennes in 1503; between 1512 and 1514 there followed the publication of works by Gregory of Tours (2), Aimoin (3), and Monstrelet (4), concerned with the national history of the French race. Such works created a new interest in patriotic chronicles and spurred new writers to emulate their example. Such enthusiasm was occasionally misplaced: 'Le travail historique s'essaye des compilations indigestes et dépourvues de critique. Avec autant d'enthousiasme que de présomption, et sur l'exemple de quelques anciens, on entame des histoires universelles.' (5). A product of this period was the legend that the French race

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(1) V. -L. Bourilly: Guillaume du Bellay 1491-1543, Paris, 1905, p.376.

(2) Gregory lived from 538 to 594 A.D. and wrote the Historia Francorum in three parts: Books 5 and 6 are based on his own experience, whilst 7 to 10 are a diary.

(3) Aimoin, c.960-c.1010 wrote Libri V de Gestis Francorum, once highly praised, but now regarded as slight. Another Aimoin ('de St. Germain des Prés') wrote a history of the Normans and of Charles the Bald.

(4) Monstrelet, c.1400-1453, continued Froissart's work in two volumes of Chroniques, which were heavily biased in favour of the Burgundians, for the years 1400 to 1444. A modern edition is by Douet d'Arcq, for the Société de l'Histoire de France, 1857-62.

(5) Bourrilly, op.cit., p.377.

was somehow descended from the defeated Trojans, which gained currency in the Compendium super Francorum gestis (1) compiled by Robert Gaguin between 1490 and 1501, and also in the work of Nicolas Gilles, whose work appeared in 1525.(2) However, the legend gained a firm footing by its inclusion in Jean Lemaire de Belges's Illustrations de Gaule et Singularitez de Troye of 1509-13, which in itself engendered Ronsard's attempt to compose a Franciade.

The preoccupation of these writers was to legitimise French historiography by tracing the descent of the nation back to the days of antiquity; an author could seek to do this by modelling his narrative upon that of a classical author, as did Paul-Emile, 'Historiographe officiel de Louis XII, puis de François Ier', whose first four volumes of history appeared in 1517 and were 'le modèle du récit historique conçu à l'imitation de Tite-Live.'(3) It is especially noteworthy that there was a post for the 'historiographe du roi' at this time; Charles VIII and Louis XII favoured history, and no doubt also saw the possibilities inherent in providing men equipped to write with a favourable account of their doings in the early stages of the Italian Wars. François Ier, however, not only favoured, but also read, history, and there were very many history-books catalogued in his library.(4)

The publication of the memoirs of Philippe de Commynes in 1523 gave an extra fillip to the writing of recent history, and seemingly

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(1) A French version came out in 1514. The idea itself first appeared in Pseudo-Fredegarius in the VI century.

(2) There may have been an earlier edition in 1520.

(3) Bourrilly, op.cit., p.379.

(4) ibid, p.380.

prompted Guillaume du Bellay to turn an already practised literary hand to the task of collecting material for a personal history, for while he was at the heart of court affairs in 1523 or 1524, he began to compile his Ogdoades.(1) It was upon these works that Jean and Martin du Bellay based the later Mémoires.(2) Guillaume, nevertheless, was a literary figure of some note as well as a trusted diplomat and courtier of François Ier. His influence upon the king has been cited among the conflicting forces surrounding him that made for instability in French policy at this time; but there is proof in his writings and in those of his brother Martin that he was a reliable judge of political issues. According to legend, Guillaume and his brothers grew up near Angers and knew the young Rabelais; Guillaume studied at the University of Paris under Denys Lefebvre and even produced a collection of devotional poetry, the Peregrinatio Humana, in 1509. This was followed by formal verse in the style of the Rhétoriqueurs. Much of his early life is shrouded in mystery: we know that he served under François Ier in Italy, and fought in Flanders against the Imperial forces after 1521. In 1524 he undertook a mission to Sicily and Tunis, but its object is not clear. In 1525 and 1526 he was concerned with retrieving the king from captivity and actually accompanied him on his return from Madrid after the signing of the treaty. Then there were vital negotiations concerning Guillaume between the Pope and the Venetian Republic in 1527, and a mission to Sardinia the following year.

Guillaume was launched on a glamorous political career by the mid-1520's, but his literary connections were equally distinguished, and he was

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(1) The Ogdoades have come down to us in only very fragmentary forms: Bourrilly details these, op.cit., pp.383-4.

(2) These were published by René du Bellay in 1569; see the edition of Bourrilly and Vindry for the Société de l'Histoire de France, Paris, 1908.

a member of the pressure-group which finally persuaded Francois Ier to establish the 'lecteurs royaux' in March 1530.(1) The Du Bellays patronised Salmon Macrin (2), and a small group of German literati (3), whilst Guillaume's generosity to men of letters brought him much attention from prospective protégés in Turin in the years after 1540. Paolo Manuccio knew him and dedicated his works to his name; Etienne Dolet, Maurice Sceve, Boyssonné, Rabelais, Fourquevaux, Morel, and Guillaume Bigot were all also known to him for periods of his life. It is said that Guillaume derived relaxation from his literary discussions with these educated men, after the stress of political duties. It would appear that he was not only regarded as a poet, but also as an accomplished warrior if we are to believe the title of a lost work by Rabelais, the Stratagemata, translated into French as the Stratagèmes, c'est-a-dire Prouesses et ruses de guerre du preux et très célèbre chevalier Langey. Meanwhile, Marguerite de Navarre acknowledged his historical work in her poem Prisons (4).

After the death of Paul-Emile, Guillaume du Bellay practically became the royal chronicler, but we are unable to assess the merits of the work he produced for the Ogdoades; it appears that after his burial, his papers were disturbed and some were stolen. This limited the material which was available to Martin when, in 1553, he came to re-assemble the parts. In the intervening decade, Jean du Bellay was nominally

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(1) The group was led by Budé, and included Jacques Colin, de Brie, Petit, St.-Gelais, and Lazare de Bayf.

(2) Nicknamed 'the French Horace'.

(3) see Bourrilly, op.cit., p.119 for details.

(4) see Bourrilly, op.cit., p.381 for a full quotation.

responsible for continuing the work started by Guillaume, but he does not seem to have greatly influenced the work as we have it. Of the ten books of memoirs, only numbers 5, 6 and 7 are attributed to Guillaume: the rest are the memoirs of Martin himself, of which numbers 1 to 4, and 8 and 9 are reputedly reconstructed from the remnants of the missing Ogdoades. Book 10 appears to be wholly Martin's work.(1) M. Bourrilly concludes from internal evidence that the supposed seven books of the Ogdoades never existed in their complete form, and Martin himself declares, with reference to Books 5, 6 and 7: 'Vous verrez par icy après trois livres que j'ay recueillis des fragments de ceux qu'avait compose feu messire Guillaume du Bellay, mon frère..'(2) Guillaume's contribution seems to grow smaller the more closely we examine it. Bourrilly himself delivers a crushing condemnation of the Mémoires as we have them, mishandled and distorted from their original purpose by Martin: they constitute 'un texte dont la valeur littéraire est négligeable. Les Mémoires des du Bellay n'ont qu'une valeur historique.'(3) The explanation of how a brave literary effort came to grief in the hands of a less worthy master is plain enough: 'Guillaume du Bellay avait entrepris de composer une histoire; Martin, lui, se borne vraiment à ecrire ses mémoires. Soldat avant tout, il ne s'intéresse guère qu'aux événements militaires, qu'il rapporte d'ailleurs exactement.'(4) It is precisely because of Martin's perversion of the object of the Mémoires that the work concerns us in a review of military literature, for this is fundamentally how the work must be classified. In Book 1, we are plunged directly into a rambling

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(1) Bourrilly, op.cit., p.387 et seq.

(2) Mémoires, ed. cit., Book 4 in fine.

(3) ibid, Introduction lxvii.

(4) ibid, lxii.

review of war and its causes, ranging from the Wars of the Roses in England, the battles of Ravenna and Marignano, the capture of Milan (1515) and the defence of Mézières to an 'aperçu' on the background of the conflict between King and Emperor. Here, and in Books 2 and 3, events are recorded in scant detail, with only a couple of exceptions; the account of the years before 1521 is very muddled, whereas the military events of that year are highly detailed. An account of the siege of Pavia in 1524 is mixed with a review of the events of Picardy (1), though a list of those killed or captured at the battle of Pavia rounds off the account.

Book 4 brings a notable change of emphasis, for it deals with diplomatic negotiations from 1530 to 1534. Such would appear to be the province of Guillaume and not of Martin, but it is not until Book 5 that we can be sure we are reading Guillaume's material. Inexplicably, the bias herein is again military: the morality of war is discussed; there is a review of France's military might; the war in Piedmont is brought to the fore. Book 7 is even more strikingly warlike, consisting of a stream of facts about Charles V's invasion of Provence. A passage mentioning the necessity of keeping one's soldiers active during lulls in the fighting to prevent their 'going rusty' smacks greatly of the practised warrior writing from personal experience.(2) It seems that we must take Martin's remarks at the end of Book 4 to mean that in piecing together the work of his brother, he selected only those passages which were of interest to himself. This would explain the prevalence of military topics. Book 6, however, is a heavy review of diplomacy and is correspondingly dull, relying almost excessively upon direct quotation of speeches and documents by Cardinals

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(1) Mémoires, Book 2.

(2) ibid, Volume III, p.163.

and the Emperor. A review of military strength even appears here (1), and the unevenness of Martin's adaptation is amply illustrated by the fact that the three books attributed by him to Guillaume refer to the single year 1536.(2)

Books 8, 9 and 10 continue the account of war in Picardy up to the deaths of François Ier and Henry VIII in 1547. One senses that Martin felt freer to use his own powers of observation in these last three books, for there is much emotional reporting of the horrors of war, and a declaration that 'Je dy ce que j'ay veu' in Book 8 (3) is followed by a claim to represent the truth in Book 9 (4) concerning the deaths of the ambassadors Frégose and Rincon. But the general sweep of military reporting is broken here and there only for mention of important political events: there is a very sparing account of Guillaume's death,(5) and mention of the birth of the future François II (6); Henry VIII's death is here described as the cause of a depression suffered by François Ier, at whose own demise Martin pronounces an old-fashioned funeral oration (7).

If the Mémoires lack literary merit it is no fault of Guillaume's. This much we may assume from the one fragment of writing which we know has been left in its original state. The Prologue des Ogdoades de Messire

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(1) ibid, Volume III, p.41.

(2) Book 8 is devoted to 1537; 1538 and 1540 are dismissed in two pages.

(3) Mémoires, ed.cit., Volume III, p.299.

(4) ibid, Volume IV, p.8.

(5) ibid, Volume IV, p.94.

(6) ibid, p.187.

(7) ibid, p.333 et seq. : the dead king is praised for his deeds rather than for his character.

Guillaume du Bellay, seigneur de Langey (1) appeared at the head of a work entitled Epitome de l'antiquité des Gaules et de France, which came out in 1556, published by Martin du Bellay. In itself, it is a literary guide to the writing of history - one which Martin presumably disregarded. Guillaume refers to the recently increased popularity of history, attributing it to the patronage of François Ier, and citing many examples from antiquity in support of his contention that great men should co-operate with men of letters to ensure that full biographies are written to furnish others with the fruits of their experience. Martin complied with this wish in so far as military affairs were concerned and we must be thankful that he took the trouble to edit his brother's work at all, for the military nobility were notoriously prejudiced against letters in his day. However, we can only regret the loss to history of the material from the Ogdoades which was either stolen or edited out by Martin and which might have been of interest for questions of diplomacy and policy during Francois's reign.

The publication of the Mémoires by René du Bellay in 1569 (2) was a landmark. As a work it was highly regarded and was used extensively by historians, moralists and memorialists. Pierre Villey concludes (3) that Montaigne used it in conjunction with the works of Caesar, Commynes, Du Haillan (4), Einhard, Froissart, Guicciardini (5) and La Noue. La Noue

(1) This piece is printed after the Mémoires in Bourrilly and Vindry's edition, Appendix, Volume IV.

(2) René dedicated them to Charles IX.

(3) See Les Sources et l'Evolution des 'Essais' de Montaigne, Paris, 1908.

(4) Bernard de Girard, seigneur du Haillan, 1535-1610, wrote a De L'état et succès des affaires de France, published in 1570 which earned him the post of historiographer to the king from 1571: thereafter his output was considerable.

(5) Francesco Guicciardini, 1482-1540, Florentine historian whose Storia d'Italia dates from 1561. There was no French translation until 1738.

himself also used it, as did Tavannes, whilst Monluc plagiarised it for additions and corrections to his Commentaires after 1572 (1). As if to set the seal on their success, the Mémoires were translated into Latin for scholars to read the world over - an odd example of a work originally conceived in Latin being rendered in the vernacular only to be re-cast and translated back into Latin. The work has no true claim to be called memoirs: though the Du Bellays were close to their sources, which makes a kind of autobiography of their book, the ultimate achievement is in fact a historical work in which the nominally central characters are referred to in the third person. This façade of impartiality contrasts strongly with the partisan memoirs of later years, while foreshadowing their claims in support of a 'home-grown' literature of warfare to be produced by the soldiers themselves.

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(1) Paul Courteault: Blaise de Monluc historien, Paris, 1907, pp.56-72.

VI

Blaise de Monluc and the 'Commentaires'

'I am far from underrating the interest of the mental outlook on the times of such personages as Bayard's Loyal Serviteur, or that self-centred old swashbuckler, Blaise de Monluc': so wrote Sir Charles Oman as he began his volume dealing with the history of the art of war in the XVIth. century, and it is perhaps not curious that he bracketed the Serviteur with Monluc, for both contributed works of interest to the military literature of their day. There is a closer connection: Monluc served under the command of Bayard from 1521 to 1524, so it is virtually certain that Monluc, a confessedly avid reader of military books in his earlier years, was acquainted with the Serviteur's book. He and the Serviteur were both soldiers turned writer, but there was a basic difference in that, whilst the Serviteur concerned himself with the biography of someone else, Monluc undertook to write about himself. Consequently we derive a greater sense of intimacy with Monluc through his self-portrait than we do with Bayard through the Serviteur's biography. Further distinction lies in the fact that the Serviteur's work straddles two conflicting literary styles, the old and the new; Monluc's work is not consciously literary, and its style is peculiar to its author.

Whereas the Loyal Serviteur seems to have encountered some difficulty in his efforts to unify the Histoire de Bayart by concentrating upon praising his chivalrous hero, Monluc's Commentaires derive their unity from the special circumstances in which they were written. Monluc's purpose in writing was threefold: he wished to preserve the name of his family, which other historians seemed too easily to ignore; he wished to enable others to profit from the reading of his experiences; and he wished to defend himself against a Royal Commission of Enquiry, headed by the

hated pair of inquisitors, Robert de Mondoulcet and Du Guast (1), which was convoked to investigate rumours that funds intended for the victualling of the army in Guyenne had been embezzled during Monluc's governorship. Monluc had been forced to retire after 1570, having been badly wounded in the face by an arquebus shot during the siege of Rabastens: as a result, he had the leisure to formulate a defence which he addressed to the King himself, and thus he accomplished the task of drafting the basis of what we know as the Commentaires in seven months. He included an address to the future Henri III, who was at this time regarded as a true soldier-prince, having taken much of the credit for the great catholic triumphs of Jarnac and Moncontour: doubtless, Monluc thought that his case would receive a sympathetic hearing from a fellow-soldier.(2) Monluc entirely succeeded in this self-defence, accomplished by recounting all his own military experiences from 1521 to 1570, including as much evidence as he could remember in his haste to complete the apologia: the king granted 'lettres d'abolition' on April 8th., 1972, exonerating Monluc from all suspicion.

Monluc had also been concerned to show that he, who since 1562 had earned the reputation of being the hammer of the Protestants, was innocent of all connection with the heretics, and also of all suspected alliance with Philip II of Spain. The work in its primitive state was published without Monluc's permission, but the interest shown in it appears to have prompted him to turn again to his own life for material, and with the help of his

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(1) See Paul Courteault: Un Cadet de Gascogne au XVIème siècle, Paris, 1909, XI.

(2) Commentaires, ed. P. Courteault, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1964: the Préambul à Monseigneur, pp. 7-19.

brother Jean (1), he worked through the book, correcting the inaccuracies, supplying missing parts of syntax, and filling out the details. These he either culled from letters and documents he had by him (2), from the Du Bellay memoirs, or the works of Paradin (3), Rabutin (4) and Paul Jove (5). This reconstructed version of the Commentaires was published in 1592, fifteen years after Monluc's death, by Florimond de Raemond, conseiller to the Parlement of Bordeaux, who contributed an address to the nobility of Gascony, but also struck out certain passages which he judged offensive to certain types of reader.(6) Scholars are indebted to the work of Paul Courteault for the most complete edition of Monluc's work (7), in which Monluc's original draft may be compared with the amplified edition, including the passages omitted by his first editor.

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(1) Jean de Monluc was the Bishop of Valence.

(2) Monluc seems to have held documents in curious respect, see, ed. cit., p.341 and p.356.

(3) Monluc's borrowings are reviewed in Courteault: Blaise de Monluc Historien, pp.56-86.
Guillaume Paradin, 1510-1590, wrote Memoriae nostrae libri quatuor, 1548 (French translation in 1550) and a continuation in 1556.

(4) Francois de Rabutin, (died 1582) wrote Commentaires sur le faict des dernieres guerres en la Gaule Belgique in six vols., 1555, supplemented by a further 5 vols. in 1559.

(5) Paul Jove, or Paolo Giovio, 1483-1552, wrote Historia sui temporis, of which a French version by Denys Sauvage appeared at Lyon in 1552-61.

(6) Commentaires, ed. cit., Introduction, p. xxv.

(7) This edition was originally published as follows; by Picard, Paris:

for years 1521-1553, in 1911 ;

for years 1553-1563, in 1913 ;

for years 1563-1576, in 1925.

The Commentaires fall into two sections. The first, comprising Books 1 to 4, deals with the Italian Wars from 1521 to 1559; the second, made up of Books 5 to 7, is concerned with the period of the Civil Wars from 1560 to 1570. At the end of Book 7, with the remonstrances to the king and to the Duc d'Anjou, there is a 'supplement' covering the years up to February 1576. Courteault has drawn the major distinction between the two principal sections of the work, namely that for the first part Monluc relied upon his memory, whilst making wide use of documentary sources for the second (1), and it is noticeable that speeches, letters and other papers are very numerous in Books 5 to 7. Monluc's style is such that it requires a special study: it is totally personal and supremely undisciplined. In the extensive revisions undertaken the original breathless sweep of the narrative is only partially arrested to allow of comment and digression; but the 'remaniement' adds an extra dimension to the work. 'La matière historique en avait été d'abord l'essentiel; elle en demeure le fond et continue d'occuper la plus grande place. Mais les observations morales et techniques lui disputent désormais l'attention du lecteur, plus curieux de goûter ces réflexions, ou l'homme apparaît, que ces récits surchargés de menus détails, souvent obscurs et confus, prolixes et traînants. La valeur littéraire du livre et son intérêt humain en sont singulièrement accrus: en se peignant lui-même, Monluc a plus fait pour sa renommée qu'en retraçant ses prouesses.'(2) The intervention of comment upon the impersonal facts of history turns the Commentaires into a self-portrait: it certainly was not Monluc's object to depict himself, but his moralistic approach to his material, like that of Montaigne, brought out facets of his character so that it is possible, by means of collating odd scraps of detail from the

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(1) On the other hand, the Supplément is a masterpiece of compressed narrative when compared with the rest of Monluc's writing.

(2) Courteault, Un Cadet de Gascogne au XVIème siècle, p.276.

many asides and digressions which are scattered throughout the work, to form a picture of him. In one sense, the Commentaires are unified by the chronological sequence from 1521 to 1576, whilst, in another, they are drawn into unity by the figure of Monluc.

Monluc's approach made of his book much more than a useful historical source, for which the first requirement would be a strict adherence to truth. Despite Monluc's protestations of veracity, reservations must be made by the reader, for the Commentaires are the work of a non-literary soldier who was determined to save his reputation. This much serves to impart a degree of bias in his writings. Monluc's untruths, nevertheless, are in his omissions, the most lengthy examples being found at periods when the European nations were at a stage of peace or truce: the truce of Moncon (1537-42) and the eighteen month period which he spent as governor of Moncalieri (1). The most suspect omission and the most important concerns the period from 1558 to 1561, covering the brief reign of François II, in which the seeds of religious intolerance took deep root. Monluc filled out his account of those years with details of the military review at Pierrepoint, admonitions to army officers, and heartfelt regrets for the death of Henri II, a king who had shown much appreciation of Monluc's dutiful service in Northern Italy.(2) A pointer to the truth, however, is contained in his statement that he found comment upon this period of French history distasteful: 'Je ne me veux mesler d'escrire les inimitiez, les rebellions qui ont esté faictes despuis jusques à la mort du roy François second ... et comme

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(1) Commentaires, ed. cit., p.191. This honour of Monluc's is very cursorily dealt with.

(2) Monluc gives evidence of their bond of friendship, ibid., ed. cit., p.178 and p.254, and reviews what might have been if Henri had not been killed, p.462.

on joüa au boutehors à la cour; aussi ne fut-ce que rebellions et séditions..' (1). However, the real reason for Monluc's unwillingness to enlarge upon this topic is his having wavered between Protestant and Catholic parties for a considerable period. In 1571, Monluc was at pains to demonstrate his unflagging loyalty to the monarchistic Catholics, and dissimulation of his former doubts became necessary.(2) Monluc gave his readers to understand that his decision to remain within the orthodox fold was prompted by the republicanism of some Huguenots; at all events, we can understand that he wanted to be on the winning side. Artfully, Monluc turned the omission to advantage, for at first sight it seemed that he was uninterested in the Court and the self-assertive people who frequented it, and that he had no desire to drag the whole sorry story of François's reign before the public once more: the reality is more disappointing.

'La crainte ne me ferma jamais la bouche'(3): Monluc's statement has to be qualified, for a comparison of the original text of the Commentaires with the later additions reveals that he was considerably less candid with his king than with his military colleagues. In recounting a session of the Privy Council in March 1544 (4), the remarks referring to the honesty of opinions expressed in the monarch's presence could be construed as offensive,

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(1) ibid, p.469-70.

(2) See Courteault, Blaise de Monluc Historien, p.399-400: 'Préoccupé avant tout de se défendre d'avoir jamais pactisé avec les Huguenots et de laisser de lui une image coulée d'un seul bloc, il n'a mis en relief qu'un seul trait de sa physiognomie, son loyalisme, si âprement contesté en 1571. Il a volontairement omis ces manoeuvres louches, ces compromissions, ces gages donnés au parti des rebelles.'

(3) Commentaires, ed. cit., p.143.

(4) ibid, p.142 et seq.

and were, in fact, added later, including the following sentiment: 'je ne serois pas bon là (1) car je dis tousjours ce qu'il m'en semble.' Against this lack of candour we must set the great haste with which the original defence was formulated: Monluc's memory served him well, apart from a few mistakes of chronology, and in the short time available to him it was not possible to do more than rush down the essential facts about his career. It is true, on the other hand, that a good deal of Monluc's additions were digressions or commentaries on what had already been included rather than fresh material: other modifications comprised the replacing of translated speeches or documents by the originals, whilst a number of new documents were included. Where Monluc's memory showed no weakness was in his ability to remember the places where his combats had occurred: 's'il dit que tel chemin de traverse montait à la colline en passant entre deux haies de saules, on peut être sûr du chemin de traverse de la colline, et des haies de saules. Sa mémoire des lieux est parfaite..'(2)

Monluc's work found a ready public, not only among those who were interested in the scandal which surrounded this old campaigner. Indeed the scandalous attraction of the Commentaires can be discounted, for Monluc was only one of thousands of catholics subjected to inquisition by the Royal Commission of Mondoulcet: it has been calculated that there were roughly 35 trials a day in Guyenne at the height of its activity.(3) Jean de Tavannes made use of Monluc's work when editing his father's memoirs (4), whilst the Abbé de Brantôme devoted his 70th. Discours to Monluc, commencing with a

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(1) 'là', i.e. in the Privy Council.

(2) Preface by Jean Giono to ed.cit. of Commentaires; see also Courteault: Blaise de Monluc Historien, p.112-3.(Paris,1907)

(3) Preface to Commentaires, ed. cit., p. xvi.

(4) See Commentaires, ed.cit., p.66, note 1.

and suggested a campaign in Flanders: 'cette entreprise serviroit aussi, comme le Piedmont, d'escole à la noblesse de France pour s'exercer aux armes, et y faire revivre des Montlucs et Brissacs, des Termes et des Bellegardes, tels que ces grands mareschaux qui s'estant faconnez aux guerres de Piedmont, avoient depuis si glorieusement et heureusement servy le Roy et leur patrie.'(1) One speculates on the connection between Monluc and the people who read him, and one notices that nearly all, like him, took advantage of their retirement to produce their work: Montaigne's withdrawal from public service to his estate is well known; Brantôme took to writing after a fall from his horse had prevented further participation in events; Marguerite de Valois, though hardly having a similar background, yet lived the life of a recluse after her divorce from Henri IV, a strange remnant of the sophisticated Court of the Valois among the Bourbon roughnecks. La Noue, like Fleurange, was to write during a period of captivity; whereas Jean de Tavannes represented more closely the procedure of the Loyal Serviteur in compiling the biography of another important person. Had Monluc not been bereft of his nose at the siege of Rabastens in 1570, and had he not been stung by the taunts of the Huguenots, he might have remained a practising soldier until his death instead of turning writer.

Monluc was a representative of the illiterate lesser nobility: as far as we are able to judge he had no formal schooling and came to hear of the works of the soldiers of Rome only in later years.(2) Consequently, the

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(1) See edition of Ludovic Lalanne, Paris, 1858, p.129-30. Monluc uses similar terms: 'Aussi en ce temps pour une escole de guerre il ne se parloit que de Piedmont'.

(2) See the 'biographie critique' by Courteault in his Un Cadet de Gascogne au XVIème siècle. Monluc's only education was as a page at the court of Nancy: his schooling must have had more than a strong military bias.

impulse to create a book in one so unused to letters must be counted as extraordinary, even under the circumstances which prompted Monluc's action. So much more interesting than the motive of pure self-defence behind the first version of the Commentaires are the reasons which explain why, having achieved his object in clearing his name, Monluc felt compelled to expand his work. Here, the truth is more complex and belongs to the discussion of the attractions of literature for soldiers in general at this time.

The self-portrait which Monluc drew is an intriguing one, but it is not entirely authentic for the reasons already given. Nevertheless it was a literary innovation on several counts. Monluc was a well known and colourful figure in Southern France and Northern Italy: in the former, his cruelty was a legend in his own lifetime, whilst in the latter, the exploits of his band of 'morions jaunes' and his defence of Siena had assured him a place in the popular memory. It is easy, therefore, to see the attraction of any book written by so prominent a figure about actions which had been so much in the public eye. This one was all the more rewarding because it avoided the dryness of such memoirs as those of the Du Bellay family, whilst still providing a wealth of historical details. The Commentaires are at times intensely personal, especially in the sullen passages which describe how Monluc has been betrayed by those whom he trusted; at other times, his frankness about his own shortcomings endeared him to his readers (1). Yet the attentive reader can detect faults which are apparent through the text, but of which Monluc was unaware. The worst of these is his conceit: he styles himself the saviour of Guyenne; he patronises the young king Charles IX with

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(1) Commentaires, ed. cit., p.544; on his bad temper, see ibid, p.822.

grandfatherly advice on the art of ruling; and he pompously claims never to have been defeated where he was in command. His conceit when away from Court circles tallies with his lack of success there - he was always an unwelcome adviser (1) and several times fell into disgrace either through his own fault or through the calumnies of his enemies.(2) Another defect identifiable by means of his writings is Monluc's ambition, a craving which was largely satisfied by his spectacular progress from obscurity and poverty at Saint-Puy• to the rank of maréchal de France just two years before his death at the age of about seventy-five. The Commentaires allow us to follow Monluc as he climbs the ladder at a rate which was certainly too slow for him; we watch him make progress in Italy, we see him promoted from captain to lieutenant and governor: but hard upon the moral victory of Siena comes the setback of Henri II's death, the weak and vacillating reign of François II and the tragic Civil Wars where the qualities of staunchness and loyalty, so strong in Monluc, are inappropriate. We can perhaps admire Monluc's integrity in the morass of compromise, betrayal and amoral politics which characterise those sad years: however, Monluc does not take comfort from the righteousness of his actions, and is intensely jealous of the progress made by these means by less principled young men. The bitterness of many passages in the Commentaires comes directly from Monluc's unfulfilled sense of ambition (3). The cruelty

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(1) See episode in which he overrides the opinions of the Privy Council before Henri II, ibid, p.252.

(2) After the Truce of Monçon (1537), he attempted to succeed at Court but he tells us: 'je fus toute ma vie mal propre à ce mestier. Je suis trop franc et trop libre; aussi y trouvé-je fort peu d'acquit.' ibid. p.76. He was disgraced in 1547, and again in 1558-61.

(3) In his reverent attitude towards the royal family and all the major courtiers one senses an obsequiousness which may have much to do with Monluc's relatively obscure origins.

which he is often at pains to deny, or at least to defend within the context of contemporary events, is amply illustrated by examples in the Commentaires, and though Monluc was not devoid of human tenderness, his attitude to his wife, for one, was curious. He seemed to place emphasis only on military matters, for, whilst pleading that men are not of iron and cannot be worked indefinitely, he spared little space in respect for his wife, confining his mentions of her to an expression of gratitude for her having nursed him, and a note of her death.(1) However, the interest of the book does not depend upon the life which Monluc led in his own home - indeed, we have no details about his peacetime existence except his remark that he hated his house and eagerly awaited each declaration of war.(2) His readers preferred the warlike content of his book and were impressed not only by his frankness and plain speaking, but also the apparent veracity of his narrative. He described himself as 'un vieux soldat, et encor Gascon, qui a escrit sa vie à la verité et en guerrier.'(3) The impression of authenticity was strengthened by the omission of incidents which he did not witness; though a true historian would have felt obliged to include such incidents as the Battle of Dreux (1562), Monluc declared: '..puisque je n'y estois pas, il ne touche à moy d'en parler.'(4) Even so, the Commentaires found their critics: it was not yet quite acceptable to write of one's exploits in the first person (5), and Monluc was censured for voicing his own praises so

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(1) See Commentaires, ed.cit. p. 25; and for mentions of Monluc's wife, ibid. p.10 and p.534.

(2) ibid, p.76 and p.168.

(3) ibid. p.833.

(4) ibid. p.576.

(5) The Du Bellay memoirs, for instance are all in the third person.

blatantly: Brantôme replied to the detractors by stating that his book was so popular (1) and the deeds recounted in it were so well known that he felt it unnecessary to outline them in his portrait of the hero; he added to this a refutation of Monluc's alleged egocentrism: 'Mais pourtant d'autant que j'ay veu plusieurs grands capitaines le blasmer dequoy il se loüe si fort, qu'on dirait que c'est luy qui a tout fait aux guerres ou il s'est trouvé, et les autres rien, jusques à dire qu'il n'est pas possible qu'il en ayt tant fait; je dis qu'il se peut faire qu'il se soit bien acquitté, de tout, ou en partie de ce qu'il dit: car il estoit un Gascon, brave et vaillant, et bouillant, et qui est de cette humeur, il ne peut estre autrement qu'il ne fasse tousjours bien, s'il ne meurt à my-chemin.'(2)

To the virtues of apparent authenticity, richness of detail and personal interest, the Commentaires added topicality: though Monluc's memoirs stretched over a lengthy period (3), they contained much consideration of developments affecting the nobility and warfare, for Monluc had been an active man until his enforced retirement in 1570 and he had kept abreast of events. As a result, his Commentaires were relevant not only as a source of historical detail but also as a form of 'littérature engagée'. Monluc was not content to review his life of campaigning alone: he continued the struggles on paper, airing his opinions on how the nobility should work to prolong their effectiveness in government and conserve their wealth, or venting his spleen against

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(1) The popularity of the Commentaires is attested by the number of editions: the 1592 edition was reprinted at Bordeaux the following year; there were editions at Lyon (1593), Paris (1594, 1607, 1626, 1641, and in 1661 three simultaneous editions appeared at different Parisian publishers).

(2) Brantôme: Discours LXX, edition of 1787, Vol. VI, p.52.

This defence is partly humorous, but good-natured.

(3) 54 years: 1521 - 1575.

newer and more dishonourable methods of combat. It would be a mistake to ignore the practical and moralistic aspects of the book, for Monluc saw in these the primary aims of the revised version of his book (1), and, moreover, it is particularly these aspects which it holds in common with the works of such writers as Jean de Tavannes and La Noue.

Monluc's Commentaires mark a fresh departure in the military literature of XVIth. century France. Already by 1580, there had been four major works written, each representing a different trend in this field. The Loyal Serviteur's work illustrated the development of the approved military biography into something more closely tied to conventional history; the Du Bellay memoirs represented the historical narrative based on military actions, influenced, but not punctuated, by personal experience; Monluc typified the integration of personal memoirs with factual history and comment, again based on military actions, but lacking historical universality; whilst Fourquevaux exemplified an analytical work on a military topic, specifically intended for practical application. All these writers agreed that military actions lent themselves to literary presentation, though each differed in his methods. The Loyal Serviteur alone was not imitated. Du Bellay's 'semi-history' was echoed by Paradin, Rabutin, Du Haillan, de Thou (2) and D'Aubigné (3). Fourquevaux's practical approach was mirrored in the military handbooks which proliferated during the second

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(1) See Chapter XV, below.

(2) Jacques Auguste de Thou, 1553 - 1617, wrote Historiarum sui temporis partes, published between 1604 and 1620; also Memoriae, 1620. A partial French translation by Du Ryer appeared in 1659.

(3) Agrippa D'Aubigné: Histoire Universelle, published between 1616 and 1630. A modern edition is that of De Ruble for the Société de l'Histoire de France, 1886.

half of the XVIth. century and at the beginning of the XVIIth. century. Monluc's combination of personal memoirs and comment, set against the backcloth of historical events, and containing the element of self-justification, was to become the popular method for all conditions of militarymen; it was copied by Tavannes, Bouillon (1), D'Aubigné, and such figures and Sully (2) and the later Tavannes (3), whilst the style seemed to become so characteristic that it even threw off a curiosity like the spurious Mémoires de François de Scépeaux, maréchal de Vieilleville (4).

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(1) The Duc de Bouillon (formerly known as the Vicomte de Turenne), 1555 - 1623, wrote Mémoires for the years 1565 to 1586.

(2) Maximilien de Béthune, Duc de Sully (also known as Rosny), Henri IV's minister of fianances, wrote the Oeconomies Royales, of which there is at present no fully satisfactory complete edition (see note in Bibliography).

(3) Jacques de Saulx de Tavannes: Mémoires, 1650 - 1672, ed. De Ruble, 1858, for the Société de l'Histoire de France.

(4) Vieilleville: Mémoires, ed. Michaud and Poujoulat, Vol. IX, p.3 - 400, Paris, 1850. For a critical study, see Marchand: Le Maréchal François de Scépeaux de Vieilleville et ses mémoires, Paris, 1893, and below, Chapter 13.

VII

The 'Vie de Gaspard de Saulx, Seigneur de Tavannes' and its composition

Monluc's Commentaires were used by Jean de Saulx, sieur de Tavannes, in the writing of his father's memoirs, a task which he undertook between either 1601 or 1602 and 1616. These were at first printed privately at Sully, the family home; it appears that they were not well known until they were published at Lyon in 1657, by which time they were very dated. If Monluc's work, printed in 1592, was topical, Tavannes's was not, for the old order had changed: the wars of the 'Fronde' were completing the process by which the 'noblesse d'espée' became fully subject to the king. Monluc's rallying-cry to the nobility came some years before Henri IV's reforms; Tavannes's similar call eventually came to a nobility already doomed to servitude and submission.

Nominally, the subject of Jean's writings is his father Gaspard, born in 1509.(1) He came to Court in 1522 and acquired the reputation of a hot-headed prankster in the company of the Duc d'Orléans. On the death of the latter, in 1545, he adopted a more sober outlook; he had taken to the military profession in common with most young nobles at Court and had already taken part in engagements as well as in scandalous duelling affairs. Though he was not popular at Court, his impetuous nature won him gradual advancement, and his performance at the battles of Jarnac and Moncontour earned him the rank of 'maréchal de France' (2): though the usual four posts of 'maréchal' were filled, a fifth was especially created for him. In this position he often clashed with Coligny, leader of the Huguenot

(1) This fact is not mentioned by Jean.

(2) This rank was conferred upon him on November 28th, 1570.

party; according to report, he agreed to the elimination of the Huguenot leaders, though not the wholesale massacre, of St. Bartholomew's Night, 1572. Further promotion, to the positions of Governor of Provence and Admiral of the Levantine Seas, came just before his death on June 19th, 1574.(1)

Jean, the author of the Vie, or Mémoires, as the work is also popularly called, was also a soldier, He was not the eldest son of Gaspard - there was a Guillaume de Saulx (2) who made use of his literary talents in writing the Mémoires de plusieurs choses advenues en France, ès guerres civiles depuis 1560 jusqu'en 1596.(3) Jean's career was no less distinguished, however, than his father's, and he somehow overcame the religious prejudices of his time sufficiently to serve under Henri IV after his abjuration of the Protestant faith: he was offered a position as 'maréchal de France' when one fell vacant, but it does not appear that he ever had the opportunity. He died, aged 74, at Sully in 1629.

The Mémoires (4) are a curious work, for upon the barest facts about Gaspard's career, Jean imposed his own reflections and grievances. Basically, the book follows a chronological sequence and divides into the reigns of François Ier, Henri II, François II, and Charles IX. These are prefaced by two sections, the products of Jean's own imagination: an address entitled Enfants, Neveux, Cousins; and another unnamed piece

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(1) The Nouvelle Biographie Universelle of Firmin-Didot gives this date as 1573.

(2) 1553 - 1633.

(3) An undated edition appeared at Lyon, followed by an edition of 1625 in Paris.

(4) All references are to the edition of Michaud and Poujoulat, Vol. VIII, Paris, 1850.

dealing with moral and religious considerations. Jean respected the integrity of his chosen subject surprisingly little, and included so many digressions that these form the bulk of the work: it appears that Jean did not study original texts by his relative, not adopting the clerkly procedure of a Martin du Bellay, though he included a number of items written by him. These are part of a letter relating to the Battle of Jarnac (1) and the Advis for the Privy Council (2), and their interest is documentary, not literary. Gaspard seems to have harboured the anti-literary prejudice of the French nobility, and according to Jean was not pleased by being asked for details of his life by would-be biographers.(3) Even so, a number of his letters have survived, and at one time there existed accounts of the battles of Cérisoles, Guines and Moncontour by him.(4) If these were available to Jean, it does not seem that he used them.

While details about Gaspard are not lacking, the tendency towards digression overshadows them, for they are slight and anecdotal in character. We are told, for instance, that Tavannes had an eye hanging out of his head, but we are not informed how it happened, or how it was cured (5); on the other hand, Jean favoured the pithiness of a remark such as Gaspard's reply to the man who inquired how so choleric a man could also be so mild: 'Je le suis, dit-il, autant qu'il se peut; mais je le sçay vaincre par la raison.'(6) Gaspard's biography is less a connected narrative and more a

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(1) ed. cit. pp.306 column A - 319 column A.

(2) ibid, pp.376 column A - 411 column A.

(3) ibid, p.19 column A.

(4) ibid, Introduction, p.11.

(5) ibid, p.100 column B.

(6) ibid, p.55 column B.

series of vignettes; it is as though Jean, possessing only a few details about his father, endeavoured to fill out the narrative with philosophy which, though generally concerned with his father's profession, yet had only slight connection with it. Michaud and Poujoulat printed a prefatory note, the author of which commented: 'Il faut le dire, la partie philosophique est la partie faible, j'ajouterai la partie ennuyeuse de l'ouvrage.'(1) This criticism has to be placed in the context of the Michaud and Poujoulat collection, designed 'pour servir à l'histoire de France': the digressions certainly do not serve the purposes of history very well, but without them the Mémoires would deserve no attention at all from the student of literature.

One may reproach Jean for his lack of a plan - rather like Monluc, he appended comment to fact in haphazard fashion; considering the long period over which the book was compiled, its aimlessness is not surprising. Jean's eagerness to talk on any subject which aroused his interest led him to at least one anachronism: after mention of the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis (1559) (2), there follows a full survey of the civil religious conflict, including a review of the position after 1595, a date over twenty years after Gaspard's death. (3) It includes references to the Jesuit doctrine of justifiable tyrannicide, which did much to inflame the politics of the 1580's, also to the Reveille-matin et le Tocsin des François, a work of which Gaspard could have known nothing.

Given the wide range of topics for discussion upon which Jean felt free to expound his views, the review of the state of religion may be

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(1) ibid, Introduction, p.16 column B.

(2) ibid, p.221 column A.

(3) ibid, pp.222-5.

defended on the grounds that it set the conflict in which Gaspard was involved in its perspective: to cut the story short at his death would have been to leave the reader confused. But it is still not the stuff of biography. A brief summary of all the major digressions in the Mémoires serves to show the range of topics broached by Jean, and the lack of order in their presentation. Just as Monluc used his own experiences and added comment to them, so Jean hung his many-faceted opinions upon the skeleton narrative of his father's life.

The untitled prefatorial section by Jean is totally composed of digressions, and begins with a piece of hortatory advice for Louis XIII. The rest is divided into five sub-sections: the morality of war, both foreign and civil; means to secure the unity of Europe beneath one church (1); the aims of war with Spain if undertaken (2); an extremely long discussion of the possibility of war against the Turks (3); and the desirability of a Franco-Spanish alliance ruling the rest of Europe.(4)

In the course of the section dealing with the events of the reign of François Ier, there are again five major sections in which Jean excuses himself from the narrative. The genealogy of the house of Saulx is traced back, via the history of Gaul, to the time of Noah, through the Roman, Gothic and Frankish invasions, and including evidence from Rabutin and a medieval document in support of the point at issue.(5) This rather fantastical history is almost immediately succeeded by a long (6)

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(1) The plan included the conquest and partition of Britain.

(2) This war became the Thirty Years' War - the plan is at least topical.

(3) Tavannes does not see fit even to question the morality of this.

(4) ed. cit. pp.20-48.

(5) ibid, pp.49 - 53 column A.

(6) ibid, pp.55 column B - 62 column B.

examination of education in its various forms. Then occur further discussions, of a Holy War with the Turks (1), a consideration of the general incompetence of doctors and surgeons (2), and a host of haphazard comments about warfare (3) in the form of military maxims. The reign of Henri II (4) is rather more political in its content, and suffers less intrusion from long-winded asides, although siegecraft (5) and the religious problem (6) are discussed. Nevertheless, the section is perpetually punctuated with remarks of a secondary importance, such as the objections to duelling (7), comment on the ineffectiveness of the 'arrière-ban' (8) and yet more military maxims.(9) Again there is an example among these intrusions of Jean's inept handling of his material: the death of Charles V is reported on p.216, column B; the encomium is delayed until p.219, column B. In the intervening pages, Jean gives himself up to comment upon the rapidity with which warfare has developed.

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(1) ibid, pp.91-94.

(2) ibid, pp.102 - 3.

(3) ibid, pp.112 - 124.

(4) ibid, pp.137 - 226.

(5) ibid, pp.177 - 8: Jean puts in a complaint that these 'original' ideas must have been effective because they were plagiarised by Duke Maurice (of Nassau) in 1619 - 18 yrs. after Jean had noted them down.

(6) ed. cit. pp.222 - 5.

(7) ibid, p. 154 - 5.

(8) ibid, p.180 column B.

(9) ibid, pp. 190 column B - 194 column A.

Dreams, assassinations, the craze for building and the advocating of military academies form the topics under review in the reign of Charles IX (1), despite a previous ample review of education in which the suggestions embodied here might have been more fittingly placed.(2) The comments upon the St. Bartholomew affair (3) derive their interest from the light they throw upon the mysteries of this event; but there seems to be little actual point in the inclusion of huge extracts from Gaspard's letters.(4) Again, Jean follows the progress of the religious strife through the events of the Ligue to Henri IV's eventual recognition by the Pope.(5) Consideration of this matter and its implications seemed to provide Jean with new scope: previously, his discussions had been dry and poorly presented: here he bent his efforts more towards the unearthing of true motives. However, the efforts were not sustained, and what began as an interesting probe tailed off into a succession of indigestible documents by Gaspard.(6)

The reign of François II remains to be considered: in this short section (7), we find the 'reductio ad absurdum' of the tendencies apparent in the rest of the work. The number of times that Gaspard is mentioned is reduced to two, and Jean uses the fruits of his own experience, not his father's, in support of his arguments against the extraction of information

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(1) ibid, pp.246 - 434.

(2) ibid, p. 336.

(3) ibid, pp.386 - 389.

(4) ibid, pp.376 - 386.

(5) ibid, p. 404.

(6) ibid, pp.405 - 411 column A.

(7) ibid, pp.227 - 245.

by torture (1) and against the progress of heresy.(2) The major part of the remainder is an examination of authority: who should wield it?; is elective monarchy defensible?; should one revolt against the rule of tyrants?; what is the importance of mortality to those set in authority? and so on. Jostling for space with these central problems is a profusion of lesser notions: whether the condemned should be permitted to speak from the scaffold; the fickleness of royal favour; plans must suit the scale of the operation; a defeat of the Turks; the death of a Pope and a review of the pitfalls attendant upon the exercise of power. All of these topics rub shoulders with the facts relevant to the period of François II's rule.

This protracted exposition of Jean's subject-matter tells us one thing - that his was at least a lively intellect if an undisciplined one. It is perhaps fitting to ask why he did not have sufficient confidence to abandon the plan to tell his father's story and gather his material together as a collection of purely military essays. What is likely is that Jean never thought of the work as anything but a biography, and looked upon his digressions as natural extensions of the points at issue. So much betrays an unskilled literary hand (3); it also speaks eloquently of Jean's sense of duty towards his father's memory, outlined by himself: 'J'escris par devoir de notre père, pour exemples et preceptes

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(1) ibid, pp.230 column A - 231 column B: the examples given do not belong to the period 1559 - 62; they are the Earl of Essex, Concini and Brion.

(2) ibid, pp. 235 column B - 236 column B: the argument actually concerns Henri III in 1575 and therefore is not relevant to the reign of Francois II.

(3) Jean tried to write poetry - ed. cit. p.349 column A - a sonnet, with rather irregular rhymes.

à vous, mes parents, non pas gloire.'(1) Nevertheless, to the student of military literature, the work of Jean de Saulx presents much that is fascinating in all aspects of the art military, and in the relationship between the nobility and literature which is to form the subject of Chapters XIII and XIV.

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Comparison of the Tavannes Mémoires with those of Michel de Castelnau enables us to appreciate how widely they differ from the type of pure source-text valued by historians, for the latter, published in 1621 by Michel's son Jacques, and referring to the period 1559-1570, is a model of orderly presentation.(2) Castelnau was born in 1520; he proved to be an enthusiastic student and an athlete, whilst in office he served under Brissac in Italy, acted as ambassador for Mary Stuart, and arranged the marriage between Henri de Navarre and Marguerite de Valois.(3) He was no less a personage than Gaspard or Jean de Saulx; apart from the different lengths of each collection of memoirs, there are three major points of distinction. Michel de Castelnau, though writing about the initial period of the Civil Wars, was not concerned principally with military matters: '..la politique l'occupe plus que la guerre.'(4) It appears that Castelnau had moved out of the sphere of the military into the antechambers of diplomacy by the period with which he was concerned in his memoirs. A second consideration demonstrates that the title of

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(1) Quoted in the Introduction, ed.cit., p.8 column A.

(2) Edition of Castelnau's works in Michaud and Poujoulat, Vol.IX, 1850, Paris, pp.407 - 554.

(3) See the Notice to his Mémoires, ed. cit.

(4) ed. cit., p.404 column B.

memoirs is really a misnomer. The period of eleven years covered is a relatively short one in a life of seventy-two years, in any case (1); but Castelnau's memoirs are not in the least designed to provide the reader with a portrait of their author or even a list of his deeds. They are simple history, told by an eye-witness who occasionally participates in the action.(2) As such, they are the logical development of the Du Bellay memoirs, which are also valuable historical sources. Finally, Castelnau was sparing of comment in dealing with events. This is not to say that he avoided all discussion, for he furnished comments by way of explanation: for instance, there is an apology for the policy of the Guisard faction under François II.(3) Later, we find the author has laid the blame for the badly-handled Amboise conspiracy at various doors.(4) Castelnau added his observations on the Battle of Dreux to his account of it (5), and when reviewing the pitiable state of France (6), gave vent to the exclamation: 'Voilà, mon fils, les beaux fruits que produit cette guerre civile.'(7) However, comment on France's poor state and on the Battle of Dreux (in which the opposing commanders were both captured by their adversaries) must be regarded as commonplace in all historical works

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(1) Castelnau died in 1592.

(2) See Book III, 12: Castelnau took responsibility during trouble in Normandy; Book V, 8: he engineered peace with England; Book V, 13: he pressed Anjou's suit on Queen Elizabeth; Book VI, 6 and Book VII, 5, he made contact with the Duke of Alba.

(3) Book I, 6.

(4) Book I, 11.

(5) Book IV, 5 and 6.

(6) Book V, 1.

(7) ed. cit. p.491 column B.

at the time (1), and cannot be taken as evidence of bias. It was Castelnau's orthodox Catholicism that prompted his contention that the heretics' familiarity with Scripture ought to be equalled by the Catholic ecclesiastics, after the Huguenot outrages at St. Médard.(2)

Castelnau's memoirs furnish information about affairs in France, England and Scotland, but are too short of comment to be moralistic and too political to rank with the military literature of the time. Yet they are of some interest for they are the work of a very important and noble official, who, though apparently highly educated, did not use his memoirs to display his knowledge. There is nothing ostentatious about his memoirs. There is no recourse to classical precedent in his treatment of the affairs of state. It would be pleasant if one could distinguish between the different styles of military literature according to the class-structure of Renaissance France: La Noue, a man of similarly high rank and almost exactly contemporary with Castelnau (3), displays similar impartiality towards events (4) but is too much of a scholar to leave them uncommented. At first sight it seems that it is the lesser nobility, or the great who have fallen into disgrace, who find it difficult to be unbiased: one thinks of Monluc defending himself against accusations; of Tavannes and Bouillon and, to some extent, Sully, who wrote their apologies in their eclipse under Louis XIII and the Regency of Marie de Médicis; of the later Tavannes writing in disgrace caused by his own carelessness. But

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(1) La Noue devoted much thought to it: see his Discours, ed. F. Sutcliffe, Droz, Geneva 1967; Discours XXVI, p.660 et seq. Monluc is unusual in declining to review it - see above p. 73 .

(2) Book III, 5 and 6.

(3) 1531 - 1591.

(4) This attitude is general, but most marked in his XXVIth. Discours.

a simpler explanation lies in the men's professions: Castelnau and Du Bellay were diplomats; La Noue (apart from his staunch religious reserve) had presumably learnt tact and discretion during his years of imprisonment.(1) Monluc explained his lack of these qualities - even glorified in it - many times, but it stemmed from his background and his profession; it is not difficult to understand why the aggrieved and disgraced could not be objective. If the writings of Monluc and Tavannes are full of advice, it was because in real life they were no longer asked for it.

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(1) He was in captivity at Limburg from 1580 to 1585.

VIII

The Duc de Bouillon : a writer in disgrace

The Vicomte de Turenne, who afterwards became the Duc de Bouillon, acquired a reputation for figuring in intrigues at Court. Within a relatively short time a number of opposing leaders commanded his allegiance: before the death of Charles IX, he advanced the case of Monsieur in his suit to Elizabeth I of England; he embraced the new religion in 1574, seeing that he could expect no advancement from his former master; he did not, however, quit the Royalist fold, throwing in his lot with François de Valois, Duc d'Alençon. François died, whereupon he took sides with Henri de Navarre, advocating the prolongation of the Civil War (against Mayenne), which paved the way for his excellent marriage in 1591,(1) and for his appointment as 'maréchal' in the following year. His attitude to his benefactor again wavered, for the evidence seems to indicate that he was implicated in the Biron conspiracy against the king and his minister Sully. He was disgraced, and after a reconciliation with the king, which had been engineered by the joint efforts of Elizabeth I, James I, and the Swiss, he retired to his castle at Heidelberg. There, in 1609, he began to write down his experiences for his son to read. This was not the end of his intriguing, nevertheless, for he supported the party of Concini in its efforts to destroy Sully after the death of Henri IV: his hatred for the 'parvenu' minister overrode the fact that he was also a Huguenot. Bouillon lived on his estate at Sedan until his death in 1623, dividing his activities between patronage of the arts and further intriguing on behalf of the Protestant movement.

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(1) It was as a result of this marriage that he gave up the title of Turenne and took that of Bouillon.

The testimony of such a complex figure would have been of as much interest as the works of Sully relating his experiences during his days at the height of power. Both these men spent the latter part of their lives in disgrace, and both employed part of their retirement in literary activity. To some extent, Bouillon was rehabilitated in society after 1610, but in his precepts for his son, the Prince de Sedan, (1), he declined to write about the most interesting portion of his life under Henri IV; the memoirs relate only to the years 1565 to 1586, a short period when compared with a life-span of sixty-eight years.(2)

Bouillon, then, was an intriguer who did not think intrigue a fitting topic for the education of his son, in whom he was at pains to instil a true sense of moral values: furthermore, he was one of the many disaffected potentates who resented the royal encroachment upon the powers of the nobility, and who demonstrated their resentment in the reign of Henri IV; Bouillon, however, took the trouble to tell his son always to obey the king.(3) He was thus capable of duplicity in literature as well as in fact, a vice which may have been prompted by prevailing circumstances, for it is Bouillon's contention that truth was neither wanted nor recognised in the political climate of the times. To those who advised the king, he sounded a warning note: 'Vous remarquerez qu'il faut estre fort retenu aux conseils qu'on donne au rois, parce qu'ils en mesurent le gré et le blasme selon leur

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(1) Bouillon's elder son, Frédéric-Maurice de la Tour d'Auvergne, was born on October 2nd, 1605.

(2) The Nouvelle Biographie Universelle states that he wrote a defence against the accusation that he was involved in the Biron plot.

(3) See edition by Baguenault de Puchesse, for the Société de l'Histoire de France, Paris, 1901, p.45: 'qu'il vous souvienne que les Rois nous sont donnés de Dieu, et quoyque mauvais quelquefois, néantmoins, nous les devons servir.'

succès, qui est souvent un faux témoin contre raison, et aux Cours, où l'on ne craint de desservir son maistre, pourveu qu' à ceux qu'on envie on fasse de la peine.'(1) This condemnation of the procedure of advisers and 'pressure-groups' is drawn from experience, and, while we may be certain that Bouillon was no better than the rest, he portrayed himself and the courtly nobility most convincingly.

In literature, and especially didactic literature, it is easy to assume a virtue without really having practised what one preaches. Bouillon's work is moral and moralistic in its approach though, in his life, Bouillon does not seem to have lived by his own precepts. On the matter of religion, his thinking was coloured by ambitious considerations: his objections to Catholicism turned upon its elaborate ceremonial, its hatred of the Protestants, and his own relative stagnation within the Catholic camp at court - by which we may understand that the prospects of rapid fame were brighter within the Huguenot faction.(2) In the event, Bouillon did not write of his conversion; when the matter is next mentioned by him, it is an accomplished fact, and Bouillon seemed to think that it had been thrust upon him by God rather than having been a matter of his own free will.(3) Nevertheless, Bouillon had sympathised with the Huguenots since the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Night, about which he said that God had guided him that day 'en telle sorte que je ne fus massacré ny massacreur.' (4); thirty years after the event, he found it no discredit to condemn the act of a faction he had long since abandoned and which had ceased to hold

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(1) ibid, p.176-7.

(2) ibid, pp.93-4.

(3) ibid, p.97. See also his retort to Chastelus, p.94.

(4) ibid, p.31.

sway: 'Cet acte inhumain, qui fut suivy par toutes les villes du royaume, me navra le coeur, et me fit aimer et les personnes et la cause de ceux de la Religion, encore que je n'eusse nulle cognoissance de leur créance.'(1) A similar attitude to events which were fresher in the public mind when Bouillon was writing for his son might have reflected less credit upon himself, but the lack of comment on events after 1586 could point to one of three reasons which it is impossible to clarify. Bouillon may have feared to write a confession or a treasonable tract, but if it was intended only for his son he need not have done so.(2) He may well have written the memoirs which are concerned with the latter period of his life, for the abrupt end of the present document points to the loss of the concluding sections or the possibility of their having been planned but not written. On the other hand, the Duc de Bouillon may have thought the moral lesson had been sufficiently pointed in what he had completed. Hence, he may have thought that a section on more recent events was desirable, undesirable, or unnecessary.

One is not helped in discovering Bouillon's original intentions by the form of the work. Like so many others, it follows a chronological sequence, though there are gaps in the flow of events.(3) It mingles historical, moral, moralistic and personal material without regard to balance, though as the work progresses the moral lessons tend to become more frequent and heavier. There are no internal divisions, and the work has no formal conclusion to balance the opening paragraphs which describe Bouillon's purpose in writing for his son. These purposes are: to instruct him in the true religion, to protect his interests and possessions, and to render

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(1) ibid.

(2) He had already formulated his own defence. (See note 2, page 90)

(3) He says next to nothing about his period of captivity from 1581 to 1584.

him susceptible to moral and political instruction.(1) They are not fully dealt with, however, though they receive mention: allusions to religion are rare, haphazard, and limited to Bouillon's own case; as to the protection of one's interests, Bouillon exhorts his son to regard promises and rewards on earth with a healthy distrust and little else (2): one may not trust one's fellow-man because of his avarice and his ambition.(3) Of moral and political instruction there is an abundance, but here again Bouillon digresses from a historical narrative to make observations as and when they occur to him. They appear to have a superficial relevance to the Prince de Sedan, for there are many which describe the failings of youth. 'Icy est à remarquer combien la jeunesse est pleine d'imprudence, et combien elle commet d'erreurs et de fautes, lors (comme la pluspart font) qu'ils se veulent croire seuls, et ne suivre les conseils de ceux qui leur sont ordonnés pour avoir le soin de leurs personnes.'(4) Perhaps Bouillon had very personal grounds for remarking that 'nous passons le meilleur de nostre aage, et depuis dix-huict ans jusques à vingt-cinq, sans jugement, jettans toute nostre conduite à l'aventure et sans avoir de but! '(5) This, and the numerous warnings about life at Court, are in a true moralistic vein: at Court, says Bouillon, 'on n'a eu que l'effronterie, les médisances et saletés pour ornement, qui fait que la vertu est mésestimée et la modestie blasmée, et rend la jeunesse moins capable de parvenir qu'elle ne l'a esté de long-temps.' (6) This remark bears the stamp of an ambitious man.

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(1) ed. cit., pp.2-3.

(2) ibid, p.112.

(3) ibid, p.73.

(4) ibid, p.24.

(5) ibid, p.116. There are similar condemnations on pp.46 and 47.

(6) ibid, p.18.

There are more moralistic themes in the memoirs: Bouillon is a strong advocate of education for the nobility: he also inveighs against Charles IX's habit of swearing (1), the craze for duelling (2) and the sin of ingratitude.(3) Yet again, Bouillon was speaking from his heart in exhorting his son to avoid risking his life in the duel: he had himself duelled with Duras whose seconds had overpowered him and left him with 22 stab-wounds.(4) Bouillon did not modestly hide the fact from his son, but hoped that he would learn by his father's mistakes.(5)

Even so, Bouillon did not neglect the historical material which is at first plentiful. Generally, he followed the pattern of memoir-writers in including historical material which was purely incidental to the topic at issue, for Bouillon is not often implicated in any of the events he describes except as a commentator. This is not true of scenes on the battlefield, however, and his descriptions of battle-preparations read very much like Monluc's.(6) He left a very detailed description of his entry at the Court of Charles IX, and tells us that he had great freedom of movement there,(7) adding a list of his expenses. There is comment on the St. Bartholomew Massacre which is useful to those who have mulled over the many questions which surround the motives behind the controversy. Bouillon supplies the opinion that the premeditated murder of Coligny at a tilting-contest was prudently set aside, but that the killing was not

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(1) ibid, pp.25-6.

(2) ibid, pp.144-5.

(3) ibid, p.29

(4) ibid, pp.140-3.

(5) There is no criticism of artillery, however.

(6) For example, p.84.

(7) ibid, pp.6 and 7.

deliberate.(1) Elsewhere, we find observations on the marriage of Marguerite de Valois and Henri de Navarre,(2) on Elizabeth I's attitude towards La Rochelle (3), and reports of the States of Blois of 1576-77 (4), and of a long interview with Catherine de Médicis (5). But as with many military writers, the historical thread is lost when Bouillon relates military actions, as for instance in the years 1580 and 1581, and at the end of the book when so many commanders are mentioned that it is hard to sort out the muddle.(6)

Bouillon's memoirs are a very personal document as one would expect in a work conceived as an utterance from father to son. They are written in the first person, and contain an account of Bouillon's domestic arrangements following his conversion to the Protestant belief.(7) They seem markedly sober: he lived away from the Court but kept himself informed of events and entertained good and knowledgeable companions of a religious background. He provided a chapel and a minister for the benefit of his servants, and spent his leisure by walking outdoors discussing theology, philosophy, politics, war, eloquence, and manners with his friends. He managed his financial affairs with prudence and there is a list of his favourite amusements. As a picture of a nobleman in retirement (8), this provokes comparison with Montaigne.

A little later on, Bouillon wrote of his first wound. Previously an illness had prompted him to think of his soul: 'Dieu eut pitié de moy, en

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(1) ibid, p.33.

(2) ibid, pp.25 and 128.

(3) ibid, pp.42-3.

(4) ibid, p.114.

(5) ibid, pp.133-6.

(6) ibid, p.196.

(7) ibid, pp.116 et seq.

(8) It was in fact a period of disgrace owing to his conversion: he was only just over twenty-one years old.

faisant servir cette maladie pour me le faire cognoistre'.(1) His concern for redemption from damnation had led him into the Huguenot camp, and now, thinking that his throat-wound would prove fatal, he attempted to evangelize those around him: 'me tenant mort, je leur fis voir combien l'escole de la vraye Religion m'avoit appris à cognoistre ce que c'estoit que de mourir; quoiqu'en l'aage de vingt-trois ans, je jouissois du bénéfice de la mort de Jesus-Christ, voyant le monde comme un mauvais passage que j'achevois de passer.'(2) This is accompanied by the fullest details of his illness and the operation to remove the accumulation of blood within his thorax. Less harrowing personal details are to be found, as when Bouillon explained his shrewd refusal to wed Mlle. de Vaudemont, which would have been a marriage of political convenience.(3) A love of military action prompted him to obey orders and join with the catholic Monsieur d'Anjou in besieging his fellow-protestants in La Rochelle (4): in any case he could not bear being thought a coward.

Bouillon's style has liveliness and clarity, and on occasion possesses the additional virtue of brevity: in dealing with the accounts of actions, such as his duel with Duras (5) and an ambush (6), he presents the facts in a clipped, dry fashion which contrasts with Monluc or Tavannes. He did not succumb to the lure of including lengthy documents and speeches, though there is a moderate number of occasions when direct speech is quoted. At one point, the memoirs very nearly

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(1) ed. cit. pp.88-9.

(2) ibid, pp.126-7.

(3) ibid, p.48.

(4) ibid, pp.32-3.

(5) ibid, p.143.

(6) ibid, p.153.

develop into an apology for François de la Noue's change-of-heart at La Rochelle (1), and there is a portrait of the Duc d'Alençon (2) which is a curiosity in this work - no other such descriptions are supplied, though Bouillon is extremely uncomplimentary about the Sieur Langoiran, whom he qualifies as 'un des plus cruels et irreligieux hommes de son temps'.(3)

In Bouillon, if we discount his unwillingness to give his version of the Biron conspiracy, we may see a miniature Monluc. All the elements, of history, of moral instruction, and of topical comment are there. Both use literature as a confessional and both turned their confessions into the illustration of moral precepts. Monluc, in his eagerness to proffer the fruits of experience to a rising generation is Bouillon, preaching to his son, writ large, and both are forward-looking men in an age of change.

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(1) ibid, pp.34-5.

(2) ibid, pp.18 et seq.

(3) ibid, p.93.

IX

François de la Noue : the 'Discours Politiques et Militaires'

François de la Noue was unlucky enough to be captured in the Flemish Campaign ten days after the fall of Ninove to the Duc d'Alençon in March 1580, and he was carried away to spend the next five years in prison at Limburg despite the intervention of all his friends and advocates, who included HenriIII, Queen Elizabeth of England and other great names. The interest that these people took, albeit ineffective, is evidence of the greatness of this Huguenot soldier who had managed to preserve friendships on either side of the religious chasm despite having served the interest of both at the Siege of La Rochelle in 1572. Having been a member of the Protestant faith for twelve years, he arrived on the scene at the request of Charles IX to persuade the Rochelois to negotiate, but was so persuaded by their case that he ended by joining with them against the king, whilst still counselling negotiation. He realised eventually that there was right on both sides and left the town once more.(1) At the time of his captivity he was a mere forty-nine years of age, and the prospect of imprisonment must have seemed irksome to an active man. His deeds after his liberation in 1585 demonstrate that his military career was by no means at an end, and he met his death in action in Britanny.(2) His own words demonstrate the bitterness of his captivity at the close of his 17th. discourse: 'Je dirois à ceste heure quelques mots des grandes remunerations & autres marques honorables qui sont apparentes, qui appartiennent à ces braves capitaines & gentils chevaliers, lesquels executent les belles entreprises, mais je m'en

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(1) A brief account is in the Introduction to Professor Sutcliffe's edition of the Discours Politiques et Militaires, Droz, 1967, pp.xi-xii.

(2) Fifteen days after being wounded at Lamballe he died on August 4th., 1591.

deporteray, pource que je suis pressé de digérer les dures amertumes d'une apprehension assez bien fondee de prison perpetuelle.'(1)

La Noue was not to waste his time, and saw to it that he had books to read and study during the term of his exile. He had cultivated a wide range of classical and modern authors.(2) Whilst in prison, therefore, he passed the time by producing a Commentaire on Guicciardini, and by writing the Discours, of which there are twenty-six dealing with moral, religious and military problems of the day. They differ from Monluc's Commentaires, for La Noue had no intention of using them as a platform for self-defence, and did not generally cite his own experience in support of his views.

It is interesting to note that the Discours, though they appeared in 1587 during their author's lifetime, were published not by La Noue himself, but by Philippe Du Fresne-Canaye, who purported to have found them in a trunk. Having failed to persuade La Noue to publish them, he did so himself without permission (3) and it has even been suggested that he went so far as to edit them as well as provide them with a preface addressed to Henri de Navarre.(4) Du Fresne expressed the hope that Henri would defend his actions - 'estre garent de ce que j'ay preferé l'utilité publique au desir particulier de Mr. de la Noue', whom he described as 'tres-mauvais priseur de ses oeuvres'.(5) La Noue may have been reluctant to publish because some of the Discours are incomplete (6), but Du Fresne offered

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(1) Discours, ed. cit. p.354.

(2) ibid, Introduction pp.vii-viii.

(3) ibid, p.2: Au Roy de Navarre

(4) This is Professor Sutcliffe's conclusion: see ed. cit. Introduction pp.xxi-xxii for the question of authenticity.

(5) ibid, p.7.

(6) These are numbers VII, X, and XVI, whilst VIII draws to a rather sudden close.

different reasons: 'Mais d'autant qu'il se pourra faire que l'autheur ... se plaindra de moy de les avoir publiez de mon autorité, et mesme d'y avoir mis son nom, lequel il se contente d'avoir rendu si celebre par ses armes, n'estimant, peùst estre, à honneur (suivant l'ancienne erreur de la noblesse Françoise) qu'on sçache combien il aime et honnore les lettres ou haissant particulierement ce livre pour la souvenance de sa captivité...'(1) LaNoue was presented as a modest hero who deemed his fame sufficient without needing to publish, but his unwillingness to do so seems misplaced when we come to consider his themes.

The Discours are not a work of arid erudition, but a set of practical and committed tracts, serving a remedial purpose in war-torn France. They are at once topical and universal; topical in their relevance to contemporary strife and developments, and universal in the principles propounded in them. The topicality of the first twenty-five Discours wore off so that they were not again published after 1614 (2); on the other hand, editors did La Noue a disservice by continuing to publish his twenty-sixth Discours under the description Mémoires de la Noue until the close of the XIXth. century.(3) Professor Sutcliffe points out in his introduction to an edition of La Noue's work that La Noue did not write memoirs; Henri Hauser, too, had inveighed against the misnomer with the remark: 'singuliers mémoires, ou il n'est jamais parlé de l'auteur.'(4) The twenty-sixth Discours, entitled 'Observations sur plusieurs choses advenues aux trois premiers troubles, avecques la vraye declaration de la pluspart d'icelles', is a collection of thirty essays in which points

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(1) ed. cit. p.6: Au Roy de Navarre

(2) Editions of the Discours appeared at Basle in 1587 and 1590, at Geneva in 1614, and there were unplaced editions of 1588 and 1596.

(3) Discours, ed. cit. Introduction p.xxiii and notes 36 and 37.

(4) Henri Hauser: François de la Noue 1531-1591, Hachette, 1892, p.141.

concerning the civil wars are clarified or commentated. Hauser further remarked that 'La Noue est avant tout un moraliste, sa vraie place n'est pas entre Castelnau et Monluc, elle est bien plutôt entre Calvin, et Montaigne.'(1) Perhaps it is nearer the truth to say that La Noue was both 'moraliste' and 'mémorialiste'.

This is not to say that the Discours do not bear a personal stamp. Though outwardly formal and restricted to a neo-philosophical consideration of theses, they contain purely 'moraliste' disquisitions on education, fitness or reading-matter for the nobility, and the remote topic of alchemy, which are the furthest removed from the military context. The rest may be divided roughly into two categories. There are those Discours which examine the state of French society and economics and the remedies which would be effective. These are, strictly speaking, 'moraliste'. Meanwhile the remaining Discours are more closely concerned with the military affairs of the day and may be looked upon as 'mémorialiste', being concerned with La Noue's own profession.

Central to both 'morale' and 'mémoires' is the idea of reform, for La Noue suggests improvements both to state and army, and the Discours are further unified by being addressed to the class of nobles and warriors whose interests coincided with La Noue's.(2) Those that are concerned with military matters are more technical, less comprehensible, and hence less interesting to a layman. In their emphasis and in their choice of topic they are peculiar to a single, important class of people: what draws them apart from the run of works published by military figures of the late XVIth. century are La Noue's qualities of impartiality and literary

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(1) ibid.

(2) ibid.

aptitude. Throughout the Discours La Noue never pleads his own case, but rather the case of reason, tolerance and Christianity. If his own experience helped to shape the Discours, as it undoubtedly did, that experience was digested and extrapolated, not presented for its own sake, and incorporated with the fruits of his study: 'La Noue a résumé (dans son livre) son expérience, ses réflections et ses lectures.'(1)

La Noue the moralist was perturbed by the sorry state of France and could not bring himself to write down all the accusations levelled at her.(2) He proposed remedies, which distinguished him from Monluc, who was content to bemoan his country's fate and its neglect of his glory. Monluc's suggestions were rarely more than distractions, though some were echoed more strongly by La Noue. Both fulminated against the procedural dilatoriness of the Law Courts (3); both believed that the employment of a full standing army, paid fair wages, would go far to prevent extensive pillaging of the countryside by starving unemployed soldiers.(4) They did not agree on the effectiveness of violence in a situation of civil war (5), and it is true to say that Monluc and La Noue disagreed on every point of warfare. La Noue denounced the nobility's extravagance in clothes, building, furniture and festivities (6), and advocated the placing of embargos on imported goods of which France herself could furnish cheaper supplies.(7) A whole Discours, number XII, dealt with abuses which needed

(1) ibid, p.142.

(2) Discours I.

(3) Discours, ed.cit. p.108.

(4) ibid, p.131.

(5) ibid, p.103.

(6) ibid, pp.116-20; 178-9; 190 et seq.

(7) ibid, p.116.

correcting, such as duelling; and as a Reformer, La Noue was anxious that reform should be accomplished by evangelical means. He regretted that atheism, oaths, blasphemy and witchcraft should have taken such a hold on society in a century when the deeper truths of Scripture had been brought to light: '..& mesmement aujourd'huy que les belles clartez de l'Escriture reluisent.'(1) His condemnations are frequently Biblical in tone (2); there is quotation from the Bible, and frequent praise of the Divine Wisdom in comparison with the puny reason of presumptuous mortals: 'des courtisans qui seront peu satisfaits de mes propos; mesmes se mocqueront de ce que je veux desmesler les affaires d'estat par des maximes de théologie.'(3)

La Noue's reforming zeal is adequately summed up in the twenty-fourth Discours, 'Contre ceux qui pensent que la piété prive l'homme de tous les plaisirs', a title which has a catechistic ring about it. Such advice and propaganda can hardly be classed as personal jottings and must have been meant for the public. This Discours, more than most, is polemic in the same way as Pascal's Provinciales, being an attack upon the '..Epicuriens & libertins... establissans leur souverain bien en la volupté.'(4) Though cultured and amiable people, they either defile religion or refuse to commit themselves out of fear of doing anything positive.(5) La Noue has no more sympathy for the warlike classes who entertain a philosophy of

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(1) ibid, p.21.

(2) See Taboureau: Un Moraliste Militaire du XVIe siècle, Paris 1909, p.11: 'La Noue est donc dans l'esprit de son époque en se servant de moyens persuasifs qui rappellent ceux d'un prédicant.'

(3) Discours, ed. cit. p.38.

(4) ibid, p.555.

(5) Montaigne would figure in the second of these categories.

'carpe diem', and give themselves over to merriment while they have breath. Now La Noue's concern with form appears, for to balance these three classes of rogue he postulates three forms of blameless pleasure: the honest, the useful and the delightful. To follow these, he expounds those pleasures which are in God's gift: courage to serve and act; the inner felicity which is a manifestation of Christian belief; the freedom from the fear of Hell; and the ability to distinguish between the riches that are transitory and those that are permanent. Contrasted with these are the worldly pleasures: fashionable love-affairs are degrading and unhealthy; worldly pleasures derive from the urges of the gut; the misguided nobility prize a good cook more than all the learning of the Ancients; and they are forced to forget their failings and excesses in their cups. This is indeed stern moral instruction.

The point at which we are able to say that La Noue became 'mémorialiste' is in those Discours which are devoted to military questions. Specifically, these are numbers XI, XIII to XVIII and XXVI. All except the last deal with technical matters of warfare - the usefulness of the 'arrière-ban'; which is the best way of deploying one's cavalry, and so forth. La Noue praises the profession of arms; at least by comparison with the amount of money wasted by the nobility on clothing and other extravagances, money spent on military service in the king's name is well spent.(1) La Noue also praises the Piedmontese school of military training (2), and suggests means to improve army discipline.(3) Discours XVIII dwells on four military paradoxes. These are useful to the military historian, for they reveal what it was customary to expect in

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(1) Discours, ed. cit. p.118.

(2) ibid, p.305.

(3) Discours XIII.

battle according to the forces deployed; in the cases cited, it was the unexpected outcome which presented the paradox. The most striking was that mounted gendarmerie should vanquish pikemen - this possibility had been discounted after Maximilian's defeat by the Swiss at Dornach in 1499. Meanwhile, Discours XXII may be looked upon as an exercise of warlike principles, a 'feasibility study' of a new Crusade.

La Noue, a warrior by profession, did not wholly sanction war and joined the ranks of military authors who pondered on the morality of war. As to almost all the rest, the aims of war were as important to La Noue as the means by which it was prosecuted, and not all modern weapons received praise from his pen. War, to be an ennobling pursuit, must be fought in Justice, Faith and Modesty, not with force alone, or the civilians will quickly tire of it.(1) Such fine qualities were not gained by the contracting of iniquitous alliances with the Infidel who was, in any case, unlikely to illustrate Christian practice in war, and was also so cruel and licentious that in no way could his conquests be called glorious.(2) La Noue also presented good reasons why the Turkish Alliance was harmful to France, reasons which show that La Noue was aware of political as well as military contingencies. War was counselled by him only in defence of the Christian doctrine, therefore, and it must be waged according to the principles of the Christian faith.

Discours XXIII follows the 'feasibility study' with an imaginary account of a four-year campaign to free Europe from the Turk: it ends with the liberation of Constantinople and the Turks are driven into Asia. To XVIth. century readers this must have been something like science-fiction.

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(1) Discours, ed.cit. p.221.

(2) Discours XXI.

A characteristic of this form of literature is its plausibility: it depends upon a profusion of facts which could be true, hypotheses that are within the bounds of credibility, and scientific jargon which the layman has no means to verify. La Noue's procedure was very similar in its way: 'Quelqu'un se mocquera dequoy je fais icy un préjugé des evenemens de la guerre, comme s'ils devoient succeder an la maniere que je le figure, mais je ne suis pas si presomptueux de penser que ce qui est inconnu aux hommes, ils le puissent prevoir. Je discours seulement de ce faict par raisons vraysemblables.'(1) It is not La Noue's fault that the analogy with science-fiction breaks down because, though man has walked on the moon, no man has managed to wrest Constantinople from the Turks: today, our priorities are different.

Throughout the Discours La Noue adhered to a formula that almost puts the collection into the same category as Montaigne's Essais. The titles betray themselves as theses to be supported, for seventeen of the twenty-six promulgate a point which is to be discussed and proven. Thereafter, La Noue may do one of two things: he may continue with an apparently distant anecdote which leads back to the topic at hand (2), or he may plunge straight into the discussion without so much as referring to the thesis, as if no opening gambit had been thought out.(3) In the body of each Discours we are always aware of planning and La Noue divides up his evidence, repeating himself very little, preparing his case with care to such an extent that study is greatly facilitated. Form is naturally

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(1) Discours, ed. cit. p.495.

(2) This is very reminiscent of Montaigne : see Discours II which opens with a tale of the King of Numidia.

(3) See Discours III where the matter is loosely opened, and XXIV: 'cette fausse opinion..'

lacking in the last and most diffuse of the Discours. This is by far the longest of them all and, as we have seen, rather different in character. Each of the thirty snippets, though all have point in themselves, do not serve any general thesis, which may have precluded their being used in other Discours.

La Noue's reputation amongst his contemporaries came to be enormous. Du Fresne was the first of many who pointed out his great virtues of impartiality, practising 'le precepte de Tacite, lequel veut que ni la haine ni l'amitié n'ayent aucune puissance sur la plume de l'historien. ..Nostre autheur..apporte tant de sincerité a representer naifvement la verité, qu'il remarque plustost les fautes du parti qu'il a suyvi que des autres, et prise ce qu'il trouve de louable en ceux contre lesquels il a porté les armes.'(1) Brantôme appreciated La Noue's military qualities and praised his examination of the Turkish crusade: 'M. de la Noue, en ses memoires, en faict un très-beau discours pour nous donner à sçavoir si elle est loysible ou non; et d'autant qu'il en a escrit aucunement bien, je luy quitte les armes, et n'entreprens d'en parler sur un si grand capitaine et suffisant personnage, et pour ce je me tays.'(2) La Noue had spoken and for Brantome this was enough. In England, where his Discours were translated in 1587 by Edward Aggas, his reputation was also great: Sir Roger Williams mentions his advice in his Briefe Discourse of Warre, whilst Sir John Smithe, in his Instructions, Observations, and Orders Mylitarie, qualifies a divergence of his opinion from La Noue's with the following words: 'Certenlie I doo thinke that the opinions of so sufficient a man of war and old soldier is no waies to be condemned, but

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(1) Discours, ed. cit. pp.5-6: Au Roy de Navarre

(2) Brantome: Mémoires, ed. Lalanne, Vol. V, 59.

greatly to be regarded.'(1) Meanwhile, Humfrey Barwick (2) asserts 'And for that I have read over the most part of the discourses of warre lately written by that famous Gentleman and worthy souldier Monsieur de la Noue,' and devotes his seventeenth and eighteenth discourses to an appraisal of La Noue's recommendations on battle-formations: the same author pours heavy scorn on Machiavelli.

Perhaps the best example of the esteem which was generally felt for La Noue is Jean Taboureau's book of 1909 (3), which was specifically directed at soldiers and intended to form a basis on which to build a military doctrine. La Noue is presented therein as being almost up to date: 'La Noue... a raisonné et disserté sur plusieurs des sujets qui nous préoccupent : éducation du soldat, courage militaire, valeur morale, etc.' (4) In the years before the First World War it was, then, possible to see the relevance of writers like Fourqueveaux and La Noue to a living military tradition, and in La Noue's case it is very fitting that Lieutenant Taboureau should pronounce a panegyric on this long-dead soldier: 'Son livre est une profession de foi: foi en la perfectibilité de la nature humaine; foi en l'avenir de la France et du progrès des moeurs militaires. Son originalité ... consiste en ce qu'il n'a pas attendu la réforme de l'armée de quelques améliorations techniques, mais qu'il l'a cherché dans l'élévation des coeurs et dans la fidèle observation de la loi morale ... Par ce souci de moralisation sociale, La Noue devance son temps.'(5)

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(1) Williams's work was printed in London in 1590; Smithe's was written in the same year but not printed until 1595.

(2) A Breefe Discourse Concerning the force and effect of all manuall weapons of fire (1594 ?), London: p.31 verso,

(3) Taboureau: Un Moraliste Militaire du XVIe siècle, Paris and Limoges, 1909.

(4) ibid, p.6.

(5) ibid, pp.54-5.

X

D'Aubigné: military writer and historian

Agrippa d'Aubigné was the one figure of XVIth. century military literature who also had conventional literary standing. As a soldier and a scholar he was not unique, but his fame as a poet placed him in a special class of his own. The military aspect of his work has been explored elsewhere (1), and concerns his Histoire Universelle, the poem Les Tragiques, and the tract entitled Les Avantures du Baron de Faeneste. The first is an impartial account of the Civil Wars, the second an inflammatory version of the same subject, while the third is a series of dialogues illustrating, among other things, the adventures and foibles of an old soldier.

D'Aubigné saw his Histoire Universelle as 'la peinture d'un temps calamiteux'(2), and intended that its lessons should guide others: 'mon oeuvre... n'est dédié à aucun qu'à la postérité. Mon dessein s'estend autant que ma vie et mon pouvoir.'(3) Thus the purpose of this history was didactic; like La Noue, D'Aubigné endeavoured to be impartial. He believed, however, that Prefaces to the work might include partisan views, and accordingly expressed his opinions there, especially in the Preface to Book IV: '(les préfaces) sont franches de la loi qui défend les avis de louange et de blasme.' What strong feelings D'Aubigné had on the matter which formed the subject of the Histoire may be deduced from the Tragiques, but the

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(1) Jean Plattard: Agrippa d'Aubigné, Boivin 1931: 'D'Aubigné écrivain militaire.' Also A.Thierry: 'Monluc et D'Aubigné', Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance, 1971, III, p.505.

(2) Histoire Universelle, ed. de Ruble, 1886 for the Société de l'Histoire de France; Vol. I, 10.

(3) ibid, p.8

historian left all venom out of his narrative: '..l'historien a retrouvé sa sérénite dans le cours du récit. Il se borne à rapporter les actes sans les juger; ou, lorsqu'il le fait, c'est avec modération, en alléguant les circonstances propres à atténuer l'odieux de certains procédés.'(1) To those about him, D'Aubigné's impartiality came as a surprise: it seemed impossible that he could be so vituperative in the Tragiques and so unbiased in the Histoire: in a later reference to the matter, D'Aubigné wrote: '... c'est chose merveilleuse qu'un esprit igné et violent de son naturel ne se soit monstré en aucun point partisan ait escript sans louanges et blasmes, fidelle tesmoing et jamais juge, se contenant de satisfaire à la question du faict sans toucher à celle du droict.'(2)

D'Aubigné complained of preceding historians who for one reason or another gave biased or false information. Memoirs should not be thought of as history, and he viewed with scorn a writer shamelessly putting 'le nom d'histoire sur le frontispice d'un ouvrage dans lequel, la porte passée, vous ne trouvex que des enfileures de memoires, receus de tous venants, dictez par leurs intérests; la recerche des actions particulières, indignes de lumière publique.'(3) Nevertheless, he had to defend his own work against the same accusation: 'd'autant que l'autheur se trouve soi-mesme à tous les coups en son chemin, ils ont dit que l'histoire est vrayement sienne, pource qu'elle est de luy principallement.'(4)

If the public need not know about the lives of specific persons, still less, according to D'Aubigné, does it need to have a portrait of the author: 'Les imprimeurs sont curieux de représenter en taille douce les

(1) Plattard, loc. cit. p.109.

(2) Tragiques: 'Aux lecteurs'.

(3) Histoire, ed.cit. pp.2-3.

(4) ibid, 'Imprimeur au Lecteur', ed.cit. p.19; this was written by D'Aubigné himself.

auteurs aux premières pages de leurs livres. Tel soin est inutile, car il ne profite point au lecteur de voir le visage et les linéamens de celui qui l'enseigne, mais bien ceux de l'âme pour recevoir le jugement des choses avec le trébuchat en la main.'(1) This rejection of memoirs, at a time when nearly every public figure published recollections, seems strange, but D'Aubigné did not write his autobiography, save only for the short Sa Vie à ses enfants (2), which adds personal details of the author to the impersonal Histoire Universelle: he directed that no copy of it should go outside the family circle.(3)

D'Aubigné was critical of historians such as La Popelinière (4) whose narratives were unbalanced, 'Ayant veu, mesmes en celui à la diligence et labeur duquel nous devons tous, un livre entier pour assiéger une abbaye, et le mesme oublier une bataille.'(5) However, he meted out praise to the historians Du Haillan (6) and De Thou (7). At all events, D'Aubigné was at pains to assert that he would not fall into the same trap: 'Vous ne verrez ni digressions, ni exclamations, restant mon mestier que d'escrire sans juger des actions, comme les praemisses d'un argument, duquel celui qui lit

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(1) ibid, p.9.

(2) In the preface, D'Aubigné reinforces his point by remarking that the lives of the Ancient Emperors are interesting, 'mais vous n'y apprenets point à porter les fardeaux du dessus.'

(3) ibid: only two copies were to be held. A modern edition is in his Oeuvres, ed. H. Weber, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1969.

(4) La Popelinière, alias Nicolas Voysin, d.1608: he wrote an Histoire des Troubles et Guerre Civile, published at La Rochelle in 1581, and left a philological study of the French language in manuscript.

(5) Histoire ed. cit. p.5.

(6) 1535-1610, the court historian.

(7) Jacques-August de Thou, 1553-1617, author of Historiarum Sui Temporis.., first published in 1604 and revised in 1620.

amasse la judicieuse conclusion.'(1) In comparison with La Noue's, D'Aubigné's contribution is slight, on the face of it, for while La Noue assimilated his experiences and used them anonymously to reach conclusions on various topics, D'Aubigné systematically omitted comment and personality which were so much the attraction of military literature at this date.

The Histoire may be impersonal, but in one sense its validity depends upon the life that D'Aubigné led. He pleaded his fitness to write about the Civil Wars in the Imprimeur aux Lecteurs, written by himself, for he incorporated with it a brief summary of his own martial career. We are informed that he saw his first siege at Orléans in 1562, and had been a soldier for 54 years, a captain for 50 years, a 'maistre de camp' for 44 years, and a 'mareschal de camp' for 32 years. D'Aubigné allowed himself a personal statement in his preface in order to claim unimpeachable authority for his work: 'J'ay eu quelque avantage naturel à mon entreprise, n'ayant pris les armes qu'un an avant qu'elles fussent permises à mon roi; parvenu par les petites charges aux subalternes quand il a eu les souveraines, et mesmes ayant administré celles qu'on met en la place des yeux aux batailles, grands combats, et sièges de remarque.'(2)

The Histoire, then, boasts impartiality, generality and authority. Yet, to say it is a universal history is to ignore its patent military bias. Plattard points out that it was written for warriors to read and cites D'Aubigné's admission of this fact. 'C'est dire que sa principale ambition était d'être rangé parmi les écrivains militaires .. (3) .. il ne doute pas que l'intérêt de son Histoire Universelle soit moins dans l'exposé des

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(1) Histoire ed. cit. p.10.

(2) ibid, p.15.

(3) Plattard, loc.cit. p.115.

principes ou des machinations des politiques que dans les récits de guerre et dans les leçons qui s'en dégagent. Et de fait, pour nous, d'Aubigné historien vaut surtout par les récits militaires.'(1) The concentration on warlike narrative results in D'Aubigné's work suffering from the same defects as Monluc's or Tavannes's: the objectives in each skirmish are obscured, and the course of the wars is far from plain. There is no impression of sequence, no climax, for D'Aubigné destroyed the continuity by passing back and forth from one theatre of war to another.(2) Almost the only identifiable sequence lies in the adoption by D'Aubigné of a curious little formula by which he attempted, in describing each action, to present the most impartial description. It consisted in putting forward first the Catholic view, and then the Protestant opinion. In the case of battles, two more sections succeeded these: first, a list of all who were killed (or martyred), and second, the recounting of the most gruesome deaths for which space could not be found in the original account. Consequently, the reader must twice endure each encounter. This concern with impartiality made the work less readable; nevertheless if, as D'Aubigné intended, the reader was to be judge, nothing less would have sufficed.

D'Aubigné tended to be less exact in the matter of topographical detail than Monluc (3), and also lacked Monluc's personal and extensive recourse to reported speech: as a result, reports of battles and manoeuvres are turgid to the point where one may wonder whether D'Aubigné wrote as an eye-

(1) ibid, p.116.

(2) ibid, pp.123 et seq.

(3) ibid, p.111: 'L'action dans la narration de la bataille de Coutras manque de dessein. Elle est constituée d'une série de petits faits dont on ne perçoit ni l'enchaînement, ni l'objectif, ni les résultats progressifs.'

witness or not. However, the Histoire did not lack its good points for the military reader. Plattard (1) gives an appraisal of its usefulness, affirming that it gives a reliable picture of warfare at the close of the XVIth. century, and illustrates the extent to which difficulties could be circumvented by recourse to improvisation.

D'Aubigné's concern for impartiality did not prevent all inflammatory material from entering into the account. Acts of cruelty, whether perpetrated by Catholics or Huguenots (2), were reported in grisly detail: the idea of propaganda was not absent, either, for D'Aubigné wrote an extension of the Histoire at the request of the Genevan Protestants to expose the sufferings of their sect at Albi.(3) Despite D'Aubigné's assurance that there would be no exclamations, there is at least one cry of triumph: 'O mort, où est ta victoire, ô sépulchre, où est ton aiguillon?'(4): this quotation was a topical reference to martyrdom. Meanwhile, D'Aubigné expressed what might be construed as a partisan opinion by insisting that Calvinism appealed to intellectuals: 'Il advint que pour confirmer la vérité de ces choses estranges, ceste religion estant receue principalement par les hommes de lettres, il y eut fort peu de siege de justice en France où il n'y eust quelque officier favorisant ceste doctrine.'(5) However, there was more than a grain of truth in this.

These lapses, if such they may be called, are indeed rare. In this universal history, the bias is completely military; for the sake of

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(1) ibid: Plattard points out glaring inaccuracies in the account of the Battle of Poitiers.

(2) e.g. Histoire, ed. cit. pp.197-8.

(3) This was entitled Mémoires des choses passées en Guyenne en 1621 et 1622 sous les ducs de Mayenne et d'Elboeuf: Plattard, loc.cit. Chapter V. The rediscovery of this tract enabled Plattard to establish that D'Aubigné used the unpublished memoirs of the Duc de Rohan, for example, which were not published until 1644.

(4) Histoire ed. cit. p.205.

(5) ibid, p.202.

impartiality, a lot of the character with which D'Aubigné might have flavoured a review of these troubled times is missing; and his use of the official sources, unpublished memoirs, and the Mercure François to fill in the gaps in his own knowledge led to inaccuracies in details, topography and chronology which Baguenault de Puchesse and Henri Hauser criticised.(1) The pity is that D'Aubigné did not favour the writing of memoirs; although Jean Prevost produced a Mémoires de D'Aubigné from fragments in the Histoire and Sa Vie à ses enfants, it can be no substitute for the autobiography which D'Aubigné should have given us.

For a personal view of the Civil Wars, we have to read between the lines of Misères and Fers, Books 1 and 5 of Les Tragiques. This poem was expressly designed to stir up resentments and emotions: 'Nous sommes ennuyez de livres qui enseignent(2): donnez-nous-en pour émouvoir.'(3) The Histoire was published between 1618 and 1630 at Geneva; the Tragiques appeared clandestinely in 1616. However, D'Aubigné's remark was added with the Aux Lecteurs 36 years after the poem's composition, and would thus refer to the Histoire which had been compiled in the meantime. The Tragiques cover the same ground in a different manner, for here are all the high feelings and condemnations aroused by the Civil Wars in the breast of a fervent Huguenot. D'Aubigné's credentials here were not the length of his experience in battle, but his sufferings: of the author of the Tragiques he remarks '..se tenant pour mort pour les plaies receues en un combat, il traça comme pour testament cet ouvrage..'(4) D'Aubigné used the third person because he posed as a commander of light horse in the wars of '77(5), and was able to praise himself as 'mareschal de camp avec un soing et

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(1) In his Les Sources de l'Histoire de France.

(2) A reference to the Histoire.

(3) Tragiques, in Oeuvres, ed. Weber, p.8.

(4) ibid, p.4.

(5) ibid.

labeur indicible, comme estimant la principale partie du capitaine d'estre present à tout.'(1)

Considered as military literature, the Tragiques do not offer any quantity of material: of the work's seven sections, none deals specifically with military matters, though Misères expounds the deplorable state of a war-torn France, and references of a military nature are plentiful in Fers. The argument in Fers is that Satan is allowed by God to roam the earth spreading material prosperity to undermine the faith of men. He works through his minion, Catherine de Medicis, until the Civil Wars break out. The Battle of Dreux, for instance, is cynically viewed as a great victory:

'Vous voyez la victoire en la plaine de Dreux,
Les deux favoriser pour ruiner les deux.'(2)

Meanwhile the conflict drags on to the Siege of Paris (1569), the Battle of Moncontour, the evacuation of Queen Renée's court from Montargis (3), the massacres of Vassy, Agen, Cahors and Tours. All is reported in repulsive detail:

'L'on void dedans le sein de l'enfant transporté
Le Poignard chaud qui sort des poumons de la mere.'(4)

The report of the Massacre of Sens, during which the bodies of the slain were thrown into the Seine, is just as repugnant:

' ... la mort ingenieuse
Froissoit de tests les tests, sa manière douteuse
Faisoit une dispute aux playes du martyr
De l'eau qui veut entrer, du sang qui veut sortir.'(5)

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(1) ibid, p.5.

(2) ibid, V, ll.369-70. Dreux was a stalemate.

(3) Queen Renée was noted for harbouring Protestants.

(4) ed.cit. V, ll.580-1.

(5) ibid, ll.589-92.

D'Aubigné's retelling of St. Bartholomew's Night takes on a special interest, for the author tells us that he was himself injured; whilst lying wounded at Thalcy, his spirit was exalted, and, in a vision, the Angel of Consolation instructed him to avenge the insult to God by using his poetic talents.(1) The Tragiques, then, are the divinely inspired instrument of punishment against the evil-doers. Meanwhile, nature is revolted by man's cruelty, and the sea, having at first refused to accept any more mutilated corpses from the rivers of France, finally grants them a resting-place in its bosom. With that, the narration closes. The analysis of Fers reveals that there is little of military interest in the subject-matter, for the canto is really concerned with cruelty. Nevertheless, D'Aubigné points out in it, for instance, that a foreign war would draw away the trouble-makers (2), and that the old ideals of military glory have died.(3)

In the Tragiques, there is a limited use of military terminology, which is used where it suits D'Aubigné's purpose.(4) The first line of Misères has a military echo:

'Puisqu'il faut s'attaquer aux légions de Rome.'

whilst the whole work is dramatised as a clash between poetry which is beautiful and war which is not:

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(1) ibid, ll. 1419-30.

(2) ibid, I, ll.645-7.

(3) See below, Chapter XVII.

(4) Plattard summarizes D'Aubigné's use of military jargon, loc.cit. p.128 et seq.

'Autre fureur qu'amour reluit en mon visage:
Sous un inique Mars, parmi les durs labeurs
Qui gastent le papier et l'ancre des sueurs,
Au lieu de Thessalie aux mignardes vallées
Nous avortons ces chants au milieu des armées,
En delassant nos braz de crasse tous rouillez
Qui n'osent s'esloigner des brassards (1) despouillez,
Le luth que j'accordois avec mes chansonettes
Est ores estouffe de l'esclat des trompettes..'(2)

By one of those 'paradoxes militaires', we might almost say, D'Aubigné's lute will triumph over the bugle just as the pen is mightier than the sword. However, further military conceits abound. France is a woman upon whose breast her unruly children fight out their differences.(3) Later, she has become a tempest-tossed vessel provided with cannon at front and rear. The warring factions fire their volleys at each other along the decks until they succeed in blowing their opponents, the ship and themselves into the next world.(4) Even the worms which devour corpses take on a martial guise, and are portrayed as they mount a campaign against Pontcher, a member of the Chambre Ardente(5):

'La mort entre le coeur et le bout de l'orteil
Fit sept divers logis, et comme par tranchées
Partage l'assiégé; ses deux jambes hachees,
Et ses cuisses aprés servirent de sept forts;
En repoussant la mort il endura sept morts.'(6)

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(1) arm-piece - a technical term.

(2) Tragiques, ed. cit. I, ll.66-74.

(3) ibid, l.110.

(4) ibid, ll.179-90.

(5) A tribunal like the Inquisition dedicated to the extirpation of heresy.

(6) Tragiques, ed.cit. VI, ll.892-6.

The unfortunate Pontcher is 'L'assiégé', the 'petits soldats de Dieu'(1) are logistically divided into seven camps, make trenches and mount attacks upon his seven ramparts. None of this alters the fact that the Tragiques are a work of literary polemic and satire, and not of military literature: they are military only in their conceits.

This being so, the influence of the Civil Wars on D'Aubigné, the only acknowledged representative of artistic life in this study, seems to have been minimal. It is perhaps reasonable to consider to what extent the Wars affected the arts at this period. The sudden collapse of the Académie du Palais in 1585 followed the royal bankruptcy consequent upon the length of the Wars. In a different sense, however, the military influence contributed little but personal memoirs, 'pièces justificatives', propaganda and all the to-and-fro of polemic in political and religious life. In the later years of the XVIth. century, the figure of the 'soldat fanfaron' appeared, principally in the pastoral novel and drama. Though his prototype had existed since the Miles Gloriosus of Plautus, and had been at large in the Italian Wars, it was the internal strife in France, coupled with the spread of chivalric-pastoral literature, that brought him to public notice. It is strange that D'Aubigné himself created such a figure in the Baron de Faeneste, whose Avantures were published between 1617 and 1630.

The Avantures were fundamentally a series of dialogues between Faeneste and others. The narrative itself contains no events other than those recounted by the various speakers: in any case, the bulk of these reports consists of anecdotal material, and only that of the Battle of St. Pierre is adventurous in a way approaching the manner of Monluc (2),

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(1) ibid, l.861.

(2) See edition of H. Weber, Pléiade (Oeuvres), pp.814-5.

though relatively short. The speakers withdraw to their beds at the end of Book II; the close of Book IV is graced by descriptions of the triumphal cars of Impiety, Ignorance, Poltroonery and 'Gueuserie'.(1) There is little poetic conceit of this order in the body of the work, and these tableaux are all the more striking for it.

Faeneste, (2) like Monluc, is a Gascon: here, as in many other places, the Gascon's military prowess is acclaimed.(3) Not that military action is without its drawbacks, for in Book IV (4) the following exchange takes place: 'c'est une chause vien honteuse que le poil ne couvre point les oreilles. - B. Vous verrez que cette invention est venue de Gascogne, et quelques-uns s'en seront servis, au lieu de cacher les oreilles, a couvrir la place ou elles avoient esté.' Despite the fun poked at him, Faeneste has had to endure hardships in war, as we see in this extract which is strangely reminiscent of Monluc (5): '.. à ces faschuses guerres ici nous abons si vien accoustumé les armes à dos, que ne poubant dormir autrement, il m'a fallu reprendre la cuirace pour le mens.'(6)

Nevertheless, there is comparatively little of military interest in the Avantures. One of the interlocutors, Enay, has unusual views on the way to attain the rank of Maréchal de France: 'j'ai oui autrefois, qu'on faisoit Mareschal de France celui qui sans tourner arriere avoit percé en trois batailles, qui avoit esté en trois assauts, qui avoit heureusement commandé en trois sieges et fait signalement en trois combatz à drapeaux

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(1) Avantures, ed.cit. Book IV, xvii-xx.

(2) This name is Greek and signifies 'appearance'.

(3) ed.cit. p.671 (preface to Book I).

(4) ed.cit. p.775.

(5) See Commentaires, ed.cit. pp.128-9.

(6) Avantures, ed.cit. p.738.

deployez.'(1) A tear is spared for those noblemen who have fallen on hard times as a result of the Civil Wars; D'Aubigné places them in the van of 'Gueuserie': 'De ce regiment estoient force gentils-hommes qui ont sacrifié leurs biens à la guerre, et que la paix avoit surpris, et a qui on avait dit; "Le Royaume a esté trente ans au pillage: pourquoi n'avez-vous rien fait?" '(2)

Such remarks as this may be topical and not a little bitter, but Faeneste himself is no model of the self-sacrificing nobleman. He boasts of the great risks he has run in four conflicts: 'Tel que bous me boyiez mentenant, y'ai bu quatre guerres, ...Si ay ye vien bu pluboir les mousquetades plus espesses que la gresle, tic, tac, toc, per aci, per entre les yambes, sous les esselles, rasibus les aureilles. Il fait von se saboir remuder!'(3); meanwhile, he declares that he has killed sixty knights, dedicating the deeds to his mistress.(4) Yet he is sufficiently aware of his own shortcomings to realise his need to dissemble at Court. In a deeply moralistic chapter, Moyens de Parestre (5), he enlarges upon the means of making, if not a splash, at least a favourable impression at Court: the need for highly fashionable clothing, the wearing of thigh-length boots to conceal one's lack of silk stockings, the wearing of spurs to suggest that one owns a horse. One must know how to converse lightly of 'amours' and duels and fashionable colours. In order to signify that one has dined well, one must pick one's teeth in public. These feints are necessary in the society in which Faeneste moves; but he is not without faults, for we learn that he cannot tell the time,

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(1) ibid, Book I, xi.

(2) ibid, Book IV, xx.

(3) ibid, Book I, vii.

(4) ibid, Book II, x.

(5) ibid, Book I, ii.

though he hides the truth by carrying a huge watch.(1)

Some of the Baron's adventures recall the fabliaux and contes of earlier periods: in one escapade, he attempts to secure the favours of his mistress by black magic, but having summoned up the demon he is too terrified to pursue the matter.(2) Recourse to the charms of music serves him no better, for he is interrupted in mid-serenade by a cascade of filthy liquid from the window above; roundly cursing the lady, he and his aide retire from the courts of Venus.(3) As a duellist, his achievement is slight: he climbs a tree to avoid bloodshed.(4)

Parts of the Avantures do not deal with Faeneste, but revolve upon the discussion of both topical and academic issues, in the old form of the dialogue. Should one include the word 'Et' before saying the Latin Grace at table?(5) Then there are scurrilous tales of pregnant monks (6), and of the curate and the chambermaid (7) which testify to D'Aubigné's taste for Boccaccio, to whom there is direct reference.(8) There is further reference to Don Quixote in Book 3, Chapter xxii; he is disguised as one 'Calopse de bonne et grande maison, nourri aux lettres, et qui en sa jeunesse a esté homme de guerre, depuis par le loisir de la paix est devenu plein de meditations, à force desquelles il est devenu ipocondriaque.'(9) The Faeneste tilts at the ideal of Court chivalry rather as

(1) ibid, Book III, viii.

(2) ibid, Book II, x.

(3) ibid, Book II, xi.

(4) ibid, Book II, xv.

(5) ibid, Book II, i.

(6) ibid, Book IV, xi.

(7) ibid, Book II, xiv.

(8) ibid: 'cette entreprise faite sur d'autres, de mesmes qu'ils avoient leues en Bocace,' ed.cit. p.718.

(9) ibid, p.765.

the Quixote, and at the pastoral with its fabulous scenario of witches, spells, magic fountains and languishing romances.(1) Its interest as military literature lies only in its characterisation of Faeneste himself, an idle member of the lesser nobility in hard times, trying to keep up his reputation by force of natural Gascon ebullience: all told, the Avantures is an odd mixture of literary styles.

D'Aubigné, military writer of experience and learning, did not depend upon the events of his own life to provide material for his literary excursions, as did Monluc. He was concerned to examine the political, humorous, moralistic and military import of the events of the Religious Wars. As a master of words, however, he could so bias his accounts to produce the unbridled invective of the Tragiques alongside the humour of the Avantures, and yet produce the somewhat colourless Histoire Universelle as a reference work. Of military writers of the late XVIth. century, only La Noue could have equalled such diversity.

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(1) ibid, Book II, xii.

XI

The Soldier's View of Contemporary Warfare

The literature under review in this study concerns itself principally with soldiers and warfare; in a review of the general themes of military literature, therefore, it is of interest to examine not only the soldier's opinion of events around him but also his view of the ethics of his own profession. In the late XVIth. century, French comment upon warfare centred upon two issues, the Civil Wars, and the Turkish menace. Both theatres of war, therefore, stemmed from a religious root, and formed curiously conflicting illustrations in the controversy as to whether a Christian was ever justified in resorting to arms. For some it was a source of embarrassment that a war at home should be fought between professing Christians, whilst no concerted efforts were being made to thwart the advances of the Infidel. Others saw in the pursuit of the latter end the resolution of the former problem. There was, they said, no better motive for war than that of defeating the enemies of Christ and restoring Christian worship to lands overrun at the beginning of the century (1): indeed for Fourquevaux, Tavannes and La Noue, the Holy War alone was justified in the sight of God: 'La guerre entre les Chrestiens est injuste. La guerre contre les Turcs, heretiques ou tyrans est permise'.(2) So wrote Tavannes, for heresy was as bad as Mohammedanism: nevertheless, his remark must be weighed against his regret that violence is used to eradicate rooted beliefs.(3) La Noue, however, was stricter, and counselled war only once in the Discours, 'pour preserver les ames de

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(1) The most disastrous reverse occurred at Mohacs in 1526.

(2) Tavannes, op.cit., p.90 column A.

(3) See below p.130, note 3.

tant de milliers de personnes de l'infection mortelle de la doctrine de Mahumet & garentir les corps de la plus horrible servitude qui fut onques'.(1) Full consideration of a Turkish war is made in Chapter XVIII: from the evidence it is clear that such an enterprise was given serious thought and even in political circles was more than a whim. For military writers, the matter had another dimension; the Turks were a hated race, but their martial superiority and, above all, their famous discipline were the envy of those who saw the defects in their own country's military organisation. After all, soldiers both noble and common were (by the end of the century) professional men who were prepared to learn by better example, and fundamentally the religious problems exasperated them so much that they lost interest and waged war out of a sense of duty. A slight trace of this defeatism in the face of complex issues runs through Monluc's writings: he affected not to be a 'theologien' (2), but, in spite of his arguments against the Huguenots (which were anything but religious) and his brutality in putting down their plots in Guyenne, and his attitude to the religious question was that it was virtually insoluble: '...tant qu'il y aura deux religions, la France sera en division et en trouble...Les autres querelles se pacifient aisément, mais celle de la religion a longue suitte; et encore que les gens de guerre ne soyent pas fort religieux, ils prennent party et estans engagez ils suivent puis après'.(3) From this statement one may infer that the side which offered a more positive leadership for the aimless soldiers of the day was the one which emerged strongest.

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(1) Discours, ed.cit. p.441.

(2) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.475.

(3) ibid, p.828-9.

Monluc, in any case, adhered to the view that war was an end in itself as well as being one of the means by which a land might be governed. Since war was the nobility's vocation, it was necessary that the employment should be of guaranteed duration, and he grew impatient of a lull in the Piedmont campaign in 1550-51: 'Nous demeurames cinq ou six moys sans guerre. Il est malaisé que deux si grands princes (1) et si voisins puissent demeurer longuement sans venir aux armes.'(2) However, even such a war need not be taken too seriously-'..une guerre de prince à prince; c'est plustot un esbat qu'une inimitié'.(3)

Monluc was alone among the military writers in believing that warfare was a pleasant diversion for princes and a means of magnifying their reputation.(4) La Noue's tenth Discours refuted the ingrown belief that the nobleman's single function was to acquire prowess in war: there were other important functions which had been overlooked in the rush to arms.(5) As to the aggrandisement of princes, 'la vraye grandeur ne consiste pas à acquérir beaucoup de pais, ains plustot à posseder beaucoup de vertu'.(6) His moral and Christian reflection condemned the ambitious sovereign: Tavannes cursed him: 'Maudit est le prince qui fait la guerre pour sa particuliere gloire et utilite!'(7) Fourquevaux's contention that only the Holy War and the war of self-defence were justifiable excluded all possibility of the war of aggrandisement: indeed, no such action was going forward in the latter half of the century, and it may have seemed advisable not to repeat the Italian Wars which had been initiated by an

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(1) The two princes were Henri II and Charles V.

(2) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.192.

(3) ibid, p.382.

(4) ibid, p.210 and p.346: '..ils veulent tousjours gaigner.'

(5) Discours, ed.cit. p.230.

(6) ibid, p.415.

(7) Tavannes, op.cit. p.156 column B.

over-ambitious Charles VIII. On the other hand, some saw in the undertaking of a foreign campaign the means to end strife at home: there was talk of a new Crusade, and Coligny's designs for a campaign in Flanders, at the time when the court was tired of war and unwilling to be pestered into fresh expenses, were a contribution to the unpopularity which resulted in his assassination. In the event, the Duc d'Alençon undertook the campaign a few years later: it ended, as prophesied, in disaster. Coligny had, after all, sought only his own advancement by the prospect of military success in the Low Countries. Monluc saw it differently: 'Il faut penser ou de batre les autres ou s'entrebastre soy-mesmes' (1): by whatever means, there must always be a war to give men like himself employment and preserve the balance of nature: 'Ne craignez en un saut perilleux d'hazarder la vie du soldat. Il n'y a ordre: il faut que quelcun se sacrifie pour le public (autrement le monde seroit trop peuplé)',(2) The view of Marguerite de Valois was nearer the common opinion, as a supporter of the project for a campaign in Flanders, which she described as 'une invention pour empescher la guerre civile, tous les esprits remuans et desireux de nouveauté ayants moyen d'aller en Flandre passer leur fumée et se saouler de la guerre'.(3) However, like many, she wished to recreate a glorious past, and hoped to see an 'escole de noblesse' as had existed in Piedmont living again to produce loyal and honourable servants for king and country.(4)

Jean de Tavannes disagreed with the provision of a counter-irritant to soothe the land torn by religious and civil strife. He could not find words strong enough to condemn the evil counsellors who insisted that the

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(1) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.669.

(2) ibid, p.447.

(3) Mémoires, ed.cit. p.129.

(4) ibid, p.130.

duel should be permitted 'pour purger ce feu et ce sang bouillant de la noblesse, qui, ne pouvant agir contre lesdits estrangers, agit contre sa propre patrie'.(1) La Noue, with strong arguments based on classical sources, refuted the idea that foreign warfare was productive of internal harmony: he cited the example of Scipio who thought that Rome's destruction of Carthage would remove the one unifying factor in republican politics.(2) On practical grounds, France could not contemplate a foreign war: half the nobility had perished; the treasury was empty, the land depopulated, military discipline in tatters and justice corrupted. A country so desolated by war had no need for further strife; 'n'est-ce pas comme rebailler une saignée a un qui a quasi tout perdu son sang?'(3) He estimated that it would take five years to rejuvenate the land and gather resources for a foreign war, five years of a peace for which he heartily longed: 'Dieu veuille en donner une si bonne en France, tant deschirée de ruines, & destituee de bonnes moeurs, qu'elle puisse se renouveller en beauté, afin qu'elle ne soit plus la fable des nations ains un exemplaire de vertu'.(4) Monluc hated peace, as we have seen: 'Les jours de paix m'estoient années', (5) yet despite his desire always to be active, he insisted that he had not wished to prolong the war at home, and had adopted what he considered to be the most effective means to bring it to an end, namely, the most brutal. No lieutenant had put more Huguenots to the sword than he had himself; in his opinion, this was not the same as wanting to keep the war going.(6)

To speak of humanitarian principles in connection with the wars of the XVIth. century is largely an anachronism, for cruelty was occasionally

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(1) Tavannes, op.cit. p.156 column B.

(2) Discours, ed.cit. p.223. The idea is perpetuated in Orwell's 1984.

(3) Discours, ed.cit. p.225.

(4) ibid, p.787.

(5) See below, Chapter VI.

(6) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.737.

valued in leaders and was regarded as fair in war. Here again, it was Monluc who brandished the banner of brutality in the most blatant manner. Whilst defending the town of Siena in 1553, he had to expel what were termed the 'bouches inutiles' from the town: these were people who helped to eat the stocks of food but were not employed in the defence of the town or in essential services. Naturally, many were murdered by the besieging forces, others starved in the ravaged countryside. Monluc combined a callous observation on the episode with a hasty glance over his shoulder at the ethics of the deed: '..ce sont les loix de la guerre: il faut estre cruel bien souvent pour venir à bout de son ennemy. Dieu doit bien estre misericordieux en nostre endroict, qui faisons tant de maux'.(1) Callousness was indeed the occupational hazard of the soldier, and life was cheap.(2) Essentially, it was the age-old question of ends and means, and the basically cruel art of war could not be waged with methods that were not cruel also. Tavannes, so often at variance with Monluc, had to concede this point: 'c'est se perdre à la guerre d'observer les regles des monasteres; le seul but doit estre de se conserver et vaincre, toutes considerations de pitié ou d'amitié postposées'.(3) Fourquevaux believed that a general should be severe, and even cruel, in order to make the best of his soldiers; (4) however, clemency was as effective an instrument in skilled hands and might achieve more than force. Fourquevaux cited Scipio's mercy towards a virgin from among a people he had just vanquished, 'lequel acte luy valut plus que toute la force',(5) for he awoke the sympathy of those who had formerly hated him: 'on ne fut iamais reprins de

(1) ibid, p.318.

(2) ibid, p.822.

(3) Tavannes op.cit. p.75 column B.

(4) See Plattard, loc.cit. p.152.

(5) Instructions, ed.cit. p.94 recto.

faire honneste guerre, & d'estre humain aux vaincuz'.(1) Where violence and clemency do not succeed, example may do so, and Fourquevaux indicated that to endeavour to convert Isalm by fire and sword was a self-defeating exercise, 'car ce n'est pas a coups d'espée que les infidelles se convertissent, & qu'ils se Chrestiennent: ains l'example & le parler y pevent plus que la force'.(2) Tavannes later applied the same argument to the religious war at home, implying that force in questions of conscience was ineffective and impious: 'l'offence est à Dieu, de vouloir par les armes, combats de feux, et cruautez, reconduire les heretiques en la vraye creance'.(3) This procedure might be effective in England, 'où ils sont accoustumez à perdre leur teste',(4) but the bloodletting had only made the situation deteriorate in France. La Noue also used a medical metaphor to make the point...'de conduire les instrumens de rigueur avecques passions malignes, c'est gaster & renverser tout....enfin on a trouvé que ces remedes ont esté beaucoup pires que la maladie'.(5) Worse still, destruction wrought in deference to a principle tended to demoralize the combatants and persuade them that their moral grounds were insufficient to justify recourse to violence. This was certainly true of the Religious Wars, and La Noue pointed out that a religious war had to be fought with due regard for the principles which were theoretically at stake.(6)

Monluc was almost the only person who persisted in the belief that violence would eventually save France: he preached, in fact, a war of

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(1) ibid, p.2 verso.

(2) ibid.

(3) Tavannes op.cit. p.28 column B.

(4) ibid, p.253, column B.

(5) Discours, ed.cit. p.103.

(6) See Discours XIX.

extermination which would massacre the ringleaders and terrify the flock into the necessary abjuration. The Huguenots had undermined the King's authority and justice, and must be punished when the whole truth should come to be known: may God inform the King, therefore, and prompt him to 'coupper tant de testes qu'il reglera son royaume et chassera toute ceste vermine'.(1) Yet it must be stated in Monluc's defence that he died before the very worst effects of the Civil War had manifested themselves; furthermore, he would have preferred not to be at home fighting his countrymen: lastly, he often expressed regret at the atrocities committed in the name of religion, though he could retaliate in like manner. The Civil Wars ravaged the countryside (2) and ruined the nobility;(3) the Italian Wars had corrupted the French who had come into contact with the cankered men of Italy (4), whilst even Monluc deplored the loss of good fighting-men who had died in vain in a war culminating in a peace so dishonourable as that of Cateau-Cambresis: '...ce n'a esté que pour y servir de tumbeau à un monde de braves et vaillans François...ce qui a cousté la vie à deux cens mil personnes, et la ruyne d'un million de familles, et enfin l'un ny l'autre n'en ont rapporté qu'un repantir d'estre cause de tant de misères'.(5) Ultimately, therefore, it was generally felt by men of the military profession that war could be bad; Monluc, for all his brutality, realised that he was being cruel, though his attitude was not so humane. Writing earlier than the rest, he stood apart in thinking that by the old-fashioned method of decimating his adversary he could set an example which would be followed by the rest, and turn the clock back to the days when warfare brought glory to the

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(1) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.467.

(2) Tavannes op.cit. p.29 column A.

(3) Discours, ed.cit. p.190.

(4) ibid, pp.21-4.

(5) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.30. 'l'un' and 'l'autre' are François Ier and Charles V.

combatants, not misery. He never realised that there was the possibility of tolerance, which later writers like Tavannes and La Noue, with the advantage of hindsight, began to realise was the only answer: it was a denial of the efficacy of war. Monluc, who had gained everything he had, wealth, position, reputation, from his warlike exploits, could never have admitted that the only methods he knew were no longer of any use. In the events that La Noue and others had witnessed there was proof: '...la pluspart des hommes deviennent bestes de proye, les païs se despeuplent, les richesses se consument, les grands se maudissent, & Dieu se courrouce'.(1)

(1) Discours, ed.cit. p.400

XII

The Development of Warfare

'Nul art n'a souffert tant de changements que le militaire'.(1) Tavannes was reviewing a century during which the conduct of warfare had altered radically and assumed a form in which it was to remain until 1918. No longer were small companies of mounted knights expected to charge headlong at the enemy; the effectiveness of foot-soldiers armed with the pike had toppled the 'gendarmes' from their position of supremacy, whilst the arquebus-bullet had limited their ability to approach the foe sufficiently closely to be effective. Pitched battles had indeed become rare, whilst the complex and expensive arts of fortification and siegecraft now counted for more in the outcome of hostilities. Most writers at the end of the century were too young to remember the glorious period at the opening of the Italian Wars when hand-to-hand fighting was the rule; nevertheless, they affected disgust at the abandonment of the primeval style of combat between man and man, which demanded great courage, skill in handling weapons, and much grit. For these reasons, they thought that fighting at close quarters was more honourable than fighting at a distance, which was made possible by the improvement in firearms and artillery. A war at the end of the XVIth. century was a static affair, a series of procedures by which each side would seek to wear down the other. The countryside would be laid waste as one passed in order to destroy provisions which might be used by the enemy. As fast as the besieged threw up fortifications - often designed and executed by Italian architects and engineers - one employed experts in the technique of mining to remove the foundations from

(1) Tavannes: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.217 column A. For a general view of the composition of the French Army during the XVIth. century, see R.Doucet: Les institutions de la France au XVIe siècle, Paris, 1948; Part III, Chapters vi, vii, and viii.

below whilst directing one's artillery against the ramparts above. For the skills which were so necessary to the new warfare, one had to employ a host of 'experts' and their assistants, schooled in Italian and Spanish practices. They dragged their cumbersome machinery overland between theatres of war, and though there was surprisingly little resentment of these mechanicals, soldiers often complained of the slowness with which arrangements were made before each siege and engagement. A considerable literature grew up on each specialised topic of ballistics, logistics, and strategy, which did not simplify matters: La Noue's remark that 'L'art militaire est aussi mieux entendu qu'il n'estoit il y a cent cinquante & cent ans' (1) may be taken to mean either that more was known about warfare than had ever been, or that there was simply more to know.

The complexity of this style of warfare had taken much of the excitement out of the attacking role; the advantage shifted now to the defensive. For all his professed love of hand-to-hand fighting, and despite all the close scrapes into which he led his men with head held high, Monluc's finest hour came in his defence of a beleaguered Siena; he looked with contempt upon the commander who had given up a stronghold without putting up much of a fight. 'Vous qui vous enfermez dans les places, advisez à ne prendre si tost l'effroy....pensez que vostre ennemy a plus de peur à vous attaquer que vous n'avez à vous deffendre'.(2) What livened up siege-warfare and prevented absolute stalemate was the spread of artillery to effect mortality at a distance greater than arm's length. La Noue recorded both the strategic development and its effect most succinctly: 'Anciennement les principales actions de guerre se desmesloient en pleine campagne. A ceste heure elles consistent à surprendre, assaillir, & defendre places; à quoy

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(1) Discours, ed.cit. p.457.

(2) Commentaires, ed.cit. pp.366-7.

l'harquebuserie & les piques sont non seulement utiles, ains necessaires'.(1)

Controversy surrounded the recourse to firearms, but one point upon which all were agreed was their effectiveness. Fourquevaux, in many ways the disciple of Machiavelli, followed the Florentine in underestimating the contribution to warfare of which artillery was capable, for in the imaginary battle (itself an idea culled from Machiavelli) the artillery is allowed to make one preliminary salvo, but does not speak again. Its function was intended to be demoralising rather than destructive.(2)

'Et les choses estãt en ces termes, il ne reste, & puis que les deux Ostz se sont entre veuz, que de bouter le feu aux pieces, & les descharger. Vous povez donce (sic) veoir que les Cannoniers d'un costé & d'autre ne dormẽt pas.(3) Et si povez oyr cõmẽt l'Artillerie tire. Prenõs biẽ garde au meutre qu'elle fera. Avez vous veu le peu de dõmage que la nostre a faict de la premiere vollée aux ennemis?'(4) However, in plagiarising Machiavelli, Fourquevaux chose an example that was already outdated; artillery stopped the French in their tracks at Bicocca in 1522 and was no less murderous at Pavia three years later.

Monluc, with seven arquebus-wounds in his body, had no reason to doubt the efficacy of this weapon; still he preferred the cut and thrust of former times: 'En toutes les deux troupes...il n'y avoit une seulle arquebuze, sinon picques, hallebardes, espées à deux mains, espées et rondelles, toutes armes pour nous joindre incontinent collet à collet. Ce sont les plus furieuses armes; car, s'amuser à ces escopeteries, c'est temps perdu'.(5) Notably, Monluc never pointed out his own use of the arquebus

(1) Discours, ed. cit. pp.299-300

(2) Fourquevaux, loc.cit.p.35 recto.

(3) The implication seems to be that it would hardly have mattered if they had indeed been asleep.

(4) The style throughout the imaginary battle is interesting: it is couched as one half of a dialogue.

(5) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.308.

though there are several instances in the Commentaires of his preference for the pike.(1) Tavannes attributed a lack of military talent to the use of the hand-gun, a reasonable idea expressed quaintly: 'Auparavant que les arquebuses et canons fussent inventez, il estoit plus de capitaines que maintenant parce qu'ils duroient plus longtemps (...); plusieurs sont tuez d'arquebusades et canonnades avant qu'ils ayent l'experience necessaire'.(2) So much was not surprising if we are to believe Brantôme's elder brother - 'Je dis que l'artillerie, ou elle donne à plomb, est si furieuse, que nul ne la peut longuement souffrir...'(3)

Neither Jean de Tavannes nor André de Bourdeille raised moral objections to the use of firearms, but they were unrepresentative in this respect. Moral exception to missiles and explosives was as ancient as the use of Greek Fire, of which the origins and composition are shrouded in mystery; Petrarch, in De Remediis utriusque Fortunae, 1366, prompted Reason to mention 'pellets of brass which are throwne foorth with terrible noyse and fire...a devlysh device, which, as some suppose, was invented by Archimedes at what time Marcello besieged Syracuse.'(4) The adjective 'devilish' is the one most often applied to the innovation: Shakespeare may have placed the XVIth. century in a XVth. century context with the remark, in Henry V, Act III, but the judgement is the same:

'... and the nimble gunner
With linstock now the devilish cannon touches,
And down goes all before them'.

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(1) For example, ibid, p.245: 'j'ay tousjours aimé à jouer de ce baston.'

(2) Tavannes, op.cit. p.336 column A.

(3) Maximes et Advis du Maniement de la Guerre by André de Bourdeille, in Discours of Brantôme, ed. Bastien, 1787. Vol.I pp.365-411, p.395.

(4) This work was translated as Phisicke against Fortune by T. Twynne, London, 1579.

Pierino Belli, while not using the epithet 'devilish', nevertheless anathematized 'the generation of our forefathers, rivalling God with his lightning, invented this means whereby even at a single stroke men are sent to perdition by the hundreds'.(1)

In France, writers agreed wholeheartedly: La Taille, freely adapting from his reading of Machiavelli, fulminated against firearms in Le Prince Necessaire:

'O faulse invention de nos armes a feu
Qui fais que la prouesse en France n'a plus lieu,
Qui des Grecs & Rommains mets la vertu par terre,
Qui abolis tout l'art et l'honneur de la guerre,
Et, sans qu'on vienne aux mains, fais qu'un Achille preux
Est la proye aujourd'hui d'un Thersit malheureux!(2)
Pleust a Dieu qu'un Roland t'eust ores engloutie
Aux Enfers dont tu es par un moyne (3) sortie! (4)

This denunciation contains, in a nutshell as it were, the main objections to firearms expounded by writers of the XVIth. century: the old military skills, its honour and prowess, have been removed from warfare (lines 2 and 3); by means of firearms the most dishonourable person can fell a mighty hero (lines 5 and 6); and firearms are products of hell (line 8). Monluc endorsed La Taille's opinions in a similar outburst: 'Que pleust à Dieu que ce malheureux instrument (5) n'eust jamais esté inventé! je n'en porterois les marques, lesquelles encores aujourd'huy me rendent languissant, et tant de braves et vaillans hommes ne fussent morts (6) de la main le plus souvent

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(1) Belli, op.cit. translated by H.C. Nutting, Oxford, 1936; Chapter 3,p.vii.

(2) Thersites was a cowardly and insolent figure in Homer's Iliad.

(3) This refers to Roger Bacon, to whom the discovery of gunpowder is attributed.

(4) La Taille: Le Prince Necessaire, CXXVIII, Jean Plattard, loc.cit. p.393, traces the origin of this to Machiavelli's second discourse.

(5) i.e. the arquebus.

(6) cf. ll.5 and 6 above.

des plus poltrons et plus lasches, qui n'ozeroient regarder au visage celuy que de loing (1) ils renversent de leurs malheureuses balles par terre. Mais ce sont artifices du diable pour nous faire entre-tuer'.(2)

Monluc used the term 'harquebuse' whenever he wished to refer to hand-held firearms, but it is doubtful whether he meant an arquebus in the strict sense: this was little more than a miniature cannon, which was fired by the application of a smouldering piece of linstock to the touch-hole. Its range was poor, because the balls were not of equal size and, since they did not fit snugly in the barrels, much of the powder's thrust was lost. Aiming was also haphazard since the barrels were not rifled. Monluc's wound may well have been inflicted, not by an arquebus, but by a musket with some kind of mechanical flintlock by means of which a spark struck from a flint would ignite the powder in the flashpan by the touch-hole when the trigger was pulled.(3) A disadvantage of both types was their unwieldliness: before they could be fired they had to be placed on forked stands, primed with powder, bullet and packing, and the ~~linstock~~ match or flint~~stock~~ lock applied. Pistols appeared during the 1540's in France and were rapidly adopted, though it was not until the development of the Miquelet and allied types at the end of the century that they became thoroughly reliable. The attempted assassination of Coligny shortly before St. Bartholomew's Day 1572 demonstrated that, even when fired from close quarters, the shot might go astray; far from killing Coligny, the ball took two fingers off his hand, In view of this, it was an unlucky soldier who fell victim to a gunshot - in all probability the bullet

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(1) cf. l.5 'sans qu'on vienne aux mains', above.

(2) Commentaires, ed.cit. pp.34-5. Also p.256: 'Voyez quel malheur qu'un grand capitaine meure de la main d'un vilain avec son baston à feu! ' - cf. ll. 5 and 6 above.

(3) Some worked by clockwork and some used linstock instead of flint.

had not been meant for him. In practice at battles and sieges, the harquebusiers (as they were invariably called) would fire salvoes without aiming, rather as their predecessors the archers had done, in the hope of putting up a barrage of fire to deter the enemy. It was this, more than anything, that prompted Machiavelli to underestimate the fire-power being developed in his day; even Monluc could, when wishing to urge on his men, denigrate its effectiveness.(1)

La Noue referred, with more exactitude, to the pistols as 'une lignée que les harquebuses ont enfantée, &, pour en dire ce qui en est, tous ces instrumens-là sont diaboliques, inventez en quelque meschante boutique pour dépeupler les royaumes & republiques de vivans et remplir les sepulchres de morts.' Reconciling himself to the inevitable, he added: 'Neantmoins la malice humaine les a rendus si necessaires, qu'on ne s'en sçauroit passer.'(2)

Devilish or not, XVIth. century writers did not scruple to write about firearms: André de Bourdeille (3) gave very copious details about artillery and Tavannes commented on the practice of shooting 'en colimaçon'(4), on the pistols used by the landsknechts from the time of Charles V, and on his own invention of a form of chain-shot (5); gleefully, he commented that new discoveries were made every day and that 'Les petars, les saucisses (6)

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(1) '(le) canon qui faict plus de peur que de mal': Commentaires, ed.cit. p.297.

(2) Discours, ed.cit. p.316.

(3) In his Advis du Maniement ..; see p.181, note 2.

(4) This was sometimes called the 'caracole': the musketeers formed a line and rapidly circled in the face of the enemy, discharging their weapons when to the fore, and priming them whilst in the second rank. The aim was to maintain constant fire.

(5) 'la balle fait voler les pierres, qui tuent beaucoup de gens': op.cit.pp.286 and 288.

(6) These were types of explosive weapons : the petard, a short mortar; the 'saucisse' a leather-covered explosive used to blow down walls or doors.

nouvellement inventées monstrent que tous arts se peuvent accroistre.'(1) Earlier writers had followed Bacon's example in demonstrating great reluctance to impart dangerous knowledge, whilst Bueil, faced with the use of Greek Fire, declined to speak of such unChristian instruments: 'Mais comme telle chose à faire et enseigner, pour les maux qui s'en pourroyent ensuir, sont deffendues et excommuniées, n'est bon de mettre en livres ne plus plainement en reciter, pour ce que à chrestien n'est loisible de user de telles inhumanitez qui meismement sont contre tout droit de guerre.'(2)

For some soldiers, the introduction of firearms heralded a new era of dishonourable and cowardly fighting: the fact that the killer did not need to look his victim in the face counted for much and made the harquebusier's job an attractive one to many. Fourquevaux commented that 'au temps present chacun veult estre harquebusier; je ne sçay si c'est pour lever plus de gaiges, ou pour estre moins chargé, ou pour combattre de loing (3)'. La Noue, whilst declaring that the arquebus was a good weapon for the training of young recruits (4), expressed a desire 'que l'ordre militaire fust restably, & qu'elle reprist la picque avec laquelle on combat de pres & a descouvert, & laissast à la jeunesse & aux pauvres soldats le maniement de l'harquebuse, parce qu'ordinairement avec icelle les combats se font de loin & a couvert, estant l'un beaucoup plus honorable que l'autre.'(5) Monluc agreed that it was natural for newcomers to take the line of least resistance and adopt any function which promised a degree of safety: 'il faut se joindre (6), ce que le soldat ne veut faire tant qu'il y a des armes à feu, car il veut tousjours porter de loing'(7)

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(1) ibid, p.288 column A. Jean also invented a 12-hour time bomb.

(2) Le Jouvencel, ed.cit. Vol.II pp.57-8.

(3) Fourquevaux, loc.cit. p.11 verso.

(4) Discours, ed.cit. p.309.

(5) ibid, p.366.

(6) i.e., fight at close quarters.

(7) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.308.

The devilish and dishonourable guns were feared also for the havoc they wrought on human flesh: 'It is not difficult to understand why bullets were vested in such a miasma of hellishness. Arrows could often be removed from flesh wounds without too much difficulty; the wound was usually a fairly neatly-sliced hole which could then be washed out. The mortality rate from infection was of course enormous, but with luck one might have a sporting chance to survive a flesh wound inflicted by blade or arrow. Furthermore, arrows striking long bones generally broke them in clean fractures, and not infrequently were deflected altogether. Bullets, however, unholy pills of hell, were terrifying in their sulphurous stench and thunder even when they missed and instead went overhead so that one could hear the accompanying demon scream and whistle to chill the blood.(1) But when they hit, they did not cut or drill flesh: they mashed; they did not glance off bones or break them cleanly: they shattered them beyond hope of repair. Vermin from garments and hair, layers of filth from the very infrequently washed skin and other purulent intrusions were ground into the flesh by the bullet's path and sealed into the wound. Probing for a bullet introduced more fetid and infectious matter ... The mortality rate from even the simplest bullet-inflicted flesh wounds was such that a shot through the buttocks ... must have been very nearly as deadly as a shot in a vital organ.'(2)

This long quotation throws an interesting light on the sordid side of XVIth. century warfare which we glimpse also in Monluc's account of his own wounding during an assault on Rabastens in 1570: 'Tout à coup je fuz tout sang, car je le jettois par la bouche, par le nez, et par les yeux.' Yet he urged his men on, 'couvrant cependant le sang le mieux que je pouvois..',

(1) Demons were said to sit astride the bullets until rifling, which made them spin at high speed, put a stop to their evils.

(2) Robert Held: The Age of Firearms, Cassell, 1959 : p.35.

and eventually yielded to examination by the medical men: 'un chirurgien du regiment .. qui me pença et m'arracha les os des deux joues avec les doigts, si grands estoyent les trous, et me coupa force chair du visage, qui estoit tout froissé.'(1) From this wound, Monluc never really recovered; for the remaining seven years of his life he wore a mask to conceal his lack of a nose, and was indeed lucky to survive for so long. Tavannes blamed the incompetence of the doctors as much as the weapons themselves: 'Peu guerrissoient au commencement des arquebusades; de mon temps ils faisoient de grandes incisions, dilatoient la playe pour donner voie à la postume avant qu'elle apparust; mal sur mal pire que les coups, le rasoir amy estoit plus dangereux que la balle ennemie.'(2) By increasing the complexity of surgery required, the bullet increased the risk of mortal infection which was in any case almost total.(3)

Tavannes, by the relish with which he referred to his own murderous inventions, demonstrated that he had no real objection to the proliferation of firearms; Bouillon's studied coolness in this respect even resembled pride: '..accompagnay Monsieur à la tranchée, ou j'ouys, pour la premiere fois, les canonades et coups d'arquebuse, desquels il y eut des hommes blessés et tués: je n'en eus aucun estonnement.'(4) Similarly, André de Bourdeille adopted no moral standpoint in his purely practical work, stating that it was desirable to have quantities of artillery which he admitted were not simple to transport, and needed expert knowledge to be rendered

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(1) Commentaires, ed.cit. pp.782-3.

(2) Tavannes, op.cit. pp.102-3.

(3) There were, however, significant advances in surgery at this period to keep pace with developments, for instance: Ambroise Pare: La methode de traicter les playes faictes par Hacquebutes ..., 1545.

(4) Bouillon: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.33.

effective.(1) But for soldiers with moral fibre such as La Noue, the acceptance of the inevitable was difficult: La Noue's attitude in the Discours was equivocal. On the one hand he condemned firearms as the weapons of the weak and cowardly (2): on the other hand they were to be recommended in the training of raw recruits (3), whilst he maintained that they were only of use in the hands of experienced and courageous warriors.(4) La Noue's English disciple, Sir Roger Williams, did not have such scruples about 'Hergulutiers' whom he wished to prove 'more serviceable than speare-men, termed by us, light horsemen.'(5) 'True it is,' he stated, 'brave men will show themselves valiant with anie kinde of weapons, all manner of waies.'(6) At the time of his writing, the English still nominally relied on the longbow, the weapon used by all the yeomanry: had the Armada landed in 1588 there would indeed have been an interesting confrontation of ancient and modern. English soldiers like Williams, Smithe and Barwicke had served in the Low Countries and having seen European practices were anxious to drag Albion into the XVIth. century, if not into the XVIIth. In the event, the obsolete longbow was allowed to rest on its laurels after legislation introducing the use of firearms in 1595. Strangely, Monluc and La Noue, two very different scions of a chivalrous outlook, bowed to the inevitable: Monluc groaned for seven years with his arquebus-wound before dying of it; La Noue languished for a fortnight after receiving a bullet in the siege of Lamballe and thus fell victim himself of what he termed a necessary innovation.

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(1) André de Bourdeille, loc.cit. pp.381, and 395-6.

(2) Discours, ed.cit. p.366.

(3) ibid, p.309.

(4) ibid, pp.362 and 361.

(5) A Briefe Discourse of Warre, London 1590; p.33.

(6) ibid, p.36.

XIII

The Soldier's View of History and Memoirs

During the period under review, the art of history was in a state of development. There still lingered the impression that ancient history sufficed for the needs of all and that the deeds of modern men were not worth recording. However, greater familiarity with ancient history spread the notion that history was not dead but continuous: Gaguin, Gilles and Lemaire de Belges produced their imitations of the Classical sources,(1) and an indigenous stream of historical study sprang up. It was not immediately clear, however, what was the historian's task. Ideally, the historian must stand outside events and report factually without bias or comment. Yet, to many, history was indistinguishable from memoirs, which, of their very nature, must be biased.

Since all the military literature of the XVIth. century was also of a historical nature, the conflict between history and memoirs impinges very closely upon this study. Mostly, writers in this field noted the clash but expressed different opinions upon it. Those who wrote memoirs, like Monluc and Tavannes, had difficulty convincing themselves that memoirs were a legitimate form in any case; at all events, they considered history to be beyond their capabilities, though they were not slow to heap criticism upon historians when they appeared to have broken the rules.

What were these rules? Military writers were as free with their advice to would-be writers as they were to prospective soldiers, and we find in their works, taken as a whole, a stringent delineation of the historian's duty. That the stuff of history is truth is generally implicit, though some writers took the trouble to re-iterate the general impression. D'Aubigné, in the interests of impartiality, entered upon his Histoire Universelle in the belief that truth is not coloured. Frankness he

(1) Robert Gaguin: Les Croniques de France, Paris, 1515; Nicolas Gilles: Annales, Paris, 1525; Lemaire de Belges: Illustrations de Gaule et singularitez de Troye, Paris, 1512.

admired, true enough, but presumably by his exclusion of his own experiences in the Histoire we are not meant to assume that the personal Sa Vie à ses enfants is a fabrication. Nevertheless, the whole truth could not be revealed to the general public. Sully, on the other hand, did not subscribe to the general view that personal records were incapable of truth,(1) nor did Monluc.(2) In the latter case we know the truth was distorted to produce an impression favourable to the author, and omission was made of those facts which would tend to destroy that impression.

If memoirs were regarded as unacceptable because biased, they were also considered as lacking in modesty. The Du Bellays wrote of themselves in the third person, whilst the later Tavannes did likewise in what purported to be a tract defending himself against the accusation of carelessness with artillery in the royal presence.(3) The modesty of this oblique approach was somewhat compromised by fulsome eulogies of Tavannes himself, still in the third person.(4) D'Aubigné, whilst remaining impersonal in the Histoire, introduced himself discreetly as a 'valet' or an 'écuyer': this, according to Plattard (5), qualifies him as a 'mémorialiste militaire', but it can hardly be said that D'Aubigné was quite the 'mémorialiste' that Monluc was.

(1) '.. a strict regard to truth is my only inducement for relating whatever may appear to my advantage, either here or in the succeeding parts of these Memoirs.' - Memoirs of Sully, translated by Lennox, London 1856.

(2) 'Et pour ce qu'il y en a aujourd'huy qui m'aiment et autres qui me hayssent je veux approcher de la vérité..' Commentaires, ed.cit. p.199.

(3) Mémoires de Jacques de Saulx, Comte de Tavannes, ed. C. Moreau, Paris, 1858: p.140.

(4) ibid, p.104, p.161, p.219.

(5) Plattard, op.cit., p.133.

Generally speaking, the soldier's objection was indicative, not of an eclectic attitude to literature, but of an almost total aversion. Apart from a rooted prejudice against sedentary and academic learning, the military nobility may have acquired their dislike of history from the feeling that it was remote from them, and did not grant them their due mention. Monluc was stung to the quick to discover that Du Bellay had mentioned him only once (1) during the account of the Italian Wars; Paradin did him the same disservice, and provoked a rueful rejoinder: '..je veux approcher de la vérité...que les autres qui m'aiment prennent plaisir à lire ce que j'ay fait et se souvenir de moy; car je voy bien que les historiens en parlent maigrement'.(2)

Though it seems clear today that it was too much to expect historians to mention all the deeds of great and small, the criticism that one's own actions had been ignored was very common. In his Histoire de Bayart, the Serviteur indulged in some head-shaking over their neglect: 'Je ne sçay comment les cronicqueurs et historiens n'ont autrement parlé de ceste belle bataille de la Bastide, mais cent ans devant n'en avoit point esté de mieulx combatue ne a plus grant hazart'.(3) The view that history was concerned only with the recording of the unusual and prodigious was also current. The Serviteur, in his attitude to La Bastide, quoted above, appeared to take it for granted that this event, surrounded by superlatives, was of the order which qualified for inclusion. Similarly, the episode in which Bayart graciously denied himself the pleasure of deflowering a maiden (4): '... et je croy que vous n'avez gueres leu en cronicque ny hystoire d'une plus grande honnesteté'.

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(1) Du Bellay Mémoires, ed.cit. Vol.II, p.216.

(2) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.199.

(3) Histoire de Bayart, ed.cit. p.153.

(4) ibid, p.219.

The opinion of Monluc on the topic probably links with his pervasive feeling of inferiority, for he believed that history dealt only with persons of rank: 'Je croy que les historiens, qui n'escrivent que des princes et des grands parlent assés et passent soubs silence ceux qui ne sont pas d'une si grande taille'.(1) For Monluc, certainly, the dividing-line between history and memoirs was clear, for memoirs were the kind of literature in which he could figure, and he did not date to call himself a historian: '...je retourne à moy; car, comme j'ay tousjours protesté, je ne veux faire l'hystorien'.(2) In declining to approach past events with the thoroughness and exhaustiveness which was demanded of a historian, Monluc echoed the avowals of many writers to whom the task of recalling every motive and nuance seemed daunting. 'Si je voulois escrire toutes les escarmouches ou je me suis trouvé il me fauldroit double papier pour l'escrire'.(3) Bueil had said the same before him: 'Et, pour ce que trop longue chose seroit de reciter et raccompter les beaulx faiz de ce bon roy, je delesse le surplus à ceulx qui font les Croniques de France'.(4) Guillaume du Bellay, however, was much more conscientious and expected the writer to attempt clarification of all that he had to say: '...il ne suffist dire (quand on voudra escrire histoire) cecy fut dit, cela fut fait, sans remonstrer comment, par qui, par quel moyen, à quel titre, et à quelle fin...'(5) In this respect, the later Tavannes was a bad offender, for he equated history and memoirs on the grounds that each needed to be undertaken with sincerity and impartiality. Nevertheless, his memoirs for the years 1650 to 1653 are notably disordered, full of gaps, and lacking in reference to contemporary developments.

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(1) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.444.

(2) ibid, p.60.

(3) ibid, p.179.

(4) Le Jouvencel, ed.cit. Vol. I, p.31.

(5) Prologue des Ogdoades, ed.cit. p.18.

Of much more concern to the soldier's pragmatic mind was the function that history and memoirs were to fulfil. Nearly all contended that knowledge of the past served as guidance for the future. La Noue thought of history as 'la lumière des temps & les registres des choses passees'.(1), while for Guillaume du Bellay, experience counted for much in the didactic purpose of history: 'Hommes d'Etat et capitaines doivent etre hommes d'experience. Or qu'est l'histoire, sinon le repertoire de l'expérience passée? ''A vray dire, je ne voy autre difference entre l'histoire bien descrite et l'homme ancien qui a moult veu, considéré et retenu, sinon que l'un est hystoire parlante et vive, mais mortelle, l'autre est hystoire morte et mute, mais à perpétuité ressuscitable et apte à recouvrer la parole par le moyen d'un lecteur studieux et diligent" '.(2) This didactic purpose was everywhere stressed by Monluc; D'Aubigné's reference to the Histoire as one of the 'livres qui enseignent' (3) bore out the same impression whilst admitting that text-books could become tiresome. This was not so in the case of La Noue, whose complex plan for a Crusade was the fruit of a collation from various history-books, formulated by him 'après avoir leu & releu les histoires, qui traittent des guerres qui se sont faictes contr'eux (the Turks)...'(4) Experience need not be drafted as memoirs to achieve this aim, however; La Noue, as we have seen, did not write directly of himself but synthesized his experiences into moralistic discourses. Nevertheless, Sir Roger Williams declared that 'the little experience I got was from him, and from such others as himselfe'.(5)

The most serious reproach that military writers could therefore direct at the historians was that they did not know at first hand the details of

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(1) Discours, ed.cit. p.18.

(2) Prologue des Ogdoades, quoted in Bourrilly, op.cit. p.390.

(3) Tragiques, 'Aux Lecteurs'.

(4) Discours, ed.cit. p.438.

(5) A Briefe Discourse of Warre , p.37.

their topic. Their work was regarded as unreliable on technical matters. 'On ne doit pas tousjours prendre pour argent contant tout ce qui est escrit aux histoires, pource que souvent les causes, qui ont produit des effects, sont ignorées ou falsifiées'.(1) Sometimes one finds the soldier's power of invective called into play, as in Monluc's sneering mention of historians 'qui parlent de tout le monde, et souvent mal à propos, comme gens malentendus qu'ils sont au faict des armes'.(2) That the impression was a fairly wide one is attested by Jean de Tavannes' aside: 'Commandant en Normandie, voulant qualifier un menteur, je le nommois historien: adage qui a depuis eu cours par la France'.(3) He himself pointed out that the historian cannot hope to be as good as the experienced eye-witness in the reporting of warfare, a highly technical pursuit: 'La narration d'un vaillant experimenté est differente des contes de celuy qui n'a jamais eu les mains ensanglantées de ses fiers ennemis sur les plaines armées'.(4) Plattard points out that D'Aubigné's objection to historians of the Religious Wars was 'de n'avoir rien vu en soldat';(5) whilst throughout the Commentaires, Monluc used the phrase 'faire un pas de clerc' to denote the commission of a blunder. Such disdain for the short-comings of non-professional military commentators was not limited to France: Humfrey Barwick impeached Machiavelli himself, as many had done, a mere courtier who presumed to pontificate upon the military profession: 'Notwithstanding that Nicholas Machiavel have set foorth his whole knowledge, as touching fortification, and other sundry policies, the which if he had been a soldier he would never have done. As in his booke called the Art of war is to be seene. It is a sport to heare how he doth by himselfe, fight a battell in words, and saith, that if he had

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(1) Discours, ed.cit. p.111.

(2) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.699.

(3) Tavannes: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.198, column B.

(4) ibid, p.20 column A.

(5) Plattard, loc.cit. p.115.

been a soldier in his youth, he would either have woon the field with valor, or at the least have lost it without shame. Who did let him to become a soldier in his youth?'(1)

Military writers could be unreasonably demanding of historians both in requiring breadth of applicability and in expecting them to be fully conversant with technical matters. Many of them sought to outdo the historians at their task but only within a restricted field, and acknowledged to a certain extent the fact that their work would have to be taken in conjunction with more general accounts. Though, for instance, one has an excellent impression of army life from Monluc, his Commentaires are by no means a full portrait of France and Northern Italy in the middle of the XVIth. century. On the other hand, events are more generally handled in the works of the Du Bellays, which, though styled 'memoirs', are in fact pure history. The elementary distinction, then, between history and memoirs is that between the broad and narrow, even the specialised view of events.

Military writers may have realised this much, but were uncertain of the ultimate merits of both. The Du Bellays, allowing for the many transformations of their work, set out to write history based on their collected notes and experience, but the result was not memoirs. The Serviteur, in portraying Bayard, endeavoured to combine both genres, but finding them mutually unsuitable, alternated his glimpses of the 'chevalier' with historical digressions that occasionally wandered far from Bayard. Bueil side-stepped the issue by presenting his memoirs as a fictional history; D'Aubigné dismissed the 'enfileures de memoires, receus de tous venants, dictez par leurs interests'(2) as invalid (though he did not deny their interest). Henri IV's minister, Sully, like Monluc, only saw fit to record

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(1) op.cit. p.30 verso.

(2) Histoire, ed.cit. pp.2-3.

what he had seen: 'Je n'entreprendrai rien ici contre les droits des historiens. Je leur laisse à particulariser toute cette action, pour me renfermer dans ce que j'ai vu moi-même'.(1) He thought it was the historian's right, therefore, to assemble evidence at second hand; Sully's work, like D'Aubigné's, became a primary historical source, 'duquel celui qui lit ammasse la judicieuse conclusion'.(2) On the other hand, ex-queen Marguerite de Valois thought history a more legitimate genre than memoirs, for history is, generally, more truthful: 'Je traceray mes memoires, a qui je ne donneray plus glorieux nom, bien qu'ils meritassent celuy d'histoire, pour la vérité qui y est contenue nuement et sans ornement aucun...'(3) Yet implicit in her remark is great praise for the military writers of the preceding thirty years, for she went on to say of her own memoirs: 'C'est une histoire, certes, digne d'estre escrite par cavalier d'honneur, vrai Françoys, nay d'illustre maison, nourry des roys mes père et frères, parent et familier amy des plus galantes et honnestes femmes de nostre temps.'(4) This is to say that military memoirs enjoyed a high reputation, and also that she wished to attain the glory of being regarded as a military writer. Montaigne, for his part, was content only to copy military writers in avoiding prolixity in his style when he expressed the wish that it should be 'plustot soldatesque'.(5)

That military literature boasted a certain style which could be imitated is not in doubt, for at the end of the century such an imitation appeared, so closely modelled on other military biographies, in fact, that its true nature was not finally understood until the end of the XIXth. century.(6)

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(1) Mémoires, ed. Ledoux, Paris, 1822, p.285.

(2) Histoire, ed.cit. p.10.

(3) Mémoires, ed.cit. p.3.

(4) ibid, pp.3-4.

(5) Essais, I, 26.

(6) Abbé Marchand: Le Maréchal François de Scépeaux de Vieilleville et ses Mémoires, 1893.

This imitation, the memoirs of Vieilleville, were thought to have been written by the dead maréchal's secretary, Vincent Carloix, and were not published until 1757. Closer examination, however, proved that the most widely accepted facts were contradicted almost on every page, and the portrait drawn of the marechal was altogether too perfect. Plagiarisms of Du Bellay and of La Popeliniere also occurred in which Vieilleville's name was substituted for that of the officer in command. L'Abbé Marchand's conclusion is that the memoirs, which were probably written at the Vieilleville seat at Durtal, are the work of a chaplain who was instructed to collate information about Vieilleville for the benefit of his grandchildren. The fact that the work betrays a major ignorance of military affairs lends support to this hypothesis.(1)

Notwithstanding its gross inaccuracies, Vieilleville's memoirs must rank highly as a fraud for they tricked all the diligent editors of the numerous XIXth. century collections of memoirs.(2) Carloix, the assumed author, was favourably compared with the 'Loyal Serviteur';(3) he was excused his failure to publish them, 'pendant les troubles qui agitèrent le règne de Henri III'(4) and his style was highly praised. Despite the failings of the work in its military aspect, one of the strongest inducements to credibility in the work is the insistence upon its merits in comparison with other works of history: the alleged avoidance of topics dealt with by other historians; the rueful recollection that Vieilleville's deeds have practically been ignored by neglectful and partisan chroniclers. In the preface to the sixth book, 'Carloix' says: 'Je ne me veux obliger non plus à cotter les jours ny les ans ausquels il executa ses braves gestes, car seroit entreprendre sur les

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(1) ibid, pp.41-47.

(2) See the edition of Michaud and Poujoulat, Vol. 9, 1850, pp.3-400.

(3) ibid, pp.4 column B to 5 column B.

(4) Marchand assumes that they were written before 1591: ibid, p.44.

cronicqueurs, ou les imiter';(1) meanwhile in a preface to the seventh book, the second of two reasons for his writing at all is '..que j'y suis forcé par l'oubliance, ou plustost malice, de tous les historiens, qui ont escrit les histoires de nostre temps depuis trente ans; car ils ne font aucune mention de luy'. Anyone who has read Monluc or Tavannes may point to parallels between these authentic works and this imitation, as with the statement that Carloix's work is 'une simple histoire, vernye de sa vérité.'(2)

Criticism of historians was widespread, but was offset to some extent by praise. Monluc, no friend to the 'clerc', nevertheless paid his respects to the ancients in the following paragraph: 'Il me sembloit, lorsque je me faisois lire Tite-Live, que je voyois en vie ces braves Scipions, Catons et Cesars; et quand j'estois à Rome, voyant le Capitolle, me ressouvenant de ce que j'avois ouy dire (car de moy j'estois mauvais lecteur), il me sembloit que je devois trouver là les anciens Romains. Doncques les historiens, qui ne laissent rien à mettre en leurs livres, (3) marqueront vostre nom en blanc et en noir avec gloire ou avec honte, comme vous voyex qu'ils ont faict de tant de capitaines qui nous ont devancés'.(4) The historian's very existence spurs the conscientious soldier on to greater deeds: '...les escriptures en parleront à jamais, car tout le bien et le mal qui vous advient est mis par escript, et plustot le mal que le bien'.(5)

D'Aubigné, for his part, praised Du Haillan, and especially De Thou,

(1) Mémoires de Vieilleville, ed.cit. p.192 column A.

(2) ibid.

(3) This is an apparent contradiction which happens to serve Monluc's purpose at the moment.

(4) Commentaires ed.cit. p.341.

(5) ibid, p.806.

of whom he said: 'Son labeur est sans pareil, son langage bien françois, qui sent ensemble l'homme de lettre et l'homme de guerre, comme il s'est signalé et monstré tel en trois actions dignes de lumière'.(1) D'Aubigné notably applauded in De Thou the marriage of warfare with capacity for literature, as was many times the case with Du Bellay (2) and La Noue.(3) Martin du Bellay appreciated the historians Paul-Emile and Paul Jove for their refusal to base their histories on current fables, (4) whilst Jean de Tavannes advised the reading of history in order to gain knowledge of State business, though it must be added that he did not think that literary glory was particularly durable: '..si c'est pour laisser memoire de nous, faudroit acquerir des royaumes, gagner cinquante batailles, encore demeurent-elles ensevelis dans les livres, en la cognoissance de peu de gens lettrez'.(5) For D'Aubigné's Faeneste, the position was hardly different: he was not concerned with his reputation as it might be after his death, but as it was now: 'Je ne donnerois pas un estiflet de Roquemadour, ni un curedent de Monsur lou Maneschal de Roquelaure de toutes bos Histoiregraphes; c'est assez qu'on en parle à la Cour, lorsqu'on y ba'.(6)

Bueil, with more sagacity than most, realised that history was not written once for all. Times changed, and methods of recording events must change too: 'Et, s'aucuns vouloient arguer que je vueil faire de vieil bois nouvelle maison, pour ce que de longtemps ceulx qui ont escript les faix des Rommains, les Cronicques de France et les autres batailles du temps passé,

(1) Histoire, ed.cit. p.4.

(2) Bourrilly, op.cit.p.117.

(3) Discours, ed.cit. p.16, ll. 9-11 : 'A M. de la Noue'.

(4) Du Bellay: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.7: preface.

(5) Tavannes, Mémoires, ed.cit. p.103 column B.

(6) D'Aubigné: Oeuvres, ed.cit. p.690.

ont mys suffisamment la manière en escript et la façon de soy gouverner à la guerre, par quoy ne seroit aucun besoing que j'en fisse mention, je respons à cet argument que qui ne cesseroit jamais de renouveller les sciences, si trouveroit-on tousjours quelque chose de nouveau...'(1) Nevertheless, a number of writers late in the XVIth. century drew attention to the radical changes in warfare and the need to record innovations.

For the military writer of the Renaissance, history was only vaguely distinguishable from personal memoirs. Some attempted to copy the historical style; others studiously avoided doing so. History, both Ancient and Modern, was regarded as a continuum, Livy being as vivid as De Thou; however, modern history was thought to be less accurate, by a curious paradox. In the highly technical field of warfare, recorded history was held to be deficient despite a grudging acknowledgement that 'universal' history could not be highly detailed on peripheral topics. The recording of one's deeds in print signified different things to different people: a means to immortality, a yardstick by which posterity could assess its actions and judge those of its forebears, or a dry document filled with uncommented facts. To most, however, history was not an end in itself, but served a purpose - that of instilling sound and tried principles into a rising generation, or that of illustrating the advice of a sage greybeard - by which the act of writing was deemed to be justified.

(1) Le Jouvencel, ed.cit. p.17.

XIV

The Soldier's Prejudice against Literature

In the opinion of most of the French nobility during the Renaissance, the impulse to write not only needed justification but also sufficient vigour to overcome a rooted prejudice against letters that stretched back over many centuries. Their repugnance resolved itself about the belief either that writing was a waste of their time, or that it was a mechanical art and unfit for the hands of noblemen. From Roman times, the literate noble had been conspicuously rare.(1) The Franks had continued the practice of employing scribes to attend to all documents. Charlemagne, a patron of arts and education, himself only learned to write late in life, and while many Frankish kings could speak both Latin and their vernacular, they could write neither. Procopius, in his History of the Wars, (2) gave a vivid impression of the nobility's opposition to the education of Athalaric: 'And all the notable men among them gathered together, and coming before Amalasuntha made the charge that their king was not being educated correctly from their point of view nor to his own advantage. For letters, they said, are far removed from manliness, and the teaching of old men results for the most part in a cowardly and submissive spirit'. That Emperor Henry III, (3) could read was considered a disgrace by his nobles, (4) because literacy in no way aided conquest. The Carolingian renaissance collapsed under subsequent rulers for the same reasons.(5) The nobility's duties were to serve the king and

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(1) See J.W.Thompson: The Literacy of the Laity in the Middle Ages, New York, 1960.

(2) ibid, p.14.

(3) Holy Roman Emperor, 1017-1056.

(4) Thompson, op.cit. p.89.

(5) ibid, p.37.

protect their vassals with the sword and not with the pen. When more settled times came, in the XIIth. and XIIIth. centuries, it became fashionable for the North European nobility to cultivate poetry and song, though one of the most noted troubadours, von Eschenbach, was illiterate.(1) By this time, the separation of the rulers from the clerics had hardened into a doctrine, for, in order to balance the seven liberal arts of the clerics there were the seven accomplishments of the knight, namely, riding, swimming, archery, boxing, venery, chess and composing verses.(2) A third class, not mentioned, was that of the peasantry, whose duty was just as rigidly formulated: to remain on the land. Noble prejudice until the end of the XVIth. century denied that serfs were capable of waging effective warfare. After the rise of a class of professionally educated clerics from 1,000 A.D., and the continuance of feudalism in Northern Europe throughout the Middle Ages, rulers continued to be illiterate or semi-literate: and even St. Louis, though able to read both French and Latin, could write only in his own tongue. Literate nobles were still regarded as exceptional: Thompson (3) mentions a number of examples thought sufficiently striking by contemporary writers to warrant mention: the will of a Count Heceard, drawn up by 875 A.D., included a book on the military art; Geoffrey of Anjou 'was so devoted to letters that he would not even go to war without a scholar at his side. His ability to turn his learning to practical account must have astonished his contemporaries. At the siege of Montreuil-Bellay we find him consulting Vegetius' treatise on the art of war.'(4) Of one Count Ayulf (5) it was said:

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(1) ibid, pp.96-7.

(2) ibid.

(3) ibid, pp.28 et seq., 139-40.

(4) ibid, p.139.

(5) The identity of Ayulf is not established.

(1)'I have, moreover, known (him).. in talking with me, to show himself so accomplished a Latinist that one would think him nothing if not a clerk, and yet, withal, so much the knight that shortly thereafter he died in the service of his country fighting the infidel. For knighthood, or the profession of arms, does not preclude a sound knowledge of letters; indeed, in a prince, the union of both these things is as useful as it is becoming...' Both Geoffrey of Anjou and the obscure Count Ayulf illustrated the lack of literacy common to the potentates of their age, the belief that ability with letters precluded military value, and the contention that letters might be susceptible of practical application in the art of war, to help it rather than hinder it.

The nobility's objections to letters persisted until the XVIIth. century in vigorous form. René du Bellay was led to comment that surprise had been created by Martin du Bellay's work, because there were in it signs of his having read widely: he further declared that the memory of Guillaume and Jean would persist 'pour avoir esté au rang des plus excellens de leur temps aux armes et aux lettres'.(2) The Du Bellays were often cited as examples of the successful combination of literacy and soldierly virtues. Guillaume was no mean patron of writers, (3) one of whom, Salmon Macrin, dedicated four volumes of Odes to him in 1520, adding an encomium of his special virtues: 'il glorifie, ce qui deviendra une sorte de lieu commun pour tous les apologistes de Langey (4), parce qu'en effet c'est le caractère essentiel du personnage, l'amour des lettres uni à celui de l'action, une égale habilité

(1) By Philip of Harvengt, abbot of Bonne-Esperance, to Philip of Flanders (1168-1191): Thompson, op.cit.p.140.

(2) Du Bellay: Mémoires; 'Au Roy de Navarre'.

(3) See Bourrilly, op.cit. pp.111-120, 317-326.

(4) Du Bellay was Seigneur de Langey as well as a descendant of the princes d'Yvetôt.

à manier la plume et l'épée, une supériorité aussi marquée dans les arts de Minerve que dans les luttes de Mars',(1) one may wonder why the poet Joachim was not included with his statesmen kindred in these panegyrics: conjecture leads to the assumption that his dedication to literature alone, his avowed 'malaise' in his dealings with mundane people, his relative poverty made him a poor target for the encomia of ambitious literati.

For the most part, however, nobles despised the effeminate practice of letters: '...many nobles, especially of the oldest families, despised learning as fit only for the bourgeois. The great Constable Anne de Montmorency was illiterate. Brantôme...likes to twit (Montaigne) as an ink-stained lover of peace: (...)when the noble Protestant leader La Noue urged soldiers to return to work once war is over, Brantôme called it evil 'that the hands which have handled (arms) so nobly and cleanly should sully and debase themselves by a mechanical plowing or a vile and dirty trade.' Yet he is a more typical noble than Montaigne' (2), La Noue himself, like Montaigne an educated nobleman, was hesitant to publish his Discours, for the reason cited by Du Fresne: 'n'estimant, peut estre, à honneur (suyvant l'ancien erreur de la noblesse Françoise) qu'on sçache combien il aime et honnore les lettres';(3) he explained this prejudice in the tenth discourse, though it would seem that it was beginning to wane by this time: 'Il est notoire, que du temps de nos grands peres, quand un gentil-homme s'adonnoit à l'estude de la langue grecque et latine, ses compagnons disoient qu'il falloit faire un clerc, & que l'espee

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(1) Bourrilly, op.cit. p.117.

(2) D. Frame: Montaigne: a biography, London, 1965, pp.117-8. He was more typical in his attitude to the professions, and also of more ancient lineage: Montaigne's 'nobility' was only a generation old - see ibid, pp.119 et seq.

(3) Discours, ed.cit. 'Au Roy de Navarre', p.6.

ne luy estoit convenable. Mesme ce proverbe couroit, que l'homme de guerre ne devoit sçavoir sinon escrire son nom, comme si les sciences eussent esté empeschemens qui l'eussent rendu moins valeureux'.(1) Du Fresne echoed the praise of Du Bellay in a dedicatory sonnet to La Noue, however, which served to emphasise the point that, in publishing the Discours, he was increasing the glory which was already rightly La Noue's for his valour -

'Qui eust creu qu'un Guerrier peust estre si sçavant,
Ou qu'un Escrivain peust estre si vaillant,
Accordant le Clairon avec la douce Lyre?' (2)

Psychologically speaking, the soldier may not have been sufficiently contemplative to countenance the undertaking of a double role as actor and commentator. Many protested that they were men of deeds and not words. Guillaume du Bellay acknowledged as much in his Prologue des Ogdoades, though aversion to literature arose as often from necessity as from inclination: 'Mais nos ancestres et fondateurs du royaume, naturellement (et comme par aventure alors estoit besoing) furent tous-jours trop plus enclins à faire qu'à escrire'.(3) Monluc was the direct descendant of these nobles, and disclaimed not only the title and role of historian but also all pretension to a liking for letters: 'J'ay toute ma vie hay ces escritures, aymant mieux passer toute une nuit la cuirasse sur le dos que non pas à faire escrire, (4) car j'ay esté mal propre à ce mestier', (5) and he described himself as 'un Gascon, qui s'est tousjours plus soucié de bien faire que de bien dire'.(6) In view of his declarations to the contrary,

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(1) ibid, p.232.

(2) ibid, p.16.

(3) ed. cit., p.341.

(4) Monluc dictated his writings.

(5) Commentaires, ed.cit., p.607.

(6) ibid, p.22.

Monluc's writing seems to betray a lack of integrity, but one must remember the circumstances in which he undertook this hated task, and assume that his continued interest in the Commentaires after they had served their purpose was due to his having discovered the pleasures of literature late in life. Jean de Tavannes, whose attitude to military literature was equivocal, as will be seen, said of his father Gaspard: 'à la forme des anciens françois, s'employoit à faire, non à dire; si peu curieux de vanité, qu'il a refusé des mémoires à ceux qui vouloient, disoient-ils, immortaliser son nom'.(1)

Gaspard de Tavannes' objection to memoirs was curiously handled by his son, who incorporated an amount of his father's original notes and letters into the Mémoires. All soldiers had to resort to the written word whilst on campaign, and kept their superiors informed of their movements by means of letters. The documents by the elder Tavannes, then, may be simply despatches which were put together with no thought of their literary worth: his account of the battle near Poitiers (1569) was addressed to the Duc d'Anjou, but was described by Jean as a 'discours' (2). On the face of it, it is difficult to judge whether the anti-literate Gaspard transgressed his own rules or not. If he thought that memoirs were a form of 'vanité', then Jean would appear to have contradicted him by writing his biography. Even so, Jean entertained little respect for bookishness: 'Les livres donnent gloire à Achilles et Hector qui peut-estre ne furent jamais'.(3) Such fabulous history might be seen in true perspective were professional men to contribute to the histories of their callings, and active men like his father were best qualified to write about battles. Here again is an apparent contradiction for Jean asserted that it was immodest to write of oneself: 'Le sieur de Tavannes a

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(1) Tavannes: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.14 column B.

(2) ibid, p.319 column A.

(3) ibid, p.198 column B.

mieux aymé faire qu'escrire; il ne sied bien qu'à Cesar d'escrire de soy-mesmes'.(1) That an exception was made in Caesar's case is hardly surprising in a century when his works were so popular. The curious thing about Jean's declaration was that it came after Monluc had cited Caesar as an example of a military commander putting his fund of experience at the public disposal in his advocacy of military writings: 'Le plus grand capitaine qui ait jamais esté, qui est Cesar, m'en a monstré le chemin, ayant luy-mesme escrit ses Commentaires, escrivant la nuit ce qu'il executoit le jour'.(2) Jean used Monluc's work in compiling his father's biography, and may have been further persuaded of Caesar's usefulness by Monluc's numerous references to his works. Monluc, though retaining the vestiges of a bad conscience about his egotistic book, tried hard to popularise military autobiography as a practical literature: the only requisites to justify it were truth and a God-fearing approach to work: 'Et pour ce que ceux qui liront ces Commentaires (...) trouveront peut estre estrange et diront que c'est mal fait à moy d'escrire mes faits, et que je devois laisser prendre ceste charge à un autre, je leur diray, pour toute responce, qu'en escrivant la vérité et en rendant l'honneur à Dieu, ce n'est pas mal fait.'(3)

Even when normal objections had been overcome, there remained a yet more formidable obstacle to the spread of military literature written by those most informed of its topics. Few nobles received more than rudimentary education. Monluc confessed 'Je n'ay pas fort veu les livres,'(4) and declared that he had not opened a book for over thirty years at the time of his writing. In his youth he had been familiar with Livy, 'non pas en latin,

(1) ibid, p.87 column A.

(2) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.22.

(3) ibid, pp.21-2.

(4) ibid, p.170.

car je ne sçay plus de ma patenostre, mais en françoys.'(1), and though he consulted Du Bellay and Guicciardini for the revision of his book, there is no doubt that he, like most noblemen, had them read to him by an amanuensis, 'à cause de ma veue et de ma blesseure.' Monluc was an adept at languages - in the Commentaires there are reasonably accurate phrases in English, Gascon, Italian, and Spanish - but he declared this to be a gift of nature, which no study had served to improve: 'car tout mon faict estoit autant que la nature m'en avoit peu apprendre sans nul art.'(2) Among Gascon barons, Monluc told his readers, this was a rarity - he had to translate his harangue to the Siena consistory into French so that the 'gentilshommes gascons, qui n'entendent guières ce langage' (3) would not have to go to the trouble of having it interpreted for them. Nevertheless, Monluc was no boaster of his own talent with words, and unashamedly declared: 'j'ay laissé infinies particularitez à escrire, car je n'avois jamais rien escript ny pensé à faire des livres; j'estois incapable de cela.'(4) Martin du Bellay was similarly deprecating in his attitude to his treatment of the material left by Guillaume.(5)

Insufficiency of education was regretted or at least considered worth mentioning by most writers. Gaspard de Tavannes received only the bare essentials of an education: 'On ne lui enseigna des lettres et des mathématiques que ce qu'il en fallait à un soldat.'(6) Bouillon bitterly regretted that his education had been abruptly terminated when his guardian suspected his tutor of having inculcated Protestant views in the boy and dismissed him: 'Je n'avois, ainsi que j'ay dit, nulles estudes que la lecture de quelques histoires que mon gouverneur me faisoit lire; mais ses honnestes

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(1) ibid, p.618. A translation into French of Livy by Pierre Berçoire appeared in Paris, 1487, with reprints in 1524 and 1530.

(2) ibid, p.226.

(3) ibid.

(4) ibid, p.829.

(5) Du Bellay: Mémoires, end of Book Four.

(6) Tavannes: Mémoires, editor's note, ed.cit.

admonitions m'estoient de très-bonnes leçons.'(1) In later life he tried to make up for his lack of culture by patronising artists and cultivating the society of learned men.(2) Of La Noue's education, his first biographer Amyrault said: '(Il) n'eut guères d'autre education que celle qu'on donnoit auparavant aux gentilshommes de bonne maison, qui estoit qu'après leur avoir fait apprendre à lire et à escrire, et quelques exercices du corps, on les mettoit incontinent à ceux des armes et des chevaux.'(3) For the most part, nobles did not reach even this level of literacy: 'Little affected by the new learning, their energy sought mainly physical outlets and enjoyed food and wine, women, strenuous sports, dances and practical jokes, with coarse gaiety. Lawsuits, and even armed fights, often over minor prerogatives, testify to their combativity.'(4) Frame, in his Montaigne: A Biography, briefly reviews the education of the nobility at this period, but his is an all too favourable picture. Similarly, Henri Hauser took too rosy a view of the matter in remarking: 'Les jeunes nobles qui naissaient dans cette brillante époque étaient d'ordinaire élevés dans le goût et dans la fréquentation des auteurs de l'Antiquité et des sciences de la Renaissance.'(5) The same author points out that for warrior nobles, born of the lesser nobility, and with fathers so penurious that they were spared the attentions of tutors, things were very different.

La Noue was perturbed by the relative ignorance of the warrior classes. In some cases, he asserted, young nobles were brought up in ignorance because their fathers could not contemplate their seeming more knowledgeable than

(1) Bouillon: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.16.

(2) ibid, pp.116 et seq.

(3) Amyrault: Vie de François, seigneur de la Noue, Leiden 1661.

(4) Frame, op.cit. p.116.

(5) Hauser: François de la Noue, Hachette, 1892, p.4.

themselves, and wanted them to be their companions in the traditional noble pastimes of hunting and litigation, 'comme s'ils avoyent honte qu'ils les devançassent en la cognoissance de vertu.'(1) He foresaw a spread of education for the young nobility only if learning were made fashionable, so sheep-like were they: 'Car le François est prompt à apprendre les arts & les sciences, quand il voit qu'on honnore & qu'on entretient ceux qui les sçavent.'(2) For the present, however, popular taste favoured too much the 'livres d'Amadis'(3) which, according to Monluc, commanders were fond of reading when they should be attending to dispatches and other military duties.(4) On La Noue's word, however, some sections of the nobility were interested in books which dealt with war and politics, like himself: 'J'ay autrefois prins un singulier plaisir à lire les Discours & Le Prince de Machiavel, pource que là il traite de hautes & belles matieres politiques & militaires, que beaucoup de gentilshommes sont curieux d'entendre, comme choses qui conviennent à leur profession.'(5)

The impression that the facts of one's career were better described by a biographer than by oneself found expression in the Prologue des Ogdoades: Guillaume du Bellay declared it the duty of every great man's secretary to take down his dictated memoirs: 'Et est mon avis que le serviteur en nulle ou peu de choses se peult monstrer plus studieux et affectionné envers son prince et seigneur, qu'en escrivant ses faictz et actes vertueux, et à son pouvoir le garentir de l'injure du temps et de l'obscurité de ténébreuse oubliance.'(6) Jean de Tavannes invoked classical precedent for his daring

(1) Discours, ed.cit. p.143.

(2) ibid, p.156.

(3) Discours VI

(4) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.346.

(5) Discours, ed.cit. p.160.

(6) ed. cit., p.360.

to write his father's biography: 'Les harangues funebres des anciens se faisoient par leurs enfans, mieux informez de leurs actions que tous autres.' (1) It may be worth while to repeat here that Jean did not wait for his children to write his own biography, and preferred to incorporate his own impressions into that of his father.

Prejudice against literature among the nobility took more than one form and had more than one cause. To some, writing was corrupting and effeminate; to others, it was another man's province. In the order of things, the nobility was meant to act and not to describe its own actions, which might be deemed boastful whilst more practical, because they were better informed. In many cases, they were not sure of their own capacity to write, preferring to leave the task to others, a belief founded more often than not upon the inadequacy of their own education. Yet all those whose views are expressed here were untypical because of their having put pen, or having caused pen to be put, to paper; they are also exceptional in having created a precedent and a positive case for a professional military literature.

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(1) Tavannes: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.19 column A.

XV

The Defence and Object of Military Literature

Military writers of the XVIth. century may have denied any intimate knowledge of great works of literature for whatever reason: nevertheless, it is apparent that they respected men who had written of the art of war in past ages. Their example was frequently invoked as justification for similar modern works. All the prominent writers recommended the study of ancient texts on war, especially those by Caesar, and likened themselves to the heroes of Antiquity, either to illustrate their own topics, or to defend their having written in the belief that what suited the ancients suited them.

The Du Bellays, men of considerable learning, gave some attention to the matter of classical precedent. Not the least interesting were René's hopes for the personal interest aroused by the publication of his brother's work: 'J'ay pensé aussi que les anciens capitaines qui vous restent de son (1) temps receveroyent quelque soulagement en leur vieillesse, se voyans nommez aux discours des guerres ou ils ont esté, et s'y recognoissans quasi comme feit Aenee en la painture qu'il trouva dans le temple de Junon à Cartage.'(2) Guillaume's Ogdoades were neo-classical in every respect except for their subject, which was modern history. His preoccupation with classical precedent was natural enough. In the surviving prologue, he pointed out that men of rank were anxious to see that true accounts of their deeds would be written: 'Telle estoit lors et auparavant la diligence et curiosité d'escrire ou faire escrire les hystoires au vray, et en bailloient les roys et princes eulx mesmes, ou de bouche ou par escrit, amples memoires et instructions. Cesar escrivit ses Commentaires a ceste intention, mais il les escrivit tels qu'il

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(1) 'son' refers to François Ier.

(2) Du Bellay: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.3.

ne trouva homme qui entreprit de le passer.'(1) What, then, was there to prevent Caesar's modern counterparts taking up their pens? Martin du Bellay was more guarded in his recourse to a defence of writing based on classical example: he preferred to advance the claims of modern history written by Paul-Emile and Jove.

Forquevaux thought Caesar the best soldier who had ever lived (2); his programme for military reform was supported by plentiful illustrations from Classical sources (3), but these were balanced by recourse to modern actions; and though his book purported to distil the best of Frontinus, Polybius and Vegetius, it was intended to pillage ideas from Machiavelli and modern - in Cornazzano's case, fashionable - authors. Jean de la Taille presented a curious paradox with Le Prince Necessaire (4) which was closely modelled on, indeed plagiarised from, Machiavelli's Il Principe (5); one of the passages borrowed from the Italian work is itself a recommendation to emulate the works of the ancients:

'Mais si le bien public forçoit d'exequter
La guerre qu'on ne peut par honneur eviter,
Je veux donc que mon Roy sache l'art de la guerre
Par l'hystoire rommaine & l'exerce en sa terre
Avec le livre autant qu'avecque le harnoys,
Qu'il cherche en Tite-Live & non point aux tournoys.'
(cxxiii)

The idea of the soldier going about his business book in hand did not seem altogether ridiculous to XVIth. century writers (6). Jean de Tavannes

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(1) ibid, p.359.

(2) Instructions, ed.cit. p.46 verso.

(3) Especially in Books 2 and 3.

(4) See Oeuvres, ed. Maulde, Vol. III, Slatkine Reprints, Geneva, 1968.

(5) See Pintard: 'Une adaptation de Machiavel au XVI siècle' in Revue de Littérature Comparée, Vol. XIII, pp.385-402.

(6) For example, Geoffrey of Anjou, mentioned in Chapter XIV above.

was not the first soldier to call for a military handbook which would offer hints for soldiers on all aspects of strategy (1), and, indeed, such books came to be written. For Monluc, however, practical advice was acceptable whether from ancient or modern sources, and to the numerous maxims coined by Monluc himself were added some that he connected with figures like Alexander the Great, whose 'Ce que tu peux faire annuict n'attends au lendemain'.(2) occurs more than once in the Commentaires. Monluc's statement that in writing his autobiography he was following Caesar's example has already been noted: despite his illiteracy, he thought of the famous Roman generals as his brothers in misfortune, and recounted the unmerited rebuffs they had suffered at the hands of an ungrateful republic with a sympathy born of his own bitter experiences.(3) The writings of Livy and Caesar were as vivid for him (4) as his own are for the modern reader, and he was sufficiently conscious that, though the military classes of XVIth. century France were illiterate for the most part, it had not been so in Rome: in addressing the Bordeaux councillors he pressed the attractions of the military life which did not preclude erudition : 'Et leur remonstray qu'eux mesmes devoient prendre les armes, si l'occasion se presentoit, et qu'il leur souvînt que les plus vaillans capitaines qu'avoient les Romains, c'estoient gens de lettre, et que, s'ils n'avoient apprins les lettres, l'on les tenoit pour indignes de grandes charges, et que les lettres ne les devoient empescher de prendre les armes et combattre mais plustost leur donner hardiesse, se souvenant des anciens Romains ...'(5) Whether Monluc felt that, as a man of letters, he also qualified as one of the 'plus vaillans capitaines' is open to question: it is sufficient to note that

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(1) Tavannes: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.59.

(2) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.188 and p.779.

(3) ibid, pp.612-22.

(4) ibid, p.341.

(5) ibid, p.652.

confidence inspired by classical precedents penetrated his Commantaires. He would, however, have been flattered to read D'Aubigné's statement in the 'Imprimeur aux Lecteurs' at the head of his Histoire, for, at long last, he was classed alongside Caesar: 'Je l'ai pourtant ouy (1) deffendant les Commentaires de Caesar et ceux de Monluc; alleguant que le plaisir de dire est juste apres la peine et le peril des actions...'(2).

Military autobiography could be both pleasurable and painful. Monluc's work was prompted by circumstances far from pleasant, and though writing had helped to while away some of the time during seven years of retirement it was originally necessary to write in order to preserve his reputation: 'Et pour ce que vous me pourrés demander qui m'a esmeu d'escripre ma vie, ou soit que je m'aye voullu vanter dens mon livre ... c'est pour la deffence de mon honneur et reputtation.'(3) Self-defence was a very strong motive which prompted Monluc to write, for throughout the Commentaires, nothing seems to have been more important to him than his honour. One does not find Bueil or the Loyal Serviteur refuting calumnies; this does not mean that honour was less dear to them. At all events, Monluc's pride had been wounded, and he turned to the king for vindication 'par là où j'ay acquis ce que j'estime plus que tous les biens de ce monde, qu'est l'honneur et reputtation en laquelle j'ay immortalizé le nom de Monluc.'(4) No-one was more aware that his honour was transitory (5), the prey of young hotheads whose own advancement depended partly on their defeating established champions (6); even in retirement, Monluc dared not rest on his laurels. To maintain his charisma

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(1) D'Aubigné is here referring to himself.

(2) Histoire, ed.cit. p.20.

(3) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.7.

(4) ibid, p.14.

(5) ibid, p.803.

(6) ibid, p.423.

and to wash away all calumny, Monluc endeavoured to present the facts of every situation he had encountered, even at the risk of boring the reader.(1)

Monluc believed that, in replying to his detractors through the medium of literature, he would gain an unassailable position. He was not alone in his high esteem of what might be termed 'bookish immortality', though his contention that many heroes would shirk their duty if unaware that their deeds would be recorded must be taken with caution. At least, the capacity to make one's mark on posterity was a distinction from the brutish state: 'C'est mourir en beste de ne laisser nulle memoire après soy'.(2)

The Serviteur's object in publishing a life of Bayard lay neither in defence of the 'chevalier' nor in the hope of educating a new generation by his example; since 'ceste histoire est principallement fondée sur les vertus et prouesses du bon chevalier sans paour et sans reprouche',(3) it was admittedly an attempt to preserve his fame. The method, however, was rooted in the past, for Bayard was presented as an amalgam of the virtues of Fabius Maximus, Hector and Coriolanus, (4) so that his portrait was backward-looking rather than forward-looking. Martin du Bellay would not have significantly disagreed with the Serviteur's concept of the historian's function, for he also wrote 'afin de conserver à la postérité les faits vertueux et memorables de nostre temps',(5) whilst Guillaume's intention was only slightly more specific, to 'consacrer à éternite le nom et loz des vertueux',(6) adding that 'l'homme ne peult estre amoureux de vertu, qui n'est songneux et curieux de sa renommée'.(7)

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(1) ibid, p.667: 'J'ay esté contraint escrire ceste faction par le menu et au long, qui ennuyera peust-estre le lecteur...'

(2) ibid, p.832.

(3) Histoire de Bayart, ed.cit. p.161.

(4) ibid, Chapter 66.

(5) Du Bellay: Mémoires, ed.cit.p.10; a degree of selectivity is perhaps implied.

(6) ibid, p.341.

(7) ibid, p.360.

La Noue's objectives in writing were complex; his first twenty-five discourses were all related to specific matters, presumably in order to indicate where improvements might best be made. There is no doubt that writing was, for him, a leisure activity rendered necessary by his captivity. It is notable that, having regained his freedom, he wrote no more, and, if we are to believe Du Fresne, lost all interest in his scribblings. Where, then, are we to place the remark, in the XXVIth. discourse, that 'Il m'a semblé que si beaux actes ne devoient estre ensevelis en oubliance'?(1) Had it been left to La Noue, posterity would not have been favoured with his account of the fine deeds referred to.

Jean de Tavannes affected disdain for durability of literary fame which was liberally accorded to legendary figures who may not have existed,(2) and had been proved in his opinion to be less durable than expected. It is difficult to discern whether it was a sense of sadness or of self-justification which led him to remark on the wholesale loss of great names and deeds which must have resulted from the destruction of Ptolemy's library.(3) The student has more reason to regret the destruction of Coligny's memoirs, of which only a Discours on the siege of St. Quentin has come down to us. (4) It tells us, however, that Coligny was not concerned to justify himself in his writings. Their destruction took place after his assassination in 1572: 'On trouva un livre écrit par l'Amiral sur "des choses mémorables de son temps et mesmes des guerres civiles". Le mareschal de Retz empêcha le roi de le faire publier, et le brûla devant le roi, "envieux de la mémoire et gloire de ce grand personnage: ce qu'il ne devoit, puisque l'envye ne reigne que parmi les pareilz. Et qu'autant de semblance (disoit-on) y

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(1) Discours, ed.cit.p.667.

(2) He was referring to Achilles and Hector: the same could easily have been said of Arthurian Romance.

(3) Tavannes: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.367.

(4) See edition of Michaud and Poujoulat, Vol. VIII, 1850, pp.567-83.

avoit-il comme d'un asne à un noble cheval d'Espagne' '.(1) Retz, at least, believed that Coligny's memory might be more respected than his own, were his writings to survive, and that he could restore the balance in his own favour by destroying them and the man who overshadowed him.

Where gaps occurred in histories already published, it was occasionally the object of military writers to supply the missing information. The best example is again Monluc, who was disgusted to find himself named only once in the Du Bellay memoirs. There is little doubt that the shock of realising his own relative obscurity spurred him on to make of the Commentaires more than a simple tract in his own defence. In addition, as he approached the end of his life, he foresaw that the line of Monluc ran a great risk of petering out: the only way to ensure that its fame would last down the ages was to write. His sons were all dead before he completed the book; the last, Fabien de Montesquieu, died from an arquebus-wound in 1573, a disaster of which he said 'Dieu me donna le courage de le porter, non comme je debvois, mais comme je peuz'.(2) The object of his writing became, then, not solely the grand celebration of his glowing deeds, but the fundamental, and utterly human, desire to prevent his name and the names of others like him from disappearing: '...j'ay dicté ce que je vous en laisse, afin que mon nom ne se perde, ny de tant de vaillans hommes que j'ay veu bien faire, car les historiens n'escrivent qu'à l'honneur des roys et princes. Combien de braves soldats et gentils-hommes ay-je nommé ici-dedans, desquels ces gens ne parlent du tout, non plus que s'ils n'eussent jamais esté! '(3) Twice only did Monluc prefer silence to open declaration: while dealing with the years

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(1) A. Grimaldi: Brantôme et le sens de l'histoire, Nizet, Paris, 1971, p.237. The references are to Brantôme, ed.Lalanne, IV, 327.

(2) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.838.

(3) ibid, pp.829-30.

1559-60, for reasons of personal integrity; and when reviewing the St. Bartholomew's Night massacre, for similar reasons. He was, indeed, only one of many muzzled writers in a dangerous time for political commentators: 'Ceux qui viendront après nous en parleront mieux à propos et sans crainte; car les escrivains d'aujourd'huy n'osent escrire qu'à demy'.(1)

Though other authors referred to the possibility of immortality by means of writing, Monluc was alone in placing such emphasis upon it. Each had his own special motives besides those which all held in common. Monluc could be said equally to have intended to initiate a school of military authors. 'Pleust à Dieu que nous, qui portons les armes, prinsions ceste coustume d'escrire ce que nous voyons et faisons! Car il me semble que cela seroit mieux accommodé de nostre main (j'entends du faict de la guerre) que non pas des gens de lettre; car ils deguisent trop les choses, et cela sent son clerc'.(2) An important and concrete motive for writing had been given to Monluc by King Henri II, who after having heard Monluc's account of the defence of Siena, '..vouleut aussi que je le misse par escript - il en fist donner la coppie à plusieurs gouverneurs'.(3)

D'Aubigné's Histoire may have owed its inception to the conversation which passed between the author and Henri de Navarre after a skirmish '..il me disoit que cette rencontre devoit estre en son histoire; et, me conviant à l'escrire, je lui respondis trop fierement (comme non content des actions passées): "Sire, commencez de faire et je commencerai d'escrire" '.(4) René du Bellay pointed out, in a preface to his brothers' work, that such a book was a rarity: 'Il y a eu en nostre nation peu de capitaines qui ayent daigné

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(1) ibid, p.835.

(2) ibid, p.344.

(3) ibid, p.353.

(4) Histoire, ed.cit. p.10.

mettre la main à la plume pour escrire ce qu'ils avoyent fait ou veu faire; mais, quand il s'en est trouvé, leurs escrits ont esté preferez à toutes autres chroniques du mesme temps'.(1) It may be inferred from his remark that he would have wished to see more literary activity among the ranks of military leaders. However, Martin had already set certain tasks which he wished his memoirs to fulfil, especially to prevent the complete loss of his brother Guillaume's work and render it capable of profitable consultation: '... pour supplier et amender aucunement la perte irreparable de ce qu'avoit escrit mon frère avant son trespas, non si au long (2) ny du stile dont mondit frère avoit usé, ainsi que par evidence le demonstrent ses oeuvres; (3) mais ce que j'ay veu et peu entendre, je l'ay discouru au mieux et plus près de la verité qu'il m'a esté possible, pour laisser memoire aux autres qui le pourront mieux faire que moy, mais mal aisement plus fidellement, ny plus près de la verité'.(4) Martin may have looked upon his work as being essentially that of collating the remnants of his brother's writings with his own humble contributions, to serve as a reliable historical source for more experienced and able writers. He was anxious, too, that his brother should receive due credit for his material, which he declared he was printing in full in order to prevent the plagiarisms of other writers.(5)

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(1) Du Bellay: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.4: unfortunately, René gives us no examples. The word 'daigné' is to be noted.

(2) This remark, which could mean that Martin had abridged Guillaume's material, should be interpreted to mean that he did not include as much detail.

(3) These 'oeuvres' are lost to us.

(4) ibid, end of Book 4.

(5) ibid, Préface de l'autheur.

Jean de Tavannes permitted himself to be scathing about the reasons behind many books of memoirs, though he shunned examples: 'Aucuns escrivent d'eux, parce que les escrivains les oublient par ignorance, menterie, ou vengeance: il est honteux de se loüer, c'est preuve de peu de courage de se vanter de ce qu'on n'a pas fait':(1) if one ignores the non-sequitur in this antithesis, one may perceive in it a reply to those warriors like Monluc who had been left out of legitimate histories and wrote in order to complete the story: Tavannes goes so far as to accuse this class of writers of deliberate lying. Yet one cannot believe that Tavannes credited legitimate historians with omniscience, for his remark makes sense only if one accepts that they left out only those deeds which were left undone. Had Tavannes been more explicit in his criticisms, one might have made more of them.

One meets a similar difficulty in considering his opinion of bookish glory: in one place he declared it to be ineffective; (2) in another, he granted it equal status with glory acquired through building, and the performance of heroic deeds: the second means to preserve a reputation was 'de reussir grandement à composer des livres et escrits qui puissent durer à la posterité'.(3) In spite of Tavannes' equivocal attitude to the object of literature, then, we must assume that the hope of immortality was one of the reasons for his having taken up his pen.

Individual writers pursued distinct objectives in their books, but all were agreed that it was their central purpose to provide a means of education by the recording of their own experience. Every writer was explicit on this matter, and Bueil set the precedent with Le Jouvencel, 'nouvellement fait et compillé par un discret et honnorable chevalier pour introduire, donner courage et hardement à tous jeunes hommes qui ont desir et voullenté de

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(1) Tavannes: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.87, column A.

(2) ibid, p.103 column B.

(3) ibid, p.358 column B.

sieuvyr le noble stille et exercice des armes..'(1) The education envisaged was specialist, however, and this restriction applied to all military writers. They could only use the fruits of their experience, which was geared to their own profession, and applied only to their equals. In the matter of education, therefore, there was no question of their having imbibed the new educational ideals of the Renaissance. They were not concerned with the education of the 'universal man', but only with the schooling of good soldiers. Only occasionally, as in the works of Du Bellay and La Noue, was there a hint that the soldiers might be more widely educated than was necessary to win battles or provision armies: Du Bellay's combination of the professions of arms and letters found praise, as did La Noue's; the latter concerned himself in his Vth. Discours with the education of young nobles in its wider context. Monluc, however, was alone in stressing the importance of academic study to the military life: 'un homme qui a leu et retenu est plus capable de belles entreprises qu'un autre'.(2) In this context, the reading of military books by soldiers counts as academic study in the sense that it constitutes learning by the example of others and not by one's own mistakes.

The Serviteur made no more mention of an educational objective than he did of a personal defence. The work of Fourquevaux, on the other hand, was uniquely educational in its conception: it set out to demonstrate how an army of legionaries might be assembled, trained and deployed, and it was praised by his son as an '... oeuvre veritablement necessaire et utile aux gens du metier, et qui vivra longuement estimée et prisée entre les mains des plus entendus'.(3) Among the Du Bellays, it was René who placed an educational value on the Mémoires; he desired to show Charles IX how matters had stood in his grandfather's reign, and to spur on the young nobility to

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(1) Le Jouvencel, ed.cit. p.5.

(2) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.656.

(3) Quoted in Lefranc, op.cit., p.114.

imitate the works of their forebears, 'd'autant que les exemples domestiques ont trop plus de force pour encourager la jeunesse à bien faire que ceux qui sont recueillis des estrangers'.(1)

For Monluc it was important that the troubles he had borne through life should serve a useful purpose; this they did by means of the Commentaires, in which his experience served the interests of a new generation, 'pour servir d'exemple à ceux qui viendront après moy, afin que les petits Monlucs, que mes enfants m'ont laissé, se puissent mirer en la vie de leur ayeul'.(2) Tavannes echoed this more personal note:'J'escris pour mes parens, et souhaitte qu'ils soient veus de mes amis, qui leur serviront d'enseignement s'ils tomboient en pareils accidens que j'ay passé'.(3) Monluc declared that one must be prepared to listen to the advice of those who have preceded one in a profession, (4) and he was far from modest about the value of his advice, for he even addressed himself to Charles IX in such terms as 'Un jeune prince comme vous et bien né.. doit tousjours apprendre des vieux capitaines'.(5) Both Bouillon and La Noue desired their examples to be followed by the young, the former directing his advice to his son, (6) the latter recording the deeds of others 'à fin que ceux qui font profession des armes s'estudient de les imiter..'(7) No didactic purpose is apparent in D'Aubigné's 'livres qui enseignent', except in that it recorded truth as he saw it, for that truth was not presented with any specific purpose in mind.

Tavannes felt there was a need for a military manual which would be far more specific than a mere collection of reminiscences: indeed, he set out

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(1) Du Bellay: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.3.

(2) Commentaires ed.cit. p.51.

(3) Tavannes: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.161.

(4) Commentaires ed. cit., p.44.

(5) ibid, p.801.

(6) Bouillon: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.3.

(7) Discours, ed.cit. p.667.

the topics which such a manual would need to consider, and the list was no mean brief for any writer to accept: 'Un livret seroit necessaire à celuy que l'on veut former pour general d'armée... Dans iceluy soit mise la force, richesse et puissance, moyens d'assaillir et se defendre, alliances, confederations, parentages, secours, vivres, munitions, villes, chasteaux forts et foibles, navigation des mers, rivieres, passages, guets d'iceux, païs d'infanterie, cavalerie, bois, montagnes, les princes qui y commandent, l'humeur d'iceux, et les plus approchans de leurs desseins, moyens de les assaillir et de s'en defendre, nommément des païs plus voisins du general'. (1) It is difficult to imagine such a book, which would have been of immense proportions, being written, for the simple reason that no one writer could have boasted such comprehensive knowledge. Manuals on individual aspects of warfare were written, however.(2) The usefulness of such a military encyclopaedia would have been short-lived, as Tavannes himself confessed: 'Nul art n'a souffert tant de changements que le militaire: les preceptes et les livres de trente en trente ans sont peu utiles; non seulement les armes ont changé, mais les ordres'.(3) One wonders if his suggestion was intended seriously, but there need be no doubt that his plan for a military academy was made in all sincerity: it was to be staffed by the oldest and most experienced stagers in the country, and its purposes were to teach 'l'art de la guerre, et extraire de tant de livres qui en sont escrits les moyens, stratagemes et conseils les plus utiles'.(4)

Beyond the explicit mention of educational objectives, writers like Tavannes, Monluc and Bouillon demonstrated their concern for teaching by

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(1) Tavannes: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.59.

(2) See the bibliographies by Dickinson and Cockle.

(3) Tavannes: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.217 column A.

(4) ibid, p.336 column B.

including practical hints and moralistic maxims in their books. For all of them, writing without purpose was idle, and the fact that the novels of chivalry, rooted in fantasy, served no practical end was their condemnation in the eyes of La Noue.(1) For those who had scruples about writing, the educational end justified the literary means, and where the justification was not educational it was still practical - to defend oneself against the harm done by one's enemies, of passing time and of neglectful historians. All but the most literary - the Serviteur and D'Aubigné - had these reasons in common, whilst entertaining incidental motives for the un-military practice of writing.

(1) Discours VI.

XVI

The Advocacy of Education for the Nobility

Military writers, in justification of their work, declared that an educational purpose was served thereby, and in addressing their remarks to their peers did not confine themselves to a presentation of their own knowledge, acquired in the field, for consumption by the reader, but indicated other sources of learning which might be consulted with profit. Mostly uneducated themselves, they realised, perhaps only when they came to write books, the importance of literature in the formation of that class of noblemen known as the 'noblesse d'épée'. Such an opinion was pitched against a considerable dislike of academic things, and against the rooted belief that a nobleman of respectable background could attain to the highest honours merely by cutting his path with his sword. No-one yet underrated military prowess which continued to be a deciding factor in national and international relations for centuries; but, increasingly, disaffection and ambition among the ranks of the nobility forced politically-minded statesmen to seek loyal administrators from the less exalted classes; and the lesser nobility, with whom are included Monluc, Tavannes and La Noue, saw their prospects diminishing. Sully, the premier minister of Henri IV, endeavoured to crush the power of troublesome nobles by excluding them from all but military posts. His work was continued by Richelieu; the position was consolidated after the War of the Fronde, which may be viewed as the nobility's final attempt to stem the inroads being made on its prerogatives by a central and increasingly bureaucratic bourgeois government.

Writers at the end of the XVIth. century looked back upon the days of the Italian Wars as a sort of golden age for the military nobility: they saw Francois Ier and Henri II as the friends of the valorous, whose martial

services would be rewarded with an Order or the governorship of an Italian town. None seemed to understand that it had been François who had established the sale of offices in order to prop up the royal treasury, an innovation which set the precedent by which it was not always the most noble or most deserving who reaped the fruits of the royal favour, but the most wealthy. Naturally, the nobility's attention was distracted at this period by events abroad,(1) and it was not until the peace of Cateau-Cambrésis threw them back on to their native soil that they began to see that their influence on home affairs had been waning. During the subsequent Wars of Religion (precipitated, according to many, by the lack of a clear military objective abroad), the machinations of a distant, highly complex, and largely non-military administration seemed unfathomable to the unschooled. If military prowess was insufficient to procure power in government, then, said many writers, the way forward lay in a wider education than had hitherto been normal for nobles destined for the army.

The Duc de Bouillon lamented his lack of formal education in a curiously perspicacious remark, for he was never trained to ponder upon things that he had discovered and thus found great difficulty in assimilating experience: '..me trouvant tout le long du jour parmy le monde voyant et oyant tousjours choses nouvelles, cela convenant à mon naturel, je devorois la plupart des choses sans les digérer. Cela m'a, et en ce temps-là et depuis, fait paroistre le profit que je pouvois faire des choses que j'ay veues et ouyes, si j'eusse pu arrester mon esprit pour les comprendre.'(2)

Fourquevaux's programme of training for soldiers was principally physical, but he made a proviso, for each Prince must see to it that those he wishes to be responsible for his armies must be not only 'les plus

(1) Works written before 1560 indicate that the nobility did not yet realise that their influence was waning. The Loyal Serviteur made no mention of education; the Du Bellays made little of it, being themselves privileged and highly educated. Fourquevaux's educational work was concerned with the common soldier rather than with the noble.

(2) Bouillon: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.15.

expertz au faict des armes qu'il sera possible finer,' but he must also 'sercher tous les moyens de les rẽdre ainsi parfaictz, ce qui ne se pourroit faire sans lire les Autheurs qui en ont baille la mode..'(1): the Instructions were presented as a digest of these authors for the perusal of the militia.

Tavannes noted the waning influence of his peers and based his advocacy of an education that did not leave all un-military schooling to chance upon the advantage it would confer upon the ambitious. Like many, he believed that the nobility had excellent qualifications for civil office: 'Les roys sont interessez à la conservation de la preud'homie des nobles: aucuns s'en sont servis pour administrer leurs finances (...) et s'en sont bien treuvez: ceux qui sont neiz de bonnes maisons et riches, ayans à perdre honneur et biens, ne mes-usent ny ne derobent, ainsi que plusieurs font en ce temps.'(2) Not only in finance, but in the legal sphere there are important posts which the nobility, frustrated in its other designs, might profitably occupy: 'C'est l'honneur de plaider et juger: les seigneurs romains s'en sentoient honorez: sotte est l'opinion des brutaux, que les presidens et conseillers ne sont gentil-hommes.'(3) Yet, though a prejudice against serving in such a clerical capacity may have been overcome, Tavannes pointed out that the desire alone was not enough: 'Les ignobles ne nous ostent les estats de judicature; c'est l'ignorance qui nous prive: la porte est ouverte à tous ceux qui font estudier leurs enfans.'(4) He therefore related the declining position of the nobility to its lack of formal education.

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(1) Fourquevaux: Instructions, ed.cit. p.3 recto.

(2) Tavannes: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.55 column A.

(3) ibid, column B.

(4) ibid.

La Noue devoted his fifth Discours, 'De la bonne nourriture & institution qu'il est necessaire de donner aux jeunes gentils hommes françois', to an examination of the wider aspects of education. He realised that the French needed only to see what might be gained by study to take education seriously: '..le François est prompt à apprendre les arts & sciences, quand il voit qu'on honnore & qu'on entretient ceux qui les sçavent.'(1) However, it was no longer relevant to sugar the educational pill because everyone now accepted the inevitability of study: 'Bref, tous estiment que comme les plantes & les arbres n'estans cultivez demeurent sauvages, qu'aussi les jeunes gens, s'ils ne sont polis par bonnes coustumes, deviennent rudes & vicieux. (—) Mais quel besoin est-il de cercher de grandes preuves & confirmations de cecy, veu que nul ne le revoque en doute?'(2)

Having established that education was desirable, writers saw that there were still obstacles to its furtherance. An education of the sort Rabelais supplies for Gargantua through a tutor could only be afforded by the very rich. For someone in Monluc's position, it was an impossibility. His father was unable to support him while he was educated, and sent him to the court of Nancy as a page. Of the instruction given him there we know nothing except that it was far from bookish, and military in totality, as we may infer from the fact that Monluc took up the military profession and never once questioned the advisability of doing so. Tavannes saw that a liking for warfare could be instilled in youngsters and suggested that they might be allowed to play with toy solders (3); on the other hand, he disagreed with the training in sword-play that was then fashionable since such finesse was of no practical use in

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(1) Discours, ed.cit. p.156.

(2) ibid, p.135.

(3) Tavannes: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.57 column A.

warfare (1). Financial difficulties and the overall repugnance for academic study militated largely against it, and Tavannes even hinted that it was all a conspiracy: 'Les poëtes, les philosophes, les mages d'Egypte, ont couvert leurs sciences de plusieurs fables, de mots inventez, obscuritez et chifres (...) avec infinis mots qui ne sont ny latins ny françois pour (par ces difficiles eruditions) bannir la noblesse des judicatures, sçachant bien que rarement les peres font estudier leurs enfans, empestrez de la necessité, et cognoissant qu'en ce temps il faut une partie de leurs biens pour acheter des offices.'(2) This must have been a very real dilemma for many, whether to spend money on a tutor for a son, or to use it for the purchase of a vacant post for him. Those without money did not have to face this cruel choice, but they could send their offspring to the wars. Here again there was a snag, for discipline in the army was so poor, and vice so rampant, that the experience, though educational, was far from ennobling. La Noue and Tavannes both suggested means by which moral and penniless youngsters could emerge from the ordeal with credit.(3)

Both La Noue and Tavannes gave very full consideration to the type of instruction which might best be given to young nobles: the latter devoted a large section in his history of the reign of François Ier to it.(4) His list of matters deserving attention is as exhaustive as that of topics for a military handbook: '(les précepteurs) instruiront leurs disciples en la connoissance et obeyssance de Dieu, sçavoir l'adorer, prier et servir, estre homme de bien, veritable; apprendront le moyen de converser parmy les hommes, connoistre soy et autres, ne les tromper, se garder de l'estre, leur bien

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(1) ibid, pp.154-5.

(2) ibid, p.243 column B.

(3) ibid, p.60 column B, and La Noue: Discours, ed.cit. pp.146-7.

(4) Tavannes: Mémoires, ed.cit. pp.55-62.

faire et se rendre agreable; apprendre à bien parler, sçavoir en gros toutes sciences, et principalement les histoires, pour servir aux affaires d'Estat; l'art de la guerre, ordre des batailles, les conseils militaires, les exercices aux heures commodes, monter à cheval, escrimer, sauter et nager.' (1) In its insistence upon Christianity, social graces, and general knowledge it was most probably modelled on La Noue's even more exhaustive suggestions embodied in his fifth Discours; this was a thorough exposition of education as it then existed. Nobles, he wrote, were either willing to receive education or they were not. The unwilling thought study conferred no benefit, or they wished their sons to enjoy the pursuits they preferred; still others did not wish to be overshadowed.(2) As for the willing, they seemed content to go through the motions of providing an education, but without interest, or else fall back on the established custom of sending their sons for training in the army, the Court or in foreign travel. With all these methods La Noue found fault. His objection to sending young men on a foreign tour was again echoed by Tavannes: 'C'est honte d'estre contraints d'envoyer les jeunes hommes en Italie, d'où ils reviennent plus charges de vices que de vertus.'(3)

Having posed the problem, La Noue set about providing an answer by turning to the precepts of the ancients - the Politics of Aristotle, and the Moralia of Plutarch. He concluded that the state must trouble itself with

(1) ibid, p.56. The loose syntax is typical.

(2) Discours, ed.cit. pp.142-3.

(3) Tavannes: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.62 column A. La Noue uses the old proverb: Qu'onc bon cheval ni mauvais homme n'amenda pour aller à Rome.' Discours, ed.cit. p.147.

the upbringing of its aristocrats, 'Car le prince, qui est père commun de ses sujets, doit procurer qu'ils soient bons.'(1) This would be implemented by the establishment of academies in towns and palaces named by La Noue: he worked out not only their location but also a detailed curriculum (2) and the means of staffing them, together with a financial study and the allocation of staff holidays.(3)

Writers' attitudes towards a bookish education were equivocal: Monluc advocated a home for old soldiers (4), but saw no need for state-run education, though often stressing the royal obligation to the nobility. In the Commentaires he was only concerned to educate by retailing his own experiences, so that others would learn as he had learned. Among teachers, it is a common fallacy to wish to re-create oneself in those who are taught: Monluc may have felt similarly, for he expressed a desire to live his life over again; since he could not do so, the next best thing was to pass on to the young what he had gained: 'Je suis bien marry que je ne puis retourner à mon jeune aage; car je me sçaurois bien mieux gouverner que je n'ay faict jusques icy, et ne me fonderois pas tant en l'esperance des Roys, que des autres qui seroient près d'eux. Mais je suis à present vieux et ne puis retourner jeune. Il n'est pas temps; cela peust-estre servira pour ceux que je delaisse.'(5) The educative content was the result of Monluc's second thoughts, and in this quotation the last sentence was a later addition.

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(1) Discours, ed.cit.p.152.

(2) ibid, pp.152-5.

(3) ibid, p.157. What La Noue was suggesting is reminiscent of the highly efficient Jesuit colleges, though these were not run on state funds.

(4) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.447.

(5) ibid, p.768.

Tavannes, as if in reply to Monluc's faith in the communicability of experience, pointed out that his father was instructed only in the military art and that other refinements were acquired as incidentals to martial experience.(1) Nevertheless, 'le bien commander (dans les grandes armées) ne s'acquiert du tout par experience.'(2); nor can kings manufacture good soldiers, who are a gift from God: 'Les roys s'abusent, qui disent pouvoir faire des gentils-hommes: c'est Dieu qui donne le courage.'(3)

Of the more bookish pursuits, the learning of foreign languages appealed to nearly all writers in the military field, mainly because of their use in communicating with allies; even Latin was thought to be of some value. Bouillon recommended a knowledge of Latin for his son (4), and bemoaned his own incompetence with languages which had been 'un grand deffaut pour les charges que j'ay eues...'(5). Monluc, himself an adept in various tongues, realised their many uses and emphasised the point: 'Vous, messieurs, qui avez le moyen (6) et qui voulez pousser vos enfans, croyez que c'est une bonne chose de leur faire apprendre, s'il est possible, les langues estrangeres; cela sert fort, soit pour passer, soit pour se sauver, soit pour negotier.'(7) On the other hand, Tavannes was cautious about this matter, for languages are not listed by him in the curriculum he desired to see. He did not shrink from telling his reader why they were excluded: 'Le

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(1) Tavannes: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.4 column A.

(2) ibid, p.424 column A.

(3) ibid, p.54 column B.

(4) Bouillon: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.3.

(5) ibid, p.5.

(6) Monluc's attitude is very practical - his own parents did not have the means.

(7) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.563.

latin n'est necessaire à ceux qui ont de bons gouverneurs et precepteurs; les langues ne sont sciences; le temps qui se mettroit à les apprendre se doit employer à sçavoir les histoires, preceptes, stratagemes et conduitte de guerre.'(1) In this way, Tavannes rejected a form of literary instruction in favour of vocational training.

In the general concern with the topic of formal education there is a personal note: those noblemen who believed that they had suffered for lack of a suitable and diversified education were anxious to see that their descendants did not labour under a similar handicap. But as men of action, their suggestions, though well-founded, were naturally restricted, and most relevant to the field they knew best: meanwhile, their consideration of wider issues in education was reduced to the very vaguest of terms. Tavannes's programme aimed at creating the Christian gentleman and warrior; further schooling was summarily dismissed in the remark that he should 'sçavoir en gros toutes sciences'. As ever, La Noue alone showed a methodical approach, and with his well-argued specific suggestions showed himself the most practical of a pragmatic profession. To the rest, however, military efficacy was the only ultimate objective.

(1) Tavannes: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.56 column B. If Latin must be learnt, then the child must be sequestered with Latin-speaking attendants (ibid), an idea which reflects Montaigne's own experience (See Appendix 2, C) Montaigne's father spoke Italian and Spanish, 'more valuable for a soldier'.: Frame, op.cit. p.9.

XVII

Propaganda for the Military Nobility

Whether or not education was interpreted in a broad or a narrow sense by military writers, it, too, was intended to serve a practical end, that of raising up the French nobility to its old position of power and esteem in the eyes of the king and the lower orders. Even so, Monluc, Tavannes and La Noue realised that an interest in thorough schooling would be valueless to the nobility without the will to triumph: by exhortation, therefore, they spurred their peers towards a better future, reminding them of their past glories, their noble duty and their many failings.

During the XVth. century, Bueil and Antoine de la Sale had produced Le Jouvencel and the Petit Jehan de Saintré which in their way might be styled 'manuals of knighthood'.(1) The former may be taken seriously as a series of true-to-life episodes; the latter is an enigmatic work which may be partly satirical of the corrupt inward nature of an outwardly splendid chivalry. The publication of the heroic deeds of knights may have served a purpose somewhat similar to propaganda in giving a fillip to the ego of each knight whose faith in selfless devotion to duty was flagging.

Such at least was the intention of XVIth. century writers who commented on the state of the nobility. Their statement of the knight/nobleman's duty had already been formulated by Bueil: 'C'est joyeuse chose que la guerre; on y voit, on y oit beaucoup de bonnes choses, et y apprent moult de bien.. On s'entr'ayme tant a la guerre. On pense en soy-mesmes: Laisseray-je ad ce tirant oster par sa cruauté le bien d'autruy, où il n'a riens. Quant on

(1) see R.L. Kilgour, op.cit. Chapter VIII.

voit sa querelle bonne et son sang bien combatre, la larme en vient a l'ueil. (—) Je croy qu'il est bien heureux en ceste monde et en l'autre, qui sert les armes en ceste oppinion, et qu'il est vray commis de Dieu.'(1) If so much that seems fundamental to the concept of chivalry needed such explanation, then there must have been grounds for grave doubts about its future at Bueil's time.

Nevertheless, XVIth. century writers looked back upon the 'ancienne noblesse' as the ideal after which all should strive. La Noue praised them: 'ceste florissante & tres grande noblesse, adonné à justice & prouesse .. de ceste grosse souche il est sorty abondance de tres-excellens personnages, qui ont grandement servy & profité à leur patrie. (—) celle qui aujourd'huy a succedé aux biens des ancestres ... s'est abastardie & esloignee des anciennes moeurs.'(2) Fourquevaux had said substantially the same thing: 'La noblesse de France n'est plus estimee ainsi qu'elle souloit.'(3) He was referring to the practice which had grown up whereby nobles, summoned to the military levy, would send their deputies instead.

The nobility argued that their status had been devalued, however, Monluc, on receiving an honour from the king, had to explain that it was worth mentioning: 'en ce temps-là ce n'estoit pas peu de chose ny a si bon marché comme à ceste heure'(4); whilst, in similar vein, Tavannes the elder is reported to have exclaimed of the Duc de Retz 'S'il a l'état de maréchal de France, je donnerai le mien à mon valet.'(5) However, it was argued that the nobility of XVIth. century France was no disgrace to its

(1) Le Jouvencel, ed.cit. p.332.

(2) Discours, ed.cit. p.133.

(3) Instructions, ed.cit. p.23 recto.

(4) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.141.

(5) Tavannes: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.14 column A (Introduction).

king. Monluc, ever ready to put in a good word for himself, fell to the task of praising the Gascon nobility with alacrity: 'Il n'y a prince au monde qui ait la noblesse plus volontaire que le nostre. Un petit sousris de son maistre eschauffe les plus refroidis. Sans crainte de changer prez, vignes et moulins en chevaux et armes, on va mourir au lict que nous appellons le lict d'honneur.'(1) Monluc only requested that due recompense be given for services rendered, and that the king should not keep his nobles inactive for too long.(2) Even La Noue, in his critical appraisal of the French nobility, found words to praise them: they were not the equals of the Spanish, Polish or Italian aristocrats, but still they had 'assez d'esprit, pour se bien conduire; assez de force pour se conserver, & assez de biens pour s'entretenir.'(3)

Faults there were, however, not least being the tendency to overspend on inessentials. The old-style nobles 'n'avoient garde de se detruire en habillemens, comme les gentilzhommes d'aujourd'huy sont.'(4); La Noue fulminated against the 'folles & superflues despenses,' adding that 'le gentilhomme français est excessif en ce à quoy il s'affectionne.' (5) Much money was wasted on litigation, said Monluc: 'Que pleust à Dieu que le roy.. feist brusler tous les livres des loix ... et que les procès ne puissent durer plus de deux ans. Si le roy faisoit cela, il se pourroit vanter d'avoir ung monde de soldatz que seroient forcés de prendre les armes, puisqu'ilz n'auroient que faire en ung palais.'(6); whilst La Noue found

(1) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.149: financial ruin stared most noblemen in the face because of their part in the Civil Wars. Monluc, however, made his fortune.

(2) ibid, p.198.

(3) Discours, ed.cit. p.179.

(4) Instructions, ed.cit. p.25 verso.

(5) Discours, ed.cit. p.191.

(6) Commentaires, ed.cit. pp.620-1.

fault also with the prédilection for duelling: 'La noblesse mesme, qui s'est tousjours monstree tres-prompte à faire de beaux actes, est aujourd'huy la premiere qui maintient ceste depravation.'(1)

In an effort to popularise the manly pursuit of arms, the military profession was praised by La Noue in comparison with the luxurious life of the Court (2): It was the nobles' obligation and prerogative to wage war. Monluc advanced the claims of noble soldiery against those of salaried commoners: 'j'ai tousjours cogneu par experience que cinquante gentils-hommes feront plus d'effect que deux cens soldats; nous retenons quelque chose de l'honneur que nos peres nous ont acquis, y ayant gaigné ce beau tiltre de noble.'(3)

Monluc was liberal with his advice on the obligations conferred by noble status: as he saw it, it brought more burdens than pleasures, burdens which should nevertheless be willingly shouldered. 'Songez, vous qui estes nez gentils-hommes, que Dieu vous a faicts naistre pour porter les armes, pour servir vostre prince, et non pas pour courre le lièvre ou faire l'amour. Quand la paix viendra, vous aurez vostre part au plaisir.'(4) He could not understand why so many hot-blooded youngsters set themselves up in sedentary occupations: 'Entrant quelquefois aux parlemens de Thoulouse et de Bourdeaus, ... je me suis cent fois estonné comme il estoit possible que tant de jeunes hommes s'amusassent ainsi dans un palais, veu que ordinairement le sang boult à la jeunesse. ... le Roy ne sçauroit mieux faire que de chasser ces gens de là et les accoustumer aux armes .. ne sçay pas quel choix il y a de mourir d'une pierre dans les reins ou d'une balle

(1) Discours ed cit. p.279

(2) ibid, p.118.

(3) Commentaires, ed.cit. p.789.

(4) ibid, p.249.

par la teste.'(1)

Conversely, La Noue, far from commenting upon the difficulty of persuading nobles to enter the military profession, declared that it was difficult for them to do anything else. 'Car estans nobles, les exercices des arts mechaniques & les trafiques leur tourneroient en vitupere, & faut qu'ils cerchent les liberaux & honnorables, entre lesquels les armes marchent..'(2) At all events, Monluc and La Noue agreed that the nobility were a special case, for they needed to preserve a special kind of dignity; for the latter, it resolved itself into the statement that 'le noble a davantage d'obligation que l'ignoble à se porter vertueusement.'(3) Monluc subscribed to the Machiavellian creed: 'si vous estes telque vous devez estre, c'est-à-dire, craint et aymé, vous tout seul en vaudrez cent.'(4) The preservation of a certain distance was necessary for the nobility's unique position of authority and service, for the right to wear the sword was not an honour to be flaunted - it was the symbol of an ancient obligation. Fourquevaux posited this belief at the very beginning of his Instructions: '..i'estime qu'il nous soit permis user des armes contre ceulx qui nous courẽt sus: & qu'a ceste occasion le glaive soit esté baillé aux seigneurs pour deffendre les petitz & les gens de bien d'estre gourmandez pas les plus fors, & par les meschans .. ce n'est pas sans cause qu'ilz portẽt le glaive, ne sans mystere.'(5) Monluc also pointed out that the sword was no idle decoration. However, one may identify a stronger appeal to the nobility in his often inflammatory remarks about his old adversaries, the Huguenots. After the 'meschante entreprinse de

(1) ibid, p.345.

(2) Discours ed.cit. p.218

(3) ibid.

(4) Commentaires ed.cit. p.605. See Pintard, loc.cit. p.389.

(5) Instructions, ed.cit. p.1 recto.

Meaux (1)', he addressed an assembly of notables at Limoges, spurring them on to crush the haughty protestants, and, in the same breath, reminding them of their duty: 'Quel bonheur vous est-ce de voir que Dieu vous a reservez pour venger en une telle injure et assister vostre roy et prince naturel en une telle necessite!'(2) Nothing could be so well calculated to engender the feeling of solidarity and loyalty that Monluc wished to see among his peers than the references to the dangers which threatened them all. Like many, he was suspicious of the republican and subversive elements within the Huguenot ranks when they declared that 'ils ne payeroient aucun devoir aux gentilshommes.'(3) The artful old soldier flattered the nobility in its fears and its vanities, too: elsewhere he was careful to stress that without their goodwill nothing of value could be achieved.(4)

The portrait of the aristocracy of XVIth. century France which is drawn by La Noue, Monluc and Tavannes is predominantly optimistic, for whilst deploring its spendthrift habits, its apathy and its mistaken conception of its duty, all believed that it could readily improve its position. Monluc's work might be termed a rallying-cry for the nobility, and an affirmation of the belief that anything may be accomplished with vigour and enthusiasm. La Noue's tone, though scarcely less urgent, inspires more confidence; nevertheless, it was Monluc and Tavannes, not La Noue and Montaigne, who were most representative of the late XVIth. century gentry.

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(1) This was an attempt by the Protestants to secure the King's person which was defeated when the Court got wind of the plot and fled to the safety of Meaux, September 26th., 1567.

(2) Commentaires ed cit. p.609.

(3) ibid, p.486.

(4) ibid, p.786: Monluc boasted of his good standing with the nobility.

XVIII

The survival of the Crusading Spirit in Military Literature

If Civil War in France was regarded as despicable, wars abroad were felt to be preferable though unnecessary. Both raised questions of morality, for Christians should not fight Christians: the existence of an agressive non-Christian power with a strong foothold not only in the Holy Land but also in Eastern Europe only threw the immorality of European warfare into relief. Here was a war that must be fought: it was justified on grounds of security for the Western civilisation and based on Christian doctrine; furthermore, it provided a convenient outlet for the energies of impetuous warriors confined at home. Perhaps it might bring about a resurgence of religious faith in a singularly godless age; united in a single movement against the encroachments of Islam, would not the nations of Europe forget their sectarian troubles and their jealousies, to the benefit of all? For centuries, the concept of chivalry had been closely linked with that of the Crusades. Although former efforts had been distinguished by brutality and betrayal, there were those who hoped that a Holy War would restore the militia to its former prestige and efficiency.

Early in the century it had seemed that some united effort would have to be made to check the Turkish advances, but it so happened that the greatest Turkish victory, at Mohacs in 1526, was also their last to have any significance. Trouble within the state and less aggressive leadership meant that the threat, though ever present, was never carried into effect. For the men of Europe the Turks were still a power to reckon with, none the less. France's oft-criticised alliance with the Crescent powers had the desired effect upon her enemies, though activity in this, as in other Turkish spheres, was confined to the seas and the coast of North Africa.

Logically, then, it was the maritime powers who harassed the Turks, not from any sense of Christian mission, but merely to preserve their sea-borne trade links. The Venetians must take the credit for what little crusading spirit there was, and also for the first real Western victory against the Turks in over a century, at Lepanto on October 7th., 1571.

The immediate result of this reverse, which put only a partial check on the Turkish supremacy in the Mediterranean, was to raise the hopes of those who wished to see another Crusade. Pinning their hopes on a repetition of Lepanto and Malta (1565), they planned their campaigns on paper and advanced the claims of the exercise to all authorities. The merits of crusading had been advanced many times before, and in many guises. Philippe de Mezieres, like writers of the XVIth. century, had urged the great princes of his day, Richard II of England, and Charles VI of France, to unite against the Saracens in his book, Le Songe du Vieil Pèlerin of 1389 (1). Petit Jehan de Saintré had reached the climax of his career when, with his own hand, he killed the Grand Turk in Antoine de la Sale's 1456 adaptation of the Nicopolis crusade of 1396: in a work which was half instruction and half comedy, it is hard to see whether La Sale thought the deed admirable or not.(2) Two years before, the projected renewal of Burgundian chivalry had prompted Philippe le Bon to mount the abortive 'Banquet du Faisan', a gathering of knights at Lille at which, with due pomp and celebration, the vows of a hundred crusaders were sworn; they were never to be fulfilled. The Burgundian tradition of chivalry was merely theatrical and semi-literary rather than functional.(3) Regrettably, Charles VIII's crusade, which set forth in 1494, placed too much emphasis on setting the European

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(1) See Kilgour, op.cit. Chapter V (i).

(2) ibid, p.306.

(3) ibid, p.257.

house in order (which is to say that Charles wished to extend his power by asserting his rights to Naples), and in fact never approached its ultimate objective, the reconquest of the Holy Land. The French certainly did not appear to be contributing as much to the crusading ideal as the Spaniards, who were able to rest upon their laurels after their expulsion of the Moors.

Fourquevaux attempted to interpret the various issues at stake in a practical and moral light. Christian disunity in Europe, he declared, was to the advantage of the Turks whose empire was daily increased: 'il y a peril que à la longue ilz ne soient gens pour nous oster tout bellement des mains ce peu de païs que nous avons de reste.'(1) Moral though Fourquevaux's approach was, it was nevertheless not directly Christian. There was no intention of wresting Jerusalem from the infidel, and any 'crusade' must content itself with retrieving that part of Europe that had been overrun, and with avenging the atrocities, kidnappings, circumcisions and damnable indoctrinations perpetrated in those regions.(2) The action was justified in that the Turks were the aggressors and because the Christian nations must reckon with God's wrath at their slackness. Throughout the century one reads much of so-called Turkish atrocities cited as justification of a crusade: Fourquevaux mentioned the Turks' apparent lack of humanitarian principles in battle and their use of slave-soldiers whose function was to draw the enemy's fire, be slaughtered and provide with their corpses mere material for the filling in of ditches and obstacles in the way of the rest of the army.(3)

A characteristic of commentators upon Turkish affairs later in the century was that few had yet come into contact with the infidel hordes.

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(1) Instructions, ed.cit. p.1 verso.

(2) ibid, p.2 recto.

(3) ibid, p.88 verso.

Philippe de Mezieres, 200 years previously, had been present at the Crusade of 1365 which had culminated in the two-day plundering of Alexandria, then a Christian stronghold. Now René de Lucinge (1), who had been involved in a number of campaigns against the Turks in Hungary, put forward his crusade-projects, based on his experiences: printed firstly in 1588, they re-appeared in 1614, with the title Histoire de l'origine, progrez et déclin de l'empire des Turcs. Lucinge's was an exceptional plan in that it did not envisage a united effort by the European powers to expel the invaders. On the other hand, Joseph de Tremblay (2) took an academic view of the matter with his Milice Chrétienne and Turciade of the period from 1615 to 1625; the latter was another imitation of Homer's Iliad, in Latin. Jean-Aimé de Chavigny (3) wrote a Discours parentetique sur le choses Turques, but this was a compilation from the works of an historian Georgiewitz (4) and La Noue.

La Noue did not have first-hand knowledge of the Turks, but it is notable that his self-appointed publisher, Du Fresne, visited Constantinople between February and June 1573, according to an account in Italian left by him.(5) The difference between these two Huguenots was that whilst Du Fresne advised Henri IV to continue the French-Turkish alliance, La Noue disapproved strongly of all commerce with the heathen. In his Discours XXI, he presented good reasons why the Turkish alliance was disadvantageous to France: the brutality and tyranny of the Turks

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(1) 1553-1615, Ambassador of Savoy to the French Court.

(2) Joseph François Leclerc du Tremblay, 1577-1638.

(3) Chavigny was a disciple of Nostradamus.

(4) Bartholomew Georgiewitz, died 1560, a Hungarian traveller who had been sold into slavery while young. He published a number of books about the Turks.

(5) See Clarence D. Rouillard: The Turk in French History, Thought and Literature (1520-1660), Paris Boivin, 1938, pp.218 et seq.

could not help but cast down the ideals of Law, Discipline and Honesty.(1) Too ambitious to be contained, they would become a liability to their allies (2), whilst the association of a Christian nation with the damned did not dispose other European nations to be amicable toward France,(3) especially in view of the flourishing trade in Christian slaves conducted by the Turks.(4) In any case, there was no likelihood of war between France and her neighbours and the iniquitous alliance could be allowed to lapse without any harm coming of it.(5) To continue it would be to accelerate a decline in moral standards: 'ce seroit degenerer du zele, de la valeur & prudence de nos ancestres, si nous voulions long temps persister en amitié avec ces barbares.'(6)

Sir Charles Oman turned La Noue's plans for a Crusade to ridicule: 'This admirable idealist dreamed of a Pan-Christian movement against Islam, and vainly conceived of a series of campaigns in which the Duke of Alva should lead one of two co-operating armies, and Henry of Navarre another! ' (7) With hindsight it is easy to scoff at La Noue's hopes, but he was aware of the conditions which must attend such an enterprise, not the least of which was a religious settlement and universal goodwill in Europe, and his projects found many eminent listeners including Sully and Henri IV. However, it is difficult to avoid drawing parallels with Picrochole when reading the hypothetical scheme of manoeuvres by which Christian princes were intended to recover the territory now under the rule of Selim II in the space of four years.(8)

(1) Discours, ed.cit. p.420.

(2) ibid, p.422.

(3) ibid, p.424.

(4) ibid, p.429.

(5) ibid, p.435.

(6) ibid, p.436.

(7) War .. in the Sixteenth Century, ed.cit., Chapter I.

(8) Discours XXII.

La Noue imagined a confrontation, during the first year's campaign, in which all the details were foreseen, including who would attack, and how many salvoes the Turkish artillery would fire; the Christians would win the day, having slain or taken prisoner half the enemy's infantry. By the end of the second season, the Turks would be confined beyond the Grecian archipelago, whilst the third season would bring a clearing of the Danube basin and a landing at Salonika. The fourth and final year would witness the liberation of Constantinople after 140 years of oppression. But La Noue still had both feet firmly on the ground: he realised that the profits of such a campaign might be unequally shared, and that the house of Austria would strengthen its position more than anyone else - a potentially dangerous consequence.(1) It was his plan, not to provide a blueprint for the campaign, but 'pour eschauffer les affections des personnes valeureuses à entreprendre.'(2), and with what success we may judge from the attention it received at the Court of Henri IV, though that monarch's 'Grand Dessein' embraced more than the idea of a crusade (3).

La Noue's favourable view of a crusade centred upon Constantinople was accepted unquestioningly by Tavannes, who in the preface Enfans, Neveux Cousins devoted a long section to a study of the methods of waging war on the Turks (4): for him the morality of such a war was above reproach; his concern was solely with practical matters. Not all military writers were so easily convinced: Monluc felt a twinge of conscience, perhaps, in considering a crusade which for him was still a religious vocation at bottom: 'Il ne faut pas renouveller les guerres de Terre-Saincte, car nous ne sommes pas si devotieux que les bonnes gens du temps passé.'(5) This

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(1) Discours ed cit. p.449.

(2) ibid, p.464.

(3) See Sully's account in Book 30 of his Mémoires, ed.cit.

(4) Tavannes: Mémoires ed.cit. p.38 column B.

(5) Commentaires ed.cit. p.669.

did not prevent an expression of regret that the powers of Western Europe could not have united against Soliman, for Monluc did not doubt that it would have been completely successful.(1) Jean de la Taille felt that the truly up-to-date prince would be wise to seek martial fame anywhere but in the Holy Land; his attitude of complacent non-intervention did not, for once, derive from Machiavelli:

'Mais pour bien guerroyer je ne veux que mon Roy
Aille en Jerusalem: qu'il guerroye pour soy,
Laisse la ces lieux saincts & leur terre destruicte
Que jusques a present DIEU veult estre maudite.'(2)

That the Turks were the instrument of God's vengeance for the sins of the Western world was a common enough view, and Tavannes regarded the French alliance with Turkey as a crime which was to be expiated by the suffering endured in 35 years of Civil War (3): as if in answer to Monluc, he declared: 'toutes sortes d'armes ne sont permises pour vaincre son ennemy.' (4) La Noue deplored the attitude of 'any port in a storm' which had led Francois Ier to contract the alliance in the first place (5), but it is notable that in this case he insisted that the promptings of morality be heeded whilst, in the case of the immoral lineage of the arquebus, moral objections were drowned under arguments of expediency. This was precisely Monluc's criterion in judging the matter: 'Tous les princes qui soustenoient le party de l'Empereur faisoient grand cas de ce que le Roy, nostre maistre avoit employé le Turc à son secours. Mais contre son ennemy on peut de tout bois faire flèches. Quant à moy, si je pouvois appeller tous les esprits des enfers pour rompre la teste à mon ennemy qui me veut rompre

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(1) ibid, p.31.

(2) Le Prince Necessaire, ed.cit. cxxvii.

(3) Tavannes: Mémoires ed.cit. p.80 column B.

(4) ibid.

(5) Discours ed.cit. p.418.

la mienne, je le ferois de bon coeur. Dieu me le pardoint.'(1) La Noue set out to prove, in any case, that the Turkish alliance was unprofitable, and there was in this at least the implication that had it not been so, he would not have counselled its abandonment. His objections, then, were not uniquely religious. Of the two, Monluc's attitude is perhaps the more disturbing.

Monluc had a healthy respect for the Turkish army which was shared by many. For one thing, he had soldiered alongside them briefly at the Siege of Nice in 1543 when, to cement the alliance, a naval force had been billetted in Provence. Monluc paid court to their martial superiority: 'Ils sont plus robustes, obeissans et patiens que nous: mais je ne croy pas qu'ils soyent plus vaillans. Ils ont un advantage: c'est qu'ils ne songent rien qu'à la guerre.'(2) Tavannes's own comments were essentially the same: 'Les Turcs ont un grand avantage, en ce que leurs gens de justice, leurs religieux, financiers et tous autres vont à la guerre; au contraire, la moitié des chrestiens tiennent les bras croisez.'(3) La Noue painted an utterly different picture, of a decadent and effeminate nation ripe for collapse; yet he also, unaware of any apparent contradiction, praised the Turkish soldiers, declaring that none were more sober, more obedient nor more diligent than they.(4) Yet he had never met any(5).

In all projected 'crusades' at the turn of the XVIth. century there was the common characteristic that the Holy Land was not the desirable military objective; the triumph of Christendom's struggle was to be consummated by the recapture, not of Jerusalem, but of Constantinople.

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(1) Commentaires ed.cit. pp.81-2.

(2) ibid, p.92.

(3) Tavannes: Mémoires ed.cit. p.46 column B.

(4) Discours ed.cit. p.461.

(5) ibid, p.437.

As the military profession had lost sight of chivalry, so had the Holy War lost touch with its origins. There was nothing ridiculous in such plans, for they genuinely weighed up the threatening situation in Europe; the means, however, sometimes appear humorous. Tavannes, for example, expressed the pitiable hope that Louis XIII might succeed where greater men had failed: 'L'experience a fait voir que les entreprinses où il n'y avoit pas beaucoup d'apparence de bon succez, celles qui estoient faites par des jeunes roys en sortant de l'enfance, et quelquefois avec peu de forces, heureusement reüssissoient.'(1): surely Tavannes realised that the war would not be won by beginner's luck, not when there was so much evidence to show how effective was the Turkish Army. Such hypotheses did much damage to the case, as did the universal respect with which all writers viewed the adversary. To this extent, all crusade projects were self-defeating,(2) and there need be no better proof that they were at bottom pipe-dreams than that none was ever seriously put into execution. In the first place, none of the proponents was sufficiently important to carry much weight with those who might have had it in their power to initiate such action: in addition, the idea of a crusade was constantly being suggested and was a commonplace topic for discussion. We find it mentioned in the works of military writers to whom it seemed appropriate for rounding off any discussion of the morality of warfare. Surrounded by the confusion of a civil war, they preferred to speak of a straightforward campaign which none could criticise them for prosecuting. The crusade was, then, partly idealistic and was certainly farfetched when viewed in the light of more pressing problems of civil disruption at home.

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(1) Tavannes: Mémoires ed.cit. p.39 column B.

(2) See Rouillard op.cit. pp.362-3.

XIX

Military Writers and Reform

Monluc and Tavannes were writers who in their reviewing of events they had witnessed sometimes used their hindsight to suggest how matters might have been better handled. Both were by nature irascible and it was not to be expected that they would allow themselves to shoulder all the blame for past mistakes if such could be just as well attributed to the prevailing attitudes of the establishment. Naturally, their recommendations for improvement were limited to matters arising from their own profession: we have seen how they and other writers dealt fully, if haphazardly, with the military vocation and with problems peculiar to the lesser nobility. In recommending the abandonment of the reliance upon mercenary forces, and the advocacy of the creation of a permanent standing army, they were raising their voices in unison with the majority. Occasionally each stepped beyond the bounds of the commonplace to offer more specialised advice, the merits of which may have been slight, but which served to illustrate that soldiers who took up the pen were not always content to say what everyone else had already said: some of these utterances are among the most original and most quaint in their writings. Rarely did they venture beyond military matters, but when they did, the result was revealing and sometimes surprising. Neither can be classed with a true 'moraliste' like La Noue, whose intention was to suggest reform, nor with a 'reformateur militaire' like Fourquevaux, whose work was tailored to the re-organisation of one institution: these were the true reformers who dealt with the broad issues of morals and administration. On the contrary, Tavannes and Monluc were conservatives who merely desired to smooth the way for their comrades by

piecemeal improvements, and it would be wrong to attempt to trace any moral thread running through their projects for reform, even if the very diversity of the material did not render this task impracticable.

In the military sphere, the reform of strategic practices could best be illustrated by memoir-writers like Monluc and Tavannes who could comment on the effectiveness of procedures they had tried themselves; advice of this sort is abundant in the Commentaires, whilst Tavannes's remarks about siege-craft and fortifications were so relevant and yet so advanced that they were considered worth plagiarising twenty years later (1). While Tavannes suggested the founding of a military academy to ensure that soldiers made a good start in their careers (2), Monluc wished them to put a fitting end to those careers in a home for old soldiers, which would be a royal foundation: 'Certes, sire (3).... une des principalles choses dont vous devriez avoir soin, c'est d'establir des lieux pour les povres soldats estropiats et blecez, tant pour les penser que pour leur donner quelque pencion. Pouvez-vous moins faire, puisqu'ils vous font present de leur vie?'(4) Here Monluc appeared to be moved by the spirit of fair play, as indeed he was when he hoped to see due credit given for services rendered. Since even kings are subject to lapses of memory, Monluc suggested that one's deeds should be commemorated by the inclusion of one's name on a 'roll of honour', from which the selection of persons due for promotion might be made (5). Having been passed over himself in the selection procedures, Monluc hoped to see established an ambitious system of selection involving examination of

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(1) See Mémoires of Tavannes, ed.cit. pp.177-8.

(2) ibid, p.336 column B.

(3) 'Sire' can only refer to Charles IX, this being a later addition.

(4) Commentaires ed.cit. p.447.

(5) ibid, p.814.

suitable applicants before the 'parlements', in the belief that, by this means, the worst excesses of favouritism would be avoided (1). All who were to be given posts of responsibility in the army should be able to give proof of their daring by exhibiting the number of their wounds: c'est signe qu'ils n'ont pas tousjours croupy sur les cendres.' Such a proposition had at least the virtue of appointing by merit and consultation, and not by the whisperings of fawning courtiers who might have axes to grind. Gaspard de Tavannes, in marked contrast to Monluc's concern that high office should not be lightly conferred, affected disdain for the title 'Maréchal de France' when it was conferred on him (2). True honour proceeded from heroic deeds and not from hollow decorations. The notion that the office might have been granted in recognition of his heroic deeds does not seem to have entered his head, if we are to believe his son's account; Monluc certainly thought in this way, Nevertheless, Jean de Tavannes was of the opinion that all the records of preferments subsisting after the death of the holder should be destroyed - to read them would inflame posterity with dangerous ambition (3).

Turning their attention from military matters to the problems of society at large, military writers generally disregarded the financial and economic position of the state: so much explains their irresponsible advocacy of costly wars in various theatres. Largely the lower and merchant classes were ignored because of their relative unimportance in warfare except as the unwilling purveyors of provender and booty. They obtained scant sympathy from military writers, though Monluc swam against the current in maintaining that the peasant was a reliable and sturdy, if gullible, soldier. Their few remarks upon the social hierarchy concerned the Court, the Law and the

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(1) ibid, p.801-2, and p.811.

(2) Tavannes: Mémoires ed.cit. p.365.

(3) ibid.

nobility. They were all anxious to see the nobility taking a greater part in the administration (1), particularly in law and the municipalities: '.. la noblesse s'est faict grand tort et dommaige de desdaigner .. les charges des villes, principalement des capitales comme Thoulouse et Bourdeaus. (—) .. refusant ces charges ou les laissant prendre les gens de ville s'emparent de l'auctorité, et quand nous arrivons, il les faut boneter et leur faire la cour.'(2) In this statement, Monluc did not cloak his true motives in the guise of the promptings of a social conscience, but he pointed out subsequently the sharp division between town and country interests which was for so long a major problem in France: 'Nous avons la clef des champs et eux des villes, et cependant il faut que nous passions par leurs mains et que pour le moindre affaire nous allions avec beaucoup de peine trotter par les villes.'(3) Tavannes's view, it must be conceded, was rather less selfish on behalf of the nobility; their participation in government would benefit the state as much as themselves (4).

Both were agreed on the decadence of the law, and both introduced the matter in a review of the various crazes which sapped the strength of the nobility. Put bluntly by Tavannes, 'Il n'y a vollerie plus grande que celle qui s'exerce sous le manteau de justice.'(5), the case against the profiteering attitude of the judiciaries seemed as pointed as the condemnation of the nobility's taste for litigation, but it was supported only by a lame plea that Latin should cease to be the language of the courts (6). Monluc called for an end to the present system of long-drawn-out judicial actions, if only to keep able-bodied soldiers out of court: he recommended that cases

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(1) See above Chapter XVII.

(2) Commentaires ed.cit. p.685.

(3) ibid

(4) Tavannes: Mémoires ed.cit. p.55 column A.

(5) ibid, p.281 column B.

(6) ibid, p.282 column B.

should be 'guillotined' after two years and that, having burnt all the statute-books, the king should make 'une justice toute nouvelle, juste et saincte (car j'oserois dire qu'il n'y a monarque en chrestienté qui s'aide de ces loix que les roys de France; tout les autres ont des loix faictes par eux pour abreger tous proces...'(1)

In the process of consultation, Monluc was convinced that kings all too often paid heed to bad advice. Kings were, in any case, vulnerable to unsound counsel: ',,ils n'y voyent que par les yeux d'autruy et n'y oyent que par les oreilles des autres.'(2) For this ill, Monluc suggested no remedy: by implication, however, we understand that he preferred meetings of the Privy Council to be conducted in a manner similar to that at which he was present before departing for Siena (3). In addition, he did not hesitate to suggest that advisers who dealt in falsehoods should have their wings clipped (4). Monluc did not fear to patronise kings with his advice and even indicated that rebellious nobles could be kept in check if they were forced to live away from their estates: 'car un roy doit tousjours desirer que ceux qui sont ses subjects, s'ils sont grands et puissants, soyent dans le coeur du royaume et non aux extremités, car lors ils n'osent lever les cornes.'(5) He had the support of history, for William of Normandy had forced his vassals to live separated from their fiefs, five hundred years before, in order to prevent sedition; Louis XIV was to take the process to its extreme in the following century. Monluc's remark was prompted by the machinations of the heretic Antoine de Navarre, now dispossessed of his kingdom and a source of Huguenot plots; it was strangely prophetic of policy under Henri IV, who

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(1) Commentaires ed.cit. p.621.

(2) ibid, p.767.

(3) ibid, pp.251-5.

(4) ibid, pp.767-8: '..il leur rongneroit les ongles.'

(5) ibid, p.699.

crushed the last renegade baron, Bouillon, in his stronghold of Sedan in March 1606 (1).

It seemed that there was a general prejudice among soldiers against meddlesome women, especially at Court. Monluc stated emphatically: 'Le Roy devroit clorre la bouche aux dames qui se meslent de parler en sa cour; de là viennent tous les rapports, toutes les calomnies. (—) Le Roy leur devroit commander de se mesler de leurs affaires.'(2) Their influence was more than enough to send men to their deaths, against all justice. Monluc left his readers to guess why, but Tavannes was less modest of the truth: 'Elles tiennent les roys par les pieces qu'ils estiment le plus, leur font oublier les capitaines assiegez en Italie. (—) Peu sert en France de sçavoir les batailles et assauts, qui ne sçait la Cour et les dames.'(3) Even so, a king with an ounce of sense could see through them: it was, he said, merely a matter of will-power which had been regrettably lacking of late. He could not resist the inclusion of a popular epigram: 'Alexandre voit les femmes quand il n'a plus d'affaires, François voit les affaires quand il n'a plus de femmes.'(4) The reasons behind this mistrust of the fairer sex may lie no deeper than resentment of Catherine de Médicis and her squad of ladies who, it was rumoured, usually managed to effect suitable changes of heart in key protagonists in the politics of the Valois Court. Significantly, Tavannes brought up the topic in conjunction with the accession of Henri II, when a change of mistress caused much scene-shifting at Court: however, Tavannes showed little respect for chronology when indulging in his wider generalisations. Monluc's opinion of the Florentine

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(1) D. Seward: The First Bourbon, London 1971

(2) Commentaires ed.cit. p.617.

(3) Tavannes: Mémoires ed.cit. p.69 column B.

(4) ibid, p.75 column B.

woman was sufficiently bad in any case (1), though a curious mixture of respect and dislike compelled him often to make common cause with her. Nevertheless, Monluc wrote a man's book about a man's world, or armies and politics within them: there is generally no place for women in it.(2)

Improvements may have been perfunctorily suggested, but Tavannes suggested one reform which would have struck at the roots of the problem of creating leaders for the nation. It was nothing if not ambitious: 'Les monarchies et republiques devroient marier les braves aux filles des vaillans pour avoir des enfans genereux, exempts des meslanges et bigarrures des hommes.'(3) Monluc had hinted at population-control, but here was Tavannes envisaging the creation of a pure race of supermen, an ideal which, in our own time, was partly practised by Nazi scientists. In the XVIth. century, such must still be regarded as an extravagant flight of fancy.

Tavannes's plan was peculiar to himself, but when he brought forward the matter of duelling, which had recently come into great prominence, he touched on a subject which raised much argument. He theorised that its sudden spread had come about through lack of a foreign war, but condemned the art of fencing because it did not help to win wars. La Noue styled the duel as one of the curses of the nobility in his Discours XII. Duels were fought over insignificant matters, and the highest gentlemen were constantly setting the worst examples. The concept of honour had been over-idealised, and should be founded on virtue, not on the 'fait d'armes'. To eradicate the practice would require positive action: those who killed in

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(1) See Commentaires ed.cit. p.29, p.467 and p.589.

(2) The court, once Henri III was dead, did not exist until Henri IV was firmly established after 1595; it was not, however, as refined a place as formerly, and women like Marguerite de Valois looked out of place. Nevertheless, it did not lack for splendour: see Seward, op.cit. p.177.

(3) Tavannes: Mémoires ed.cit. p.366 column B.

public display should be ignored, even ostracised; deputies and go-betweens should be imprisoned or banished; meanwhile, a royal tribunal should hear grievances and arbitrate peaceably between intending combatants (1). La Noue's analysis of the problem was good, but his remedies could not seriously have been applied until strong government again became the rule. The idea of taking grievances to the king for judgement was a logical one, and re-appeared, if not in real life, on the stage in Corneille's Le Cid; there, however, the resolution had been reached and the function of the tribunal was one of reconciliation.

Bouillon included a sheepish account of a duel with Duras in his memoirs: having presented himself at the appointed place, his opponent's failure to appear forced him to re-arrange the affair for the following day. With a full complement of duellers, this time, and having chosen swords of a regular length (for to use swords of five or six feet in length was a later dastardly practice), they began to fight. Duras's seconds threw themselves upon Bouillon, who was left wounded in 28 different places. The lively account of this brawl was immediately followed by a moral condemnation of duelling, but we cannot doubt that Bouillon relished the story; the wonder is that he lived to tell the tale (2). As the century wore on, duels became less honourable, and more bloody and treacherous if we are to believe Brantome's accounts, all of which are characterised by an utter dearth of humanity and betray a flippant attitude towards studied cruelty (3): no moral viewpoint was propounded here. The sheer magnitude of the losses incurred in duels forced Henri IV to introduce exacting legislation against them, though his minister Sully disagreed with its harshness and obvious

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(1) Discours XII.

(2) Tavannes: Mémoires ed.cit. pp.140-45.

(3) See ed.cit. of the Discours of Brantôme, Vol. VIII.

impracticality (1).

In reviewing all these questions, one is made aware of the writers' liberty to comment upon anything which struck their imaginations. La Noue and Fourquevaux were more than commentators, whereas Monluc and Tavannes could hardly be credited with having thought very deeply about problems of their day. We have seen that they were selfishly motivated, even when their inspiration was fairness. Monluc stated, in connection with the matter of female sway, 'Je ne veux pas faire le reformateur.'(2); yet, elsewhere he asserted that if only he dared he could expose many other malpractices to the Duc d'Anjou, 'car certes il n'y a que trop à dire et à refformer.'(3) It seemed then that he had not only neglected to think methodically on his subject-matter, but also on the role he was to adopt as a writer. If Tavannes was marginally more consistent, it was because he approached almost every topic with suspicion and cynicism.

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(1) Sully: Mémoires ed.cit. Vol. III p.255: the law would be flouted because so many pardons would have to be granted to all the higher-ranking duellers who were convicted. Sully was also exasperated by Henri's unwillingness to allow the law to take its course in the matter: ibid, Vol. IV pp.415-27.

(2) Commentaires ed.cit. p.178.

(3) ibid, p.815. This 'remonstrance au Duc d'Anjou followed a similar 'remonstrance au Roi'; Monluc addressed himself very specifically to different readers in different sections of the Commentaires. Here his remarks were directed at the future Henri III in his capacity of Catholic leader, fellow-soldier and patron.

XX

Towards an evaluation of Military Literature

Abel Lefranc, in an article dealing with Fourquevaux at a time when the Instructions were less well known (1), stated that no study of the renaissance or of the influence exercised by the ancients on the ideas of that era could afford to ignore so farsighted a writer. Of far more interest to a study of military literature, however, was his somewhat unprepared closing remark: 'Il ouvre dignement la brillante série des écrivains militaires de la France moderne.'(2) Much may be read into this statement: we may first of all question the existence of a 'series' of military writers. Were their characteristics sufficiently congruent to permit of our speaking of a school of military literature? We are further permitted to ask if Fourquevaux's work was in any way the well-spring from which this stream flowed; Lefranc's remark suggested that 'modern' military literature did not exist before the XVIth. century: if this was so, where did it originate? Most important of all, however, is the question raised by the use of the epithet 'brillante': what was the literary worth of writers like La Noue, Tavannes and Monluc? : did they improve on the Serviteur or Fleurange? Did they establish a certain style of military literature?

The first confusion arises naturally from the lack of any clear distinction between pure history and pure literature in this field; certain works may not repay a literary approach (3). We are deterred by their

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(1) See the article quoted in Revue du Seizième Siècle, 1915, p.154.

(2) ibid.

(3) The Du Bellay memoirs are an example.

subject (1) or the objective underlying the work (2). Others may be coy about their own qualifications as writers (3), whilst by comparing their work with that of a La Noue we may feel we have prejudged the issue. Yet a very different conclusion attends a proper literary evaluation of this field, and incidentally helps to clarify the relationship between military works and what is generally regarded as 'literature'.

A superficial review of the approach to form in military writings is both helpful and interesting. If one tries to classify each work, one is immediately aware of the wide diversity of basic approach. The Serviteur wrote an encomiastic biography: Fleurange a semi-fictional autobiography (4). Monluc's work is difficult to label because it existed at two different times, in two different forms, and for avowedly different purposes; nevertheless, it is a pure autobiography (5), whilst the work of Jean de Tavannes is an autobiography of sentiments superimposed on a biography of his father. La Noue's is by no means a record of life, but a series of essays, whilst D'Aubigné's Histoire endeavours to cloak, even to drown, a partial autobiography in the testimony of others in order to produce total impartiality - a surprisingly strong edifice in spite of unsure foundations.

In each, except La Noue's, the material is ordered according to chronology; but one cannot allow this to pass without comment. In the case of the Serviteur, there is little digression from the theme to upset the march of the story: however, there is a preponderant amount of completely irrelevant material which it is impossible to regard as mere digression. Fleurange's asides do not count as digressions for the contrary

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(1) Fourquevaux's book had no literary justification at all.

(2) D'Aubigné's Histoire was almost intentionally dull.

(3) Monluc is the best example of this false modesty.

(4) This work was, then, similar to Bueil's.

(5) Bouillon's also qualifies for this description.

reason - they are so short as to escape notice. Monluc rarely digressed: his lengthy comments were prompted solely by the point under review. Hence repetition of similar events necessitated repetition of the corresponding range of remarks, and there is much of this. His solution was happier than Tavannes's: the latter's digressions, whilst avoiding repetition, took on a role which was no longer subsidiary to the biographical theme; existing almost as complete essays in their own right, they wander far from the chronological order until they fall into anachronisms. His father's life-story is cocooned in the son's mental wanderings (1). Even this is preferable to D'Aubigné's strictly chronological procedure with several different centres of interest; even here, there is much retracing of steps. It is at this stage that one realises that La Noue has little part in the discussion, for his work is neither ordered chronologically nor prone to digression; it is digression itself if we look upon it in the same way as we look upon Tavannes's moral discourses. In reality it is a totally different type of work, and merits separate consideration.

Taking, then, the biographical works, we find that in nearly all cases the total spread of the subject is explored: Monluc's Commentaires cover the years 1521 to 1576: we have noted some gaps and a slight change of emphasis after 1559, but this is no mean record. On the other hand Bouillon revealed only a very insignificant portion of 21 years from his life-story. In the cases of Fleurange, Bayard and Tavannes, the spread is only nominally that of the whole life, for the treatment of the figure we are intended to regard as the centre of the work is uneven and almost sketchy.

By the nature of their subject, none of the works makes any attempt

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(1) Though the material is different, it is substantially the same procedure as the Serviteur's.

to achieve more than an episodic character. Some doom themselves to an early failure in their haste to include as much circumstancial paraphernalia as was to hand at the time of writing. Monluc's adoration of eloquence in any form led to wholesale inclusion of verbatim speeches and documents (1) which are of intrinsic interest and valuable enough, but one feels that they are there because of a certain liking for display. Tavannes's peccadilloes in this context are much less acceptable, for the documents which he threw together in places give the work no extra attraction. Similarly it is no surprise to discover that formal divisions within the work do not compass within their limits any tangible progression; since little of the material is developed, being simply presented in such a way that it has only its own merits to recommend it, there is no sense of construction, of prepared climaxes (except very rarely) that correspond with pauses between sections. Monluc's Commentaires are divided into seven books, but only after the fourth do we feel that a break is necessary, and this is mere historical accident. For once, Monluc rose to the occasion with a few apposite remarks summing up the previous period and opening out the gloomy vista of the Civil Wars. The Serviteur and Fleurange chopped up their narratives into many short chapters, the profusion of which underlines their irrelevance to the flow of events. In view of the historical bent of his writings, Jean de Tavannes chose the seemingly logical solution of pausing between each reign; this was no more successful. The object of breaking up an historical narrative was not clearly understood by any of these writers; they did not see that each section might be made to have its own special point of emphasis, and to signal a step further towards some conclusion. They were hampered by the subject-matter, diffuse and confusing: the most obvious way to tell a story was tostart at the beginning and stop

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(1) There are few letters, however.

at the end; they did little to awaken the reader's curiosity as the book progressed: they had only the vaguest idea of their true objectives in writing. In the face of these facts, it is not surprising that their writings proceed aimlessly along an uncertain route without the usual literary mile-posts.(1) In any case, we cannot be certain that the capitulation of these works were not imposed by the original editors.

Accidentally or not, there are occasionally signs of a partial grasp of the advantages of deploying one's forces in such a way as to arouse interest, sustain it and satisfy it in relating an episode. Strangely, we find a skeletal example in the Histoire de Bayart, in the way that preparation for the narration of the Battle of Ravenna is made by the announcement in Chapter 51 that a combat with the Spaniards was in the offing. Chapter 53 elaborates upon parleys and tactics, and ends with a remark capable of arousing a desire to read on: 'Le lendemain il y eut une plus aspre et cruelle (bataille), et dont François et Espaignolz mauldiront la journée toute leur vie.'(2) One is not aware of a fitting climax to balance these preliminaries, for the centre of interest shifts to the wounded hero himself, though this is fitting enough in its way.

The episodes in the Commentaires which most have the sense of wholeness are three in number; they are Book III (the defence of Siena), and the episodes of the Pont Ste-Marie (3) and of the 'arquebusade'. (4)

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(1) It must be admitted that the opening pages of Tavannes's Mémoires show a constructional promise that is not extended to the rest: each of the preliminary four sections could be unrecognised chapters.

(2) ed.cit. p.203.

(3) Commentaires ed.cit. pp.753-6.

(4) ibid, p.780 et seq.

Though a stylist would have edited the third book considerably, the elements of well-told tale are all present, and one even has a sense of climax as it culminates in the favours and intimacy bestowed upon Monluc by Henri II - one of the very few 'happy endings' in the book. It is prepared when Monluc sees the king and counsels open war instead of inactivity, against the reasoned arguments of the wise men around the king. Almost immediately the action begins with Monluc's departure, first to Marseille and then into Italy: in two pages we have passed from the Council Chamber to the first engagement, a skirmish at Sant'Abbondio. There follow all the other episodes: the Battle of Marciano, the raid of Camollia, the bombardment of Siena, the treason of Borgne Pietro. This brings us to that fine scene of the town's capitulation, the proud procession past the besieging army, and the return home to report to the king. It has excellent descriptive passages of the effects of famine on the people, of the town's layout, of the refractory nature of the 'Siennois', of the extraordinary 'toilette' and its effects, and of the almost pageant-like exodus of the French Army. Odd passages were plagiarisms from earlier works, in particular that in praise of the Siena women (1), yet this narrative contains almost the only information we have about Monluc's daily life - the mere fact that he ate once a day during the siege from January to April 1555 (2): that, and the description of the 'mess dress' in which he appeared to hearten the Siennois, are details of a special kind. Sainte-Beuve accorded generous praise to this particular section (3) which, indeed, could exist in its own right.

Another section deserving praise, though a mere episode from a sequence of events, concerns the demolition of Coligny's bridge across the

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(1) See Courteault: Blaise de Monluc Historien, pp.79-80.

(2) Commentaires ed.cit. p.329.

(3) Causeries du Lundi for 23rd October 1854.

Garonne at Port Ste-Marie. The whole notion seems so improbable that the reader cannot fail to be fascinated by this rather tall story. Monluc's plan was to prevent Coligny's crossing the river, or at least to separate him from his supplies, by smashing the pontoon bridge constructed by his engineers. To do this from the safety of his position higher up the river would have been impossible if Monluc had not conceived the plan of cutting loose a floating wooden mill (1) and sending it down the fast-flowing river. The projectile was loosed at 11 p.m. and smashed the pontoons two hours later. The event was a nine-days'-wonder at Bordeaux, but Monluc's prosaic discussions of ingratitude and of the precarious subsistence of Bordeaux which immediately follow do not allow us to revel long in this triumph.

Finally, the 'arquebusade' episode is announced by Monluc's premonition of ill-fortune; never, he declared, had he suffered without prior warning. Putting a bold face on his fears, he went forth to the assault of Rabastens, and was shot in the face. Thenceforth the report is unemotional: the surgeon cleans the hideous wound, and Monluc gives himself over to a discussion of vengeance prompted by the outright massacre of the defenders of Rabastens by his soldiers for this very reason. In this case, the wound sparked off so many topics important to Monluc that he breathlessly plunged into them before the reader could properly understand the harm he had suffered.

Tension, even dramatic tension, certainly exists within the loose framework of Monluc's work, but the same cannot be truly said of Fleurange, Tavannes or D'Aubigné. In the latter case there are too many halts, where events are summarised, to permit an easy flow of narrative, let alone a grain of dramatic movement. The bias of the Histoire is towards a

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(1) See Legras: Blaise de Monluc, Paris 1926.

reference-work ethos and impartiality. Bias is, however, more noticeable elsewhere. Monluc's work was biased in its whole conception, towards Catholicism and monarchism, as well as towards Monluc himself. The Serviteur was partisan in his very title; Tavannes was a prominent Catholic reactionary. Still, they were human and ready to joke and make fun, if a little grimly, of their woes from time to time. Humour was notably absent from Tavannes's writings, but the Serviteur could be genial and Monluc satirical: soldiers who lose their wits in battle are like 'les yvrongnes qui voyent mille chandelles au coup'.(1) whilst of the English he said 'Honi soit il qui les aymera jamais..'(2), a parody of the Garter motto. The most human is the story of the old Imperial courtier whose gout was cured when a brick wall fell on him in his litter (3).

Fleurange seemed to have a predilection for recounting such faintly humorous prodigies in his book: we are told that the Venetian ambassador was 'un gros homme tondu, à tout les plus grandes oreilles que je visse oncques.'(4); later, after Ravenna, we are informed 'feust trouvé audict Ravenne un enfant monstre, le plus horrible qu'on vit jamais.'(5) Later still a parley in the Abbaye de Trécas is interrupted when a cannonball harmlessly passes in at one window and out at another (6). This weakness for oddities is almost the sole distinction in a turgid narrative, but does not suffice to impress itself positively upon the general tone.

If there is one word to describe the tenour of the Histoire de Bayart, that word is jubilant, at least in the sections relevant to the prowess of

(1) Commentaires ed.cit. p.178.

(2) ibid, p.179.

(3) ibid, p.313.

(4) Fleurange: Histoire ..., ed.cit. p.14 column B.

(5) ibid, p.29 column A.

(6) ibid, p.36 column A.

the hero. At the other end of the scale, Bouillon's tone is apologetic and introspective. Our impression is one of contrition in an intriguer looking back to the less guilty days of his youth and finding little to console him there. In common with D'Aubigné and Tavannes, the language is elevated and conveys no emotion; here the contrast with Monluc could not be greater, for he was by turns factual, vituperative, pathetic, jubilant, wheedling and domineering. All these qualities breathe through his writing, and provide variety and mutual relief which render the Commentaires very readable.

Monluc, outwardly very different from his contemporary protestant colleague, La Noue, had at least one quality in common with him: he wrote a work in which the reader may feel involved. Monluc's personality in the Commentaires, along with his assumption that the reader is a friend and 'confident', invite one to share with him his moments of triumph and depression, though circumstances are now so different and the themes obsolete by several centuries. The same is true of La Noue: his Discours speak so clearly of long-dead arguments that they live again. Nevertheless, our sympathy with their author is intellectual and not emotional. When we come to examine La Noue and his relationship with other military writers we find that his background is very similar, but that stylistically he is in a class of his own. True, he has as many facets as Monluc, but his tolerant attitude is more reminiscent of Michel de l'Hospital, his approach in writing illustrative of an acquaintance with Calvin. The work is not biographical; it is divided up with respect to its themes; it is unbiased and taut (apart from a few loose introductions and one or two rather abrupt conclusions) in its construction, thorough in its exploration of each topic and conservative in its use of humour in the pointing of morals.(1) 'C'est

(1) Particularly with regard to the 'livres d'Amadis', Discours VI.
An analysis of La Noue's style may be found in Hauser:
François de la Noue 1531-91, Hachette 1892, Chapter V.

quelque chose de bien plus relevé, et d'un mérite littéraire autrement vrai que la verve gasconne, tant vantée, d'un Blaise de Monluc, ou que le commérage d'un Pierre de Bourdeilles, abbé de Brantôme.'(1) La Noue, like Monluc, speaks to an attentive listener, and has a command of verbal felicities; his literary virtues advance the claim of his Discours to be regarded 'non seulement comme un précieux document, mais presque comme une oeuvre d'art ... c'est de la vraie prose française, et déjà de la bonne prose.'(2)

What do other military writers have to offer, stylistically speaking, to equal Monluc and La Noue? Bouillon has little concept of how best to tell a tale, and when we read (3) that an illness caused him to consider the state of his soul, thinking that an account of his conversion is to follow, we are doomed to disappointment. Ten pages later, when we next hear of this important change, it is a 'fait accompli'; this story, if such it may be termed, has a beginning and an end, but lacks a middle. His style only takes wings, as it were, in the exhortations addressed to his son (4), and then only because the narration has some identifiable relevance. For the rest, a portrait of the Duc d'Alençon (5) is all that claims attention. Surprisingly, the memoirs of Tavannes benefited little from his study of Monluc's book, for there is no range of emotion in them; the author is consistently surly and his style is of the most pedestrian and un-metaphorical. He rose to a commonplace simile to describe the upheavals of the Civil War ('C'est vértablement de la droicte main coupper la gauche, tourner le fer, le feu et le sang contre nous-mesmes.'(6)) and

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(1) Hauser, op.cit. p.194.

(2) ibid, p.200.

(3) Bouillon: Mémoires, ed.cit. p.88.

(4) ibid, p.35, p.45, p.73 and p.176.

(5) ibid, p.18.

(6) Tavannes: Mémoires ed.cit. p.29 column A.

an exclamation which is both stylistically and thematically reflective of Monluc: 'Mal'heureux capitaines, qui militez sous les rois, subjects a plus de soupcon et calomnies que ne sçauriez acquerir de reputation! '(1) The conclusion of the memoirs, dealing with the death of his father Gaspard, seems to typify Jean's lack of grasp of the influence that construction may have upon the effect produced. A touching death-bed scene, in which Gaspard kisses his wife farewell and regrets his leaving his family unprovided-for, is followed by a cynical justification of their keeping his death a secret to protect their financial situation: having dispatched his father, Jean almost in the same breath can say 'Le principal amour des hommes est fondé sur l'utilité qu'ils reçoivent des autres, laquelle cesse par la mort de celuy duquel ne se peut plus tirer service.'(2), a remark which four more pages of other-worldly considerations do little to smother.

Tavannes, however, is most useful for one good reason: in his book there is plenty of evidence of his having been prompted by what he had read of Monluc, La Noue and Montaigne. In many instances, Tavannes expressed an opinion contrary to that of his source, though their mention of it is never acknowledged; however, a general confession that he had used them is contained in the remark 'J'excuse Du Bellay, Montluc et La Noue d'avoir escrit d'eux-mesmes ...'(3) These borrowings (4) are concrete enough to be important to the question of whether we can trace the burgeoning of a school of military literature. At the very start of the series of military writers referred to by Lefranc, we are more likely to discover Monluc than Fourquevaux; Monluc was copied, but Fourquevaux was

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(1) ibid, p.86 column B.

(2) ibid, p.430 column B.

(3) ibid, p.19 column B.

(4) A detailed list appears in Appendix II.

not, unless one considers that all men who write logically of practical matters are copying their predecessors. Individual works from the pens of military men differed in character; but, as has been demonstrated, their themes were common, allied to contemporary problems in army and state. It has been possible in this study to deal only with the most important: the civil war (1), the development of their own profession (Chapter XII), the reform of those abuses which impinged on them (Capter XIX) and the popular crusading day-dream (Chapter XVIII). Although these were topical matters, and one cannot definitely say that one writer actually copied from another - except in definite cases like that of Tavannes - the characteristics of military memoirs, diffuseness, personal involvement, loose construction, and lack of literary pretensions, were first pasted together by Monluc. Writers like Bouillon and Tavannes may have recognised the affinity which led them to use him as a source. Even if this were not so, the role of the spurious Vieilleville memoirs cannot be overlooked, for their conscious pastiche of a certain 'military style' forces us to the conclusion that such writers were considered collectively by the end of the century.

Of the objectives of military writers, little need be said that has not already found its way into Chapter XV: they were frequently similar, but not synonymous. Whether they wrote biography, autobiography or history, it was they felt amply qualified to do so. One may conjecture that they realised that the general spread of printed books could enable them to reach a wider public and exercise their influence on public opinion as never before; the idea that the printed word was another

(1) Military writers steered clear of doctrinal matters, and La Noue was more than discreet on this point.

weapon in the soldier's hand is apposite and probably true.

It remains only to ask what they created. Military literature at its inception could not be regarded as pure literature, since it existed for practical rather than academic ends. All military writers in the XVIth. century were to some extent committed. However, it occasionally happens that words spoken in heat or coolness, applicable only to the moment, ring true for all time or are so well said that they live on. Such are the Discours of La Noue, which survive principally for their literary merits, whilst Monluc's Commentaires survive purely for their various levels of interest. Even in their day, the Commentaires were more popular than the Discours (as is attested by a comparison of the number of contemporary editions), even though their themes grew to be less relevant to France's predicaments as time wore on. Of the rest, one can say only that their achievement is slight; one cannot seek literary accomplishment in them, one hesitates to recommend them for general reading. Perhaps it is sufficient to know that if one is prepared to overlook pomposity and the 'longueurs' of soldiers who were not often called upon to speak after dinner, one can find in them a personal and often entertaining view of affairs which were momentous in their day, but which now seem remote.

Appendix I - XVIth. Century Military Writers listed by Henri Hauser in 'Les Sources de l'Histoire de France'[1]

Each author is given under the reference number by which he is first classified in Hauser. This is not a complete list of memoirs published in the sixteenth century, but is a selection of those known to Hauser which have an affinity with military literature as it appears in this study.

1. The volumes consulted are published by Picard, Paris, as follows:

I	(1494-1515)	published in 1906;
II	(1515-1559)	published in 1909;
III	(1559-1589)	published in 1912;
IV	(1589-1610)	published in 1915.

I 15 VILLENEUVE, Guillaume de: Mémoires for the years after 1497.

371 FLEURANGES, Robert de la Mark, seigneur de: Mémoires du Jeune Adventureux, for years 1499 to 1521.

373 MARILLAC, Georges de: Vie du connetable Charles de Bourbon

376 LOYAL SERVITEUR: Histoire de Bayart, 1524 (?), 1527.

377 CHAMPIER, Symphorien: Les Gestes...du preux Chevalier Bayard, c.1525.

II 760 BARRILLON, Jean: Mémoires for the years 1515-1521.

761 DU BELLAY: Mémoires, 1569, covering the reign of François Ier.

766 ROCHECHOUART, Guillaume de (1498-1568): Mémoires.

768 MONLUC, Blaise de: Commentaires, 1521-1576.

769 BRANTÔME, Pierre de Bourdeille, Abbé de: Oeuvres, published in 1662.

770 SAULX-TAVANNES, Gaspard de (1509-1573): Mémoires.

771 VIEILLEVILLE, Marechal de: Mémoires (not considered authentic).

1252 PARTHENAY-LARCHEVEQUE: Mémoires.

1253 RABUTIN, Francois de: Commentaires.., published 1555-1559.

1254 BOYVIN DE VILLARS: Mémoires.

APPENDIX I - Sheet two

1258 MESMES, Henri de: Mémoires, 1532-1589.

1259 MERGEY: Mémoires.

1264 LA POPELINIÈRE, Lancelot du Voesin de.: Histoire des Troubles.. 1555-1581.

III

1418 VALOIS, Marguerite de: Mémoires, 1552-1578.

1421 CASTELNAU, Michel de (1520-1592): Mémoires.

1424 VILLEGOMBLAIN: Mémoires.

1425 VILLEROY: Mémoires.

1426 CHEVERNY (1528-1599): Mémoires.

1427 BASSOMPIERRE (1579-1646): Mémoires.

1428 DE THOU, Jacques-Auguste: Historiarum Sui Temporis Libri.

1429 LA NOUE, François de: Discours Politiques et Militaires.

1462 LA FORCE: Mémoires, 1572-1610.

1463 BOUILLON, Henri de: Mémoires, 1565-1586.

1464 SULLY, Duc de: Oeconomies Royales, first published 1662.

1480 D'AUBIGNÉ, Agrippa: Histoire Universelle, published 1616-1630.

IV

2582 AUBÉRY DU MAURIER: Mémoires, 1566-1636.

2587 FONTENAY-MAREUIL: Mémoires, 1595-1647.

2592 FRETON: Commentaires, to 1625.

Appendix II: Tavannes's Borrowings

A Monluc - Tavannes

Monluc	Tavannes
1. Pleust à Dieu que nous, qui portons les armes, prinsions ceste coustume d'escrire.. (344)	1. J'excuse Du Bellay, Monutluc et La Noue d'avoir escrit d'eux-mesmes.. (19 B)
2. ..coupper tant detestes qu'il reglera son royaume et chassera toute ceste vermine.. (467)	2. L'offence est à Dieu, de vouloir par les armes, combats, feux et cruautez, reconduire les heretiques en la vraye creance.. (28 B)
3. Project for a war with Spain. (667) 'Possible'	3. Project for a war with Spain. (33) 'Inadvisable'
4. Les Turcs...ne songent rien qu'à la guerre.. (92)	4. Les Turcs ont un grand avantage en ce que leurs gens de justice, leurs religieux, financiers et tous autres vont à la guerre.. (46 B)
5. Et croy que c'est une tres-belle partie à un capitaine que de bien dire.. (654)	5. L'eloquence est necessaire, il est aussitôt bien que mal dit. (59 B)
6. ..il faut que l'honneur et reputtation de l'homme demeure devant tous hommes claire et nette... (8)	6. Le desire d'honneur est en perpetuel travail. (65 B)
7. ..l'amour des femmes. Ne vous y engagez pas. (29)	7. Peu sert en France de sçavoir les batailles et assauts, qui ne sçait la Cour et les dames. (69 B)
8. Tous les princes chrestiens ..faisoient grand cas de ce que ..nostre maistre avoit employé le Turc à son secours. Mais contre son ennemy on peut de tout bois faire flesches.. (81)	8. La faveur portée aux Lutheriens et l'alliance du Turc sont expiées en France par trante-cinq ans de guerre; toutes sortes d'armes ne sont pas permises pour vaincre son ennemy.. (80 B)
9. Ainsi, Sire, je dis et soustiens que c'est un mauvais conseil de penser faire la paix, si par mesme moyen vous ne songez a commencer une guerre estrangere. (669)	9. Je ne sçaurois assez blasmer ces mauvais conseillers qui disoient au feu roy Henry IV que, pour eviter la guerre civile, il faloit permettre les duels pour purger ce feu et ce sang bouillant de la noblesse, qui, ne pouvant agir contre lesdicts estrangers, agit contre sa propre patrie.. (156)

Appendix II - Sheet two

10. Le proverbe des anciens est vray: si l'ost sçavoit de l'ost, mal iroit de l'ost. (261)	10. Les anciens disent: Si l'ost sçavoit ce que fait l'ost, l'ost deferoit l'ost. (222 A)
11. ..les huguenots seulement (car ainsi les appella-on, je ne sçay pourquoy) (472)	11. Explanation of origin of the word 'Huguenots'. (292 A)
12. Si vous estes tel que vous devez estre, c'est-a-dire craint et aymé,.. (605)	12. A sçavoir si un general doit desirer d'estre plus craint qu'aymé. (359 B)

B La Noue - Tavannes

La Noue	Tavannes
1. Discours XXI & XXII (Turkish War)	1. Enfants, Neveux, Cousins: 4th section, Pour faire la guerre contre les Turcs.
2. Recruits to be drafted into the army in two's and three's to prevent their corruption. V, p.146	2. Recruits to be drafted into the army with the attentions of a governor to prevent corruption. (60 B)
3. Que les princes chrestiens estans bien unis ensemble peuvent en quatre ans chasser les Turcs de l'Europe. (XXII, title)	3. Ceux qui disent qu'il faut mettre quatre ans à vaincre cest empire n'ont consideré ceste incommodite: si l'empyre de Constantinople n'est subjugué dans dix-huict mois, il ne le sera jamais. (94 A)
4. La Noue's conduct at La Rochelle, as in the Declaration.	4. Tavannes's support for La Noue. (418 B)

C Montaigne - Tavannes

Montaigne	Tavannes
De l'expérience: III, 13: 'Ceux-cy ne m'entretenoient d'autre langue que Latine. Quand au reste de sa maison, c'estoit une reigle inviolable que ny luy mesme, ny ma mere, ny valet, ny chambriere, ne parloyent en ma compaignie qu'autant de mots de Latin que chacun avoit apris pour jargonner avec moi.' (ed. Rat, Garnier, 1958).	(To learn Latin:) il faudroit que les enfans de deux ans fussent sequestrez dans des maisons separées, et que les nourrices, pages et precepteurs ne leur parlassent que latin.. (57 A)

Appendix III - The Du Bellay Family

The Du Bellays were 'une antique famille de l'Anjou' (Chamard).
Family name from Allonnes-sur-Montsoreau.

First notable member, Hugues III du Bellay. (XIII century)

JEAN IV DU BELLAY

1. Eustache du Bellay (seigneur de Gizeux, Touraine) = Catherine de Beaumont
   - Jean = Renée Chabot, de Liré.
     1. René du Bellay, governor of Metz, 1551. Tutor to Joachim after he was orphaned.
     2. Joachim du Bellay, 1521-1560

2. Louis du Bellay, seigneur de Langey = Louise de la Tour-Landry.

1. GUILLAUME 1491 - 1543	2. JEAN 1492 - 1560	3. RENÉ after 1492 - 1546.
Fought in Italy; captured at Pavia; involved in divorce of Henry VIII; worked against interests of Charles V; Viceroy of Piedmont in 1537; Ordre de St.Michel 1541; buried in Le Mans cathedral.	Bishop of Bayonne 1526, of Paris 1532, Cardinal 1535; also Bishop of Le Mans, Limoges 1541, Bordeaux 1544, Ostia 1555. Diplomat to England and Italy; employed Rabelais as secretary.	Vicar-general to Jean at Paris; Bishop of Grasse 1532, Le Mans 1535 to death. Keen gardener; employed Peletier du Mans as secretary.

4. MARTIN	5. Nicolas	6. Jacques
died 1559	killed at Naples, 1528	killed at Sassari, 1527.

NOTE: Genealogical details about the Du Bellays are sparse and uncertain; the two Renés are confused in the Nouvelle Biographie Universelle (Firmin-Didot). This table has been compiled with the help of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, the NBU, Bourrilly's study of Guillaume, and Chamard's Joachim du Bellay, 1899. Chamard indicates sources, including works by Ballu, and Léon Séché.

Appendix IV - Biographies

A short summary of the life of each important figure occurring in this study is given here to clarify the chronology of military literature.

BAYARD, Pierre du Terrail, seigneur de. (1475 - 1524)

Bayard started his career in the service of Duke Charles of Savoy, whence he moved to the court of Charles VIII of France, whom he followed to Italy. For his actions at the Battle of Fornova (1495), he was knighted, and gained further renown by defeating the well-known champion, Alonso de Soto-Mayor, in single combat in 1499. He defended, single-handed, a bridge over the Garigliano (1505) in a successful attempt to defend the French Army from surprise attack. He was wounded in the leg at Brescia, and, though not fully recovered, attended the Battle of Ravenna. After the Battle of Marignano, it was his honour to knight the young king, François Ier, and he gave distinguished service in Navarre, which had just been usurped by the Aragonese king. He soldiered in the region of Calais against the hosts of Henry VIII and the Pope, seeing action at the Siege of Thérouanne. After further exploits in Piedmont, he organised the defence of the town of Mézières with 1,000 men and held for six weeks against a besieging army of 35,000 troops, eventually forcing them to retreat. For this, he was received like a national hero in Paris, and given command of 100 men-at-arms, an honour normally reserved for princes of the blood alone. He met his death whilst at Rébec, near Milan, when an arquebus-shot pierced his spine. François Ier, a year later, was heard to invoke his name on the field of Pavia, because his excellent skill for the deploying of the army was sorely missed.

FLEURANGE(S), Robert de la Mark, seigneur de. (1491? - 1537?)

The son of Robert II, seigneur de Sedan and Catherine de Croy, Robert was a page at the court of Louis XII from about 1500, where he became a firm friend of François d'Angoulême, the future king. In 1510, he married the niece of the Cardinal d'Amboise, and was involved in the Italian Wars from 1509 to 1516. He was in Germany in 1519 for the Imperial election, and was in action in the Ardennes campaign in 1521. From 1524 to 1528, he was held prisoner by the Imperialists, being freed as a result of the Treaty of Madrid. Later, as Maréchal de France, he defended the town of Péronne in 1537.

DU BELLAY, Guillaume: seigneur de Langey. (1491 - 1543)

Guillaume was brought up with his brothers in Anjou, and from about the year 1506 was at university in Paris. A work, Peregrinatio Humana, modelled on Digulleville, was published in 1509. From this time until 1523, his movements are not clear. He is assumed to have followed François Ier into Italy, and was probably at Marignano. After 1521, he was sent on missions to Sicily, Tunis, and also to Spain where he was instrumental in arranging the release of François Ier from the imprisonment which he had suffered after

Appendix IV - Sheet two

Pavia (Guillaume had also been prisoner for a time after this defeat). His actions on the king's behalf earned him great prestige, and his diplomatic career dates from this period: he was concerned in international affairs thenceforth to his death. As a man of learning, he was already well known (see Chapter 5), and he was one of the eminent agitators for the establishment of the posts of 'lecteurs royaux', whose wages he also occasionally paid when the king's treasury defaulted. In 1537, he became Viceroy of Piedmont, and gained a reputation as an astute organiser of espionage: he detected the celebrated plot against the French ambassadors Fregose and Rincon (to the Venetians and Turks, respectively) in 1541. His death occurred after an illness during which he had undertaken the journey back to Fontainebleau, where he intended to report to the king.

DU BELLAY, Martin (died 1559)

Very little is known of the main compiler of the Du Bellay memoirs, and the fourth son of Louis du Bellay. Hauser mentions that he accompanied his brother to Novara, Marignano, Pavia, Provence and Piedmont. He became governor of Turin for a time, was at the battle of Cérisoles, and fought in Flanders (1545). Having been created 'lieutenant-général' for Normandy, he retired to Glatigny assuming also the ancient right to the title of 'roi d'Yvetôt' where he died in 1559.

MONLUC, Blaise de, Sieur de Lasseran-Massencôme (1502? - 1577)

Born at St. Puy in the modern departement of Gers, Monluc came of a family too poor to provide an education in the modern sense of the term. He was sent to be a page at the court at Nancy to the Duc Antoine de Bourgogne, where it is thought he became a page in the Duke's company of archers about 1517. With his father's help, he left the court to join the war in Italy, and was witness to the French loss of Milanais. ,Thereafter, he served under Lautrec in Guyenne and was captured at Pavia, but soon released because of his relative unimportance, He was disillusioned by the loss of Naples, and had already received several wounds by the time he, as lieutenant, defended Marseille. His obtaining a post as commander in the personal guard of the Dauphin Henri was the start of a long friendship (1537). After the truce of Nice, Monluc tried to turn his hand to diplomacy in high places under the aegis of his brother Jean, Bishop of Valence, at Rome, but he did not succeed as an intriguer. Returning to military matters, he organised a band of freebooters, known as the 'morions jaunes' from their distinctively coloured helmets, in Piedmont in 1542: their exploits gained him a wide reputation, and his promotions began with the post of 'gentilhomme servant' in 1544; after the battle of Cérisoles he was elevated to 'chevalier', and inherited property at d'Estillac. Thenceforth to the end of the Italian Wars, in the favour of Henri II, his career was steadily upward: governor of Moncalieri, he agreed well with Brissac, who was in charge of the whole of Piedmont, For his work there, he was created 'gentilhomme de la chambre du roi', and his defence of Siena (1554-5), the outcome of which he had foreseen, having twice tried to resign the post of commander, nevertheless earned him the coveted Ordre de St. Michel and the king's special favour. He ended the period of the Italian Wars with work in Turin, Montalcino, and Rome. He was created 'colonel des gens de pied' in 1558, having 30 men in his command, but the end of the Italian Campaign and the death of his patron, Henri II, caused

a reverse in his fortunes, which, allied to the uncertainty prevailing in religious matters, pushed him into an eclipse. He wished to see which side in the religious struggle would eventually gain supremacy, and for a time favoured the Protestants; however, their attempt to seize the court estranged him from them and caused him to take up the Catholic cause in the ensuing wars. He and Burie shared the lieutenancy of Guyenne till 1565, but Monluc was left largely unpaid for the wages of his soldiers. The confusing policies of the court at this time made him very sceptical about the leadership of the Catholics and moderates, and he was constantly passed over in the queue for promotion. Having distinguished himself at the battles of Longjumeau and Jarnac (1569), Damville was instead created governor of Languedoc at the age of 35 (Monluc was then about 67); because of this snub and Damville's haughty contempt of him, Monluc resigned his governorship of Guyenne on the grounds that Damville would not co-operate. Damville was later discredited in a plot; Monluc resumed command of an expedition to Bearn, but was unable to pursue it after receiving a facial wound at Rabastens on the 23rd. of July, 1570. An inquiry was commenced into his financial affairs by Du Guast and Mondoulcet, on the assumption that he had embezzled state funds. Monluc then riposted with the first version of his Commentaires and was assisted by the Duc d'Anjou, with whom he had fought at Jarnac. Exonerated from the charges, he participated in the Siege of La Rochelle in 1572 under his benefactor, and was created Maréchal when Anjou became king in 1574. For the last seven years of his life he did not enjoy good health, and he died after revising his writings at Condom on the 26th. of August, 1577. Promotion came late to Monluc, and throughout life he was dogged by the sense of his inferiority, a product of his inadequacy with persons of authority: he was a bitter and disappointed man who felt he had never made his mark properly.

TAVANNES, Gaspard de. (1509 - 1573)

The nominal subject of the Tavannes Mémoires, he was born at Dijon, and became a page at court in 1522. He was captured at Pavia (1525) and later released. He did not distinguish himself specially until, as lieutenant of cavalry to the Duc d'Orléans, he came to court in 1537 and attracted attention through his escapades with women and other hotheads. He soldiered in Luxembourg in 1542, and at Cérisoles (1544) he arrived just in time with a band of his own soldiers to play a significant part in the proceedings. The following year he became 'chambellan du roi', and in 1552, 'maréchal du camp'. For his courage at the battle of Renti (1554), he was granted the Ordre de St. Michel and became lieutenant-general of Burgundy. At the commencement of the Civil Wars in 1560, he was sent to quell sedition in the provinces of Dauphiné, Provence and Lyonnais, but it was not until his participation in the battles of Jarnac (13/3/1569) and Moncontour (3/10/1569) that his reputation was finally assured, though some of the credit went to Duc D'Anjou also. He was swiftly created Maréchal de France (28/11/1569), and attained to the governorship of Provence in 1572. Whilst on his way to the Siege of La Rochelle, he was taken ill and died in his castle of Sully.

LA NOUE, François de. (1531 - 1591)

The son of François de la Noue and Bonaventure l'Épervier, La Noue was brought up in his native Britanny with a rudimentary education to which he

later added in his adulthood. He was a page to Henri II, saw action in Picardy and Flanders; and in Piedmont under Damville. He was called back to his estates in Britanny after the Peace of Cateau-Cambrésis (1559) where his father had died, leaving his irresponsible mother in charge of finances. Whilst at home, he heard the Reform preached and was converted but still remained a firm friend of the Guise family, and was indeed one of the party which accompanied Queen Mary Stuart back to Scotland after the death of her husband, François II. On this journey, he got to know Brantôme. In the 'Premiers Troubles' (from 1560), he served under the Huguenot leader Condé at Meaux, Orléans and Dreux. In the 'Seconds Troubles', he distinguished himself by capturing Orléans, whilst in the third wars, he met with less success, being twice imprisoned at great risk to his life, and losing his left arm at the siege of Fontenay. An artificial arm was manufactured to replace it, and he was henceforth nicknamed 'Bras-de-fer'. By now, he was a well-known captain, and after serving under the Duke of Nassau in Flanders, he was entrusted with the delicate mission of arbitrating between king and the besieged inhabitants of La Rochelle (1572). The Rochelois wanted him to be their governor, and, with a certain amount of support from the government, he accepted their demands. However, they insisted on continuing the struggle, and he found himself obliged to battle with the king's representatives, led by Biron. However, on hearing of Montmorency's arrival from England with reinforcements, he withdrew, and the situation was saved when the Siege was abandoned because of Anjou's election to the Polish throne. La Noue saw further service in La Rochelle, however, for he defended it for Henri de Navarre from 1574 to 1577, after which he was with the Duc d'Alençon on the trip to Flanders in 1580. La Noue captured the town of Ninove on the 30th. of March, 1580, but ten days later, he fell into the hands of the enemy and was imprisoned at Limburg, where he remained for five years, despite the intervention of crowned heads throughout Western Europe. During his imprisonment, he studied and wrote. After being freed, the death of the elder Bouillon (whose title the Vicomte de Turenne was to inherit by marriage three years later) left La Noue governor of his town of Sedan, by testament. La Noue's control of this important centre was offensive to almost everyone, and he had to justify his assumption of power there in his Déclaration. This was his only other work after the Discours, which had been published meanwhile in 1589. He was a notable combatant against the Ligueurs, beating them at the battle of Senlis, and for his services, Henri III promised him the first vacant post of Maréchal; the death of the king prevented this. In 1590, he served as lieutenant to Longueville in Picardy, and the following year saw his return to his native Britanny. There he was involved in action, until he was grazed by an arquebus-shot at Lamballe during reconnoissance; though superficial, the wound proved fatal, and he died at Moncontour on the 4th. of August, 1591.

TAVANNES, Jean de. (1555 - 1629)

Born in Paris, the compiler of the Tavannes Mémoires was while still quite young involved in the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Night and is reputed to have saved the lives of three Protestants. He was at the Siege of La Rochelle under d'Anjou, whom he followed to Poland upon his election to the throne. He fought against the Turks in Europe, and went to Moldavia in 1574 eventually being imprisoned at Constantinople for a time. After his release, he joined the ultra-catholic faction (1577) and became governor of Auxonne.

Appendix IV - Sheet five

He gravitated into the Ligue against Henri III and Henri IV, against whom he showed indomitable stubbornness by refusing to serve under him at the Siege of Amiens (1597) even after Henri had agreed to recognise Tavannes's claim to the post of Maréchal which had been granted him by the Ligue leader, Mayenne, in 1592: it had been intended that Tavannes would take the first vacant post, but the insult was remembered, and after Biron's demise the post was given to another. Jean de Tavannes thenceforth lived as a recluse at his castle of Sully, writing sporadically between 1601 and 1621 the memoirs which were then printed privately at the castle. A public edition appeared, after his death, at Lyons in 1657.

BOUILLON, Henri de la Tour d'Auvergne, Duc de, formerly Vicomte de Turenne. (1555 0 1623)

Born near Clermont, he was orphaned at the age of two. He too served under the Duc D'Anjou, and in 1573, Charles IX gave him a company of 30 lancers. He refused to follow Anjou on the trip to Poland, and embraced the reformed religion after 1574, going over to Henri de Navarre and becoming lieutenant-general of the Navarrese armies in 1576. He joined the Duc d'Alençon's campaign to the Low Countries in 1580, but was captured and spent three years in prison. After the death of d'Alençon, he was freed and assumed an important political role in negotiations with the English, Dutch and Germans in order to muster a powerful army for Henri de Navarre. He dropped the title of Turenne after making a brilliant marriage into the Bouillon family in 1591, and shortly afterwards became Maréchal de France. Fortune turned sour for him, however, His property at Sedan soon became notorious as a headquarters of discontented reformers, and the Biron conspiracy caused him to quarrel with Henri IV, and he was obliged to flee to Geneva to avoid arrest. Henri ordered him to return within two months or be treated as a disobedient subject (1603), but seeing that Biron had been beheaded, Bouillon did not care to return. James I of England interceded on his behalf, and eventually Bouillon threw himself on the king's mercy, forfeiting his property at Sedan to the crown: Henri returned it to him forthwith. In 1609, he wrote his memoirs for the education of his son. After Henri's death, he was again involved in intrigues, this time against Sully on Concini's behalf, and other malicious intrigues too numerous to mention, though it has to be admitted that he acted as a patron of the arts at Sedan, where he died in 1623.

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ERRATA

p.24, line 18 : for 'revouveller', read 'renouveller'.

p.31, line 10, should read : 'les princes et roix est pour (etc.)'.

p.70, line 5 : for 'di' read 'de'.

p.135, line 13 : for 'meutre', read 'meurtre'.

The reference to the French in line 16 should be taken to mean the French Army which was, in fact, composed mainly of Swiss mercenaries.

p.168, line 6 : for 'Forquevaux', read 'Fourquevaux'.

p.225, line 22, should read : 'history, it was because they felt amply qualified to do so. (etc.)'