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La nouvelle française au XV^e siècle (Bibliothèque du XV^e siècle, T. XII).
 WERNER SÖDERHJELM, Paris, Champion, 1910. Pp. xii + 237.

Professor Söderhjelm who has made some most significant contributions to comparative literature in various studies on the sources of *Jehan de Paris*, and the works of Antoine de la Sale and Martial d'Auvergne, in which he has also added to our knowledge of the life and art of the known authors, undertakes, in his *La nouvelle française au XV^e siècle*, to complete his survey of the literary genre to which these works belong, by tracing its evolution, and its place in French literature and narrative style. For his task he has all the requisite qualities; writing out of a full knowledge of his subject, he shows a power of subtle and broad synthetic treatment, a well-balanced judicial temperament and a perception of the delicate shades of style.

After an introductory chapter on the type prior to the fifteenth century, he takes up in succession *Les Quinze joyes de Mariage*, the authentic works of Antoine de la Sale, the *Cent Nouvelles nouvelles*, *Les arrests d'Amour*, *Jehan de Paris* and the *Nouvelles de Sens*. He finds the beginnings of that mode of story-telling, which in its setting, its spirit and its art is typically French in two genres of medieval literature. The *lais* have the simple directness and conciseness of

style, with too, a touch of realism in the details of the setting of their wonder-stories, and the fableaux have realistic themes and settings, pitiless delineations of scenes of contemporary life, if told in a style bare of artistic distinction. That the formal collections in French of stories pointing a moral, of Oriental origin, played no part in the formation of the novel except in furnishing the material of a story, now and then, is evident. The suggestion that the change from verse to prose in these collections pointed the way to a similar evolution in the novel is unnecessary; equally so is the assumption of the influence of the prose chronicles, records of actual events, with which the authors of imaginative works would wish to assimilate their own productions. Beginning with the early part of the thirteenth century, the author of certain histories, didactic works, and romances in prose, justified the vehicle of their expression by emphasizing its greater exactitude and precision.¹ The exceptions became the practice in all genres of narrative literature; its appearance in the novel is only a point of chronological interest, which needs investigation. Only in the case of the *Dit de l'Empereur Coustant* and the *Contes dou roi Coustant l'Empereur* is it possible to show the stylistic results of this transition of form. After the author's delicate analysis of *Aucassin et Nicolette* (8-15) which brings out the way in which the unique personal tone is combined with essentially medieval attributes, it is unfortunate that he elsewhere (223) accepts as possible Pater's paradox which makes of it a precursor of the Renaissance. As is pointed out (24), there is no occasion for a discussion of the story of *Asseneth*, which was published by d'Héricault and Moland as one of their *Nouvelles françaises en prose du XIV^e siècle*. It is only a translation of Vincent de Beauvais's textual reproduction of the version of a Jewish rabbinical legend, found in the *Historia scholastica* of Pierre le Mangeur, who died in 1179.

One can follow the author in refusing to attribute the paternity of *Les quinze joyes* to Antoine de la Sale, because—to voice the thought he does not express in so many words—Antoine was not capable of writing it: "un ouvrage de la plus haute originalité . . . le plus ancien chef-d'oeuvre en prose, au sens moderne du mot, qu'offre la littérature française" (71). But of the external evidence against this attribution, two of the three proofs in favor of a date earlier than the period of Antoine's activity, the allusions to a peculiar style of dress, and to the title of the Dauphin (30 ff.), can be shown to be unfounded by further studies in the history of costume, and in diplomatics. It is surprising that Professor Söderhjelm has not seen in Antoine's story of the "Chaperons" (81-3) the well-known historical episode of the *capuciati* (1182-4), which has been treated most fully, in recent years, by Luchaire.² Antoine has adopted the version of the sceptical anonymous chronicler of Laon.³ If it is necessary to go back to classical antiquity to find a pendant to the pathetic nobility of "la dame de Chastel" in the *Reconfort* (94), the anecdote of the mourning mother whose tears weighed down the dress of her son in the after-world, was a favorite with medieval

¹ Cf. P. Meyer, *Rom.*, VI, 495; XIV, 66; *Not. et Extr.*, XXXIII, Part I, 22, 31; E. Brugger, *Zeit. f. franz. Sprache*, XXIX, 75-7.

² *Séances et travaux de l'Académie des sciences morales et politiques* (1900), LIV, 283 ff.; *Grande Revue*, XIII (1900), 317 ff.; *La société française au temps de Philippe-Auguste* (1909), 13 ff.

³ Bouquet, XVIII, 705 ff.

storiologists. If there are any parts of the book which call for particular commendation it is the treatment of the *Cent Nouvelles* and the *Nouvelles de Sens*. In the one case the characteristics of the author's methods and style, with the multiple chances of variety, are brought out most strikingly, especially in the comparison of the French work with the *Decamerone*. In the other case the author has held the just balance between the over-enthusiastic tone of Vossler, natural, perhaps, in the first discussion of the work as a whole, and the curt tone of censure, with which Langlois judges it in his edition in his *Nouvelles françaises inédites du XV^e siècle*. The chapter on the *Arrests d'Amour* is welcome as it is unexpected particularly because the work of Martial d'Auvergne is not accessible in modern reprints as are the other works discussed. Taken as a whole the book adds a new chapter to literary history, on a subject which has been hitherto dismissed with a summary judgment, stated in vague generalities. For its merits, both of scholarship and of criticism, it at once keeps up the standard, and adds to the reputation of the collection of which it forms a part, the Bibliothèque du XV^e siècle, due to the enterprise, perspicacity and patriotism of its publisher.

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Gli studi provenzali in Italia nel Cinquecento, di Santorre Debenedetti. Torino, Loescher, 1911, in 8vo., pp. 304.

Although Mussafia, Rajna, Crescini and De Lollis have made special contributions to the history of Provençal studies in Italy, there has been hitherto no work, analytic and synthetic at the same time, elucidating the thousand details of this theme, arranging them, estimating them for their individual worth, and putting them into relation with the culture of the age. There was lacking above all a good history of the Provençal MSS. of Italy, dealing with that century when they were collected and preserved with such a great solicitude. This is the subject dealt with by Debenedetti in this volume.

After showing the deep interest aroused by Provençal literature in Italy in the early centuries, the author passes to an *Introduction* of the scholars, who in the sixteenth century renewed these studies. Pietro Bembo is characterised as a keen observer of the linguistic phenomena; then comes Colocci, to whom the A. dedicates several pages full of important information: he stands out as one of the most genial minds among these philologists. Equicola and Vellutello are also studied in their relation to one another; and a new light is thrown upon the characteristic figure of Onorato Drago. The A. passes then in review Barbieri and Castelvetro, scrupulous scholars both, Beccadelli and Giganti, Jacopo Corbinelli, the impenitent forger Jean de Nostre-Dame, Gianvincenzo Pinelli, Fulvio Orsini, Pietro di Simon del Nero.

The first part deals particularly with the philological studies of these scholars of the sixteenth century. In spite of the scarce number of grammars and dictionaries, we may observe how deeply these keen and quick minds succeeded in commanding the Provençal language. Drago's phonetical studies are minutely analyzed, and the evidence given by Bembo, in his *Prose*, by Barbieri, Giganti, Beccadelli and Varchi, undergoes a careful examination, which sifts the elements derived from other authors from the original ideas of the penetrating minds of