



A case study of the education of Heloise
by Elizabeth Mary McNamer

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education
Montana State University
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Abstract:

Heloise was born in 1100 and died in 1163. She lived during what is known as the twelfth century renaissance, when as a result of the Crusades, Europe was opening up to new ideas that caused changes in class structure, attitudes to women, and in scholarship.

She received the education usually available only to men bent on a ecclesiastic career, and is believed by many to be the only woman of her time to have received such an education. Abelard, one of the most renowned teachers of the day was employed to teach her philosophy. Heloise and he had a love affair which lasted for about eighteen months. Heloise then became a nun. She became abbess of her convent of nuns at the Paraclete in France and built up that convent from what was just a few broken down huts to a thriving abbey with six dependent houses. She served as abbess for thirty years. She is believed to have taught the nuns Greek and Hebrew at a time when these languages were not readily spoken in Europe, so that they could read Scripture in the original. Heloise was an administrator and scholar of renown, yet she is remembered in literature only because of her romantic association with Abelard.

Using historical case-study methodology, this paper examines the educational milieu of the twelfth century, who had access to education and what education comprised. It examines the education of Heloise and her accomplishments as abbess, scholar and educator. The conclusion is reached that, because of her romantic association with Abelard she has been fictionalized as a romantic heroine and her scholarship has gone unrecognized.

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by

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of the requirements for the degree

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This thesis has been read by each member of the thesis committee and has been found to be satisfactory regarding content, English usage, format, citations, bibliographic style, and consistency, and is ready for submission to the College of Graduate Studies.

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ABSTRACT

Heloise was born in 1100 and died in 1163. She lived during what is known as the twelfth century renaissance, when as a result of the Crusades, Europe was opening up to new ideas that caused changes in class structure, attitudes to women, and in scholarship. She received the education usually available only to men bent on an ecclesiastic career, and is believed by many to be the only woman of her time to have received such an education. Abelard, one of the most renowned teachers of the day was employed to teach her philosophy. Heloise and he had a love affair which lasted for about eighteen months. Heloise then became a nun. She became abbess of her convent of nuns at the Paraclete in France and built up that convent from what was just a few broken down huts to a thriving abbey with six dependent houses. She served as abbess for thirty years. She is believed to have taught the nuns Greek and Hebrew at a time when these languages were not readily spoken in Europe, so that they could read Scripture in the original. Heloise was an administrator and scholar of renown, yet she is remembered in literature only because of her romantic association with Abelard.

Using historical case-study methodology, this paper examines the educational milieu of the twelfth century, who had access to education and what education comprised. It examines the education of Heloise and her accomplishments as abbess, scholar and educator. The conclusion is reached that, because of her romantic association with Abelard she has been fictionalized as a romantic heroine and her scholarship has gone unrecognized.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It is only in the 20th century that women have been generally afforded opportunity for education and scholarship at an advanced level on a par with men. While some women in former times acquired an education on a level with men and achieved high degrees of scholarship, such women have not always been accorded the seriousness as scholars which they deserve.

In anticipation of the lack of seriousness accorded women writers, some women have chosen to write under the pseudonym of a man,¹ and recent feminist scholarship has brought to light works written by women previously assumed to have been written by men.²

The Norton Anthology of World Literature, published in 1975, includes the work of only one woman poet, Sappho. The Norton Anthology of English Literature, published in the same year, contains the work of one woman, 17th century poet Ann Finch. The writings

¹ Examples are Amandine-Aurore Lucille Dupin, who wrote Indiana, Lelia, and Jacques, under the pseudonym of George Sand, and Mary Ann Evans, who wrote several novels, including Adam Bede, under the name of George Eliot.

² McNamer, Sarah, "Authorship of the Finden Manuscript." Paper delivered at the South West Regional Medieval Conference, Arizona, Spring, 1989.

of medieval mystics such as Julian of Norwich (the first woman to write in the English language) and Hildegard of Bingen were brought into the light of modern scholarship only long after their male contemporaries.

Heloise is a twelfth century figure who fits this situation of inadequate attention given by historians and scholars to the accomplishments of a woman. Heloise's intellectual and educational accomplishments were of great renown in her day. However, she is generally recognized today as the greatly pitied heroine of the tragic love affair with Abelard. To better understand the general question of the role and status of woman in education and scholarship, the education and work of Heloise needs to be examined.

Heloise was a woman known for her scholarship as well as for her administrative abilities. She was highly regarded by her contemporaries. Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny, Abelard, one of the greatest teachers of the twelfth century, Guillaume Godel, a monk of Saint Martial of Limoges, and her own community, all praise her for her learning.³ During her thirty years of guidance as abbess of the convent of the Paraclete, near Troyes in France, it grew from a few run down huts to a thriving complex which encompassed six dependent houses. The Paraclete acquired a reputation for scholarship which continued until the convent ceased to exist as a religious house in 1793 at the time of the French Revolution.⁴ Yet

³ McLeod, Enid, Heloise (London: Cox and Wyman, 1971), 17.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 19.

Heloise survives in literature only as a romantic heroine overpowered by love and attachment to a man. This deserves re-examination.

What is known of Heloise comes from the writings of her contemporaries, from her own letters, and from the official documents of the Paraclete (called the Chartulaire), now housed in the library at Troyes.⁵ From these we learn that her mother's name was Hersende. Nothing is known of her father. She was born in 1100 and seems to have been orphaned at an early age. She became the ward of her uncle, Fulbert, a canon of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. It appears that he is the one who initiated her unusual education. Abelard states: "Fulbert loved Heloise so much that he had striven to do all in his power to further her knowledge of letters," and, "Fulbert was always ambitious to further his niece's education."⁶ She was sent to the convent of Ste. Marie of Argenteuil near Paris to be raised by the nuns.⁷ It is not known what Heloise learned at the convent at Argenteuil but the level of learning of the nuns was high at some houses.⁸ The formal program of study at monastery schools at this time was the seven liberal arts, which comprised grammar, rhetoric,

⁵ These documents were translated into French by C. Lalore in La Chartulaire de L'Alay de Paraclet, (Troyes: Biblioteque Publique, 1878). Several of the documents are given in this English translation here for the first time.

⁶ Radice, 66.

⁷ Ibid., 74.

⁸ Powers, Eileen, Medieval Women (Cambridge: Univeristy Press, 1976), 8.

logic, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music. Fulbert's interest in the education of his niece strongly suggests he would not have sent her to a school where the basics were not taught, and Heloise's letters rather clearly indicate that she was taught the seven liberal arts at Argenteuil.

When she was a young girl, possibly aged fourteen, she left the convent and went to live with her uncle in Paris.⁹ As a canon, Fulbert would have had his residence close to the cathedral. In 1114, partly as a result of the Crusades, methods of education were changing and Arab learning was seeping into Europe. Cathedral schools were becoming more prominent and beginning to replace the monastic schools which were the traditional places of learning.¹⁰ At the time Heloise moved to her uncle's house, students were gravitating to Notre Dame to receive an education. It is supposed that Heloise furthered her education in this milieu of learning.

Much of Heloise's knowledge and intellectual development is evidenced in the exchange of letters (all of them very lengthy) between her and Abelard during the years 1128 to 1142, and in letters that she wrote others until her death in 1162. She knew Latin, Greek and Hebrew.¹¹ Knowledge of Latin was of the greatest necessity for every medieval student. The term "literatus" applied

⁹ Radice, 66.

¹⁰ Rashdall, Hastings, The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages Vol. 1 (Oxford: University press, sixth edition, 1964), 34.

¹¹ Migne, A., Patrologia Latina , Vol 178, 326.

only to those who had a knowledge of Latin.¹² Heloise's letters were written in Latin. Biblical Hebrew was known in the France of her day, and she may have learned this through interaction with Jewish scholars. Greek was almost entirely unknown in the western world, and no lexicons for general use had yet been compiled. Yet there is evidence of other contemporary scholars having a knowledge of both of these languages. Heloise would probably have learned Latin at the convent at Argenteuil. It is not known who taught her Greek or Hebrew, but it is known that Fulbert went beyond the established norms to provide a teacher to instruct her in philosophy,¹³ and it is therefore possible that he also provided teachers to instruct her in languages.

Peter Abelard was thirty seven years old when Fulbert employed him as tutor to his niece. Heloise would have been about eighteen years of age at the time. Abelard had a profound effect on Heloise emotionally as well as intellectually. We do not know exactly what he taught her. He was a master of logic, had introduced the dialectical method of teaching, and had written a book on ethics. He may have imparted these subjects to Heloise, for her writings suggest the influence of dialectics. In their letters to each other they quote from the same authors, and it is likely that the works of these authors were studied during the tutorial sessions.

¹² Parks, Malcolm, The Literacy of the Laity in the Middle Ages, (Oxford: Univeristy Press, 1973), 555.

¹³ Radice, 14.

Abelard and Heloise became lovers. When Heloise informed him that she was pregnant, Abelard spirited her away from her uncle's house to his home in Brittany, where their son, Astrolabe (the name means "gliding star" or "child of God"), was born. Abelard wanted to make Heloise his wife, but she was disinclined to marry since it would hamper his career. Celibacy had not yet become mandatory for the clergy, but scholars traditionally did not marry. However, at the insistence of Fulbert, Abelard and Heloise were married when they returned to Paris (the child was left in the care of Abelard's sister). They wished to keep the marriage secret, and in order to do this Abelard continued with his work as a teacher and Heloise went to live in the convent at Argenteuil and dressed as a nun.¹⁴ This outraged Fulbert. He arranged for ruffians to break into Abelard's apartment one night and castrate him. The marriage no longer being viable, Abelard entered the monastery of Saint Denis, and Heloise became a nun at the convent at Argenteuil.¹⁵

Heloise became prioress of the convent, a position which carried with it the responsibility for the education of the nuns. Some ten years later, she and some of her associates moved to the Paraclete, near Troyes, which had been built by Abelard and was owned by him.¹⁶ Heloise became its first abbess. In the twelfth

¹⁴ Ibid., 57.

¹⁵ Abelard left Saint Denis in 1121, and established a school, the Paraclete., near Troyes. In 1126, he accepted an invitation to become Abbot of a monastery in Brittany, Saint Gildas. His works were twice condemned, at the Council of Soisson in 1121, and at the Council of Sens in 1140. Radice, 18-21.

¹⁶ Radice, 88.

century, in general ecclesiastical lists, an abbess enjoyed the same rank as a bishop.¹⁷ She not only had the responsibility for ruling her own community, but also represented it on outside business. The abbess was seen as landlord, employer of the local people, and administrator of charity to the poor and to travelers.¹⁸

Heloise took her job very seriously. Her administrative ability is demonstrated by the fact that six daughter houses were added to the Paraclete during her abbessy. Twenty-nine deeds of gifts and privileges are recorded in the Chartulaire. These expanded the physical plant of the convent to include meadows, lands, vineyards, mills, woods, fish-ponds and farms. Heloise was a scholar-educator. There is some evidence that she taught her associates Greek and Hebrew so they could translate the Scriptures from the original languages, and the convent became renowned for its learning.

She asked Abelard to write a rule for nuns, since she did not consider the Benedictine rule compatible for women, and she expressed her own views on what these rules should be, strongly emphasizing study and meditating on Scripture. The rule that was eventually adopted by her community, and is presumed to have been written by Heloise, was compiled from the Benedictine rule and from Abelard's suggestions.

¹⁷ McGrath, A.M. Women in the Church (New York: Image Books, 1976), 66.

¹⁸ Labarge, Margaret, A Small Sound of the Trumpet (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 98.

Her continued interest in learning is evident in the forty-one questions on difficult passages in Scripture she addressed to Abelard. He replied at length. These are contained in the Problemata appended to this study.

Heloise thus sought the spiritual guidance and scholarly insights of Abelard during the first ten years of her abbessy. After his death she had his body interred at the Paraclete, and wrote the Abbot of Cluny for a formal absolution of Abelard. She obtained a reply from the Abbot granting formal absolution. At her request, she was buried in the same grave as Abelard at the Paraclete, although their bodies have since been moved to the Pere Lachaise cemetery in Paris. Despite her own achievements as abbess and as a scholar-educator, Heloise has been remembered in literature only for her romantic association with Abelard.

Hypothesis

The unusual and advanced education received by Heloise made her a highly competent scholar, promoted the welfare of the convent in which she served as Abbess, and furthered the education and scholarship of her associates, but nonetheless she has been fictionalized as a romantic heroine. A study of her accomplishments indicates that she should be recognized for her personal scholarly achievements rather than being stereotyped as a romantic figure, or overlooked because of her gender.

Much of what is known of the education of Heloise is contained in the series of eight letters of Heloise and Abelard, written in Latin between 1128 and 1142. The first of these letters is known as the

Historia Calamitatum, an autobiographical letter written by Abelard ostensibly to console a friend. The next four letters are generally referred to as the "personal letters." The final three letters are concerned with spiritual direction, where Heloise asks for advice and Abelard gives it to her on matters pertaining to the welfare of her community.

None of the original texts of these letters is extant. References are made to them by Jean De Meun in his poem The Romance of the Rose in the thirteenth century. Historians believe that the letters were kept at the Paraclete (it was current practice for medieval writers to keep copies of their own letters), and that more than a century after the death of Heloise they were brought to Paris and copied.¹⁹ The first texts of the letters were published in 1616, in Paris in two editions. In 1718, an English edition appeared. They were published in Switzerland in 1841, followed by a further publication in Paris in 1849. The letters were translated into English and published in a small volume by H. Morten in 1901. In 1925, the letters were again translated into English by J. Monfrin, and by Betty Radice in 1974.

Design of the Study

The case study qualitative research method was chosen as the most appropriate design for this study. This design lends itself to

¹⁹ Southern, Richard, The Letters of Abelard and Heloise in Medieval Humanism (Oxford: Blackwell, 1970), 190.

non-experimental studies when there is no manipulation of the data. Qualitative case study is "particularistic," designed to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the person studied.²⁰ The education of Heloise is a particular study of a particular person at a particular time in history. This study is inductive, focusing on the process, understanding and interpretation of the data. Since this educational case study is historical, it necessarily borrows from historical methodology. It relies on primary documents and secondary sources as evidence. When dealing with primary documents, the writings of Heloise herself and the official documents of the Paraclete are referred to as "internal" evidence; other original documents and writings are called "external" evidence. The study is descriptive and analytical in nature.

The first step in the study was to collect data from both primary and secondary sources which formed the case study data base. One such source was found serendipitously. Baron Charles Walckenaer, the present owner of the Paraclete, pointed out the Rue de Juifs and the twelfth century synagogue at Quincy, less than a mile from the Paraclete. Another source, the Problemata had not been translated into English. The official documents of the Paraclete had been translated into French, but were not available in English.

The data was then organized into categories. The first category included references to cultural and social attitudes that determined

²⁰ Merriam, Sharan B., Case Study Research in Education (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1988), 11.

the education received by men and women in the twelfth century, and events that were affecting changes in society at this time. This category also included references to medieval education, what was studied, and how.

The second category included references to the education of Heloise and to her scholarship as well as references to other scholars who were her contemporaries. The last category covered references to the work of abbesses in the twelfth century, references to Heloise's achievements as abbess, references to her achievements as scholar-educator, and references to Heloise in literature.

Having collected the data, the second step was to do a critical examination of the sources. The primary sources used were: three personal letters from Heloise to Abelard; her letter to Peter the Venerable written after the death of Abelard; the Problemata, a series of questions on problematic passages in the Scripture, which is a letter she directed to Abelard and to which he replied; the Institutiones Nostrae, a redaction of Heloise's rule for her community; the Historia Calamitatum and the Confession of Faith, both in the form of letters written by Abelard; and four personal letters of Abelard to Heloise.

Internal examination of the primary sources required the creation of historical context. The study called for detailed knowledge of twelfth century culture so that there was an understanding of the milieu in which Heloise lived and wrote. To create this historical

context, reliance was heavily placed on secondary sources, "someone else's description and analysis of data."²¹

Material was then selected from the sources that was relevant to education, to scholarship, to Heloise as abbess and educator-scholar and analyzed in as fair a manner as possible. A modest amount of inference in interpreting the data was used to fill in gaps in the records, founded on the knowledge of the culture and social climate of the first two thirds of the twelfth century, and the concept of an intelligent woman operating in that environment.

Narrative was used to the extent that it was necessary to organize the material, to draw the facts together, and to give unity and coherence to the study.

Definitions

Malcolm Parks, in The Literacy of the Laity in the Middle Ages, defines the educated person in the twelfth century as "one who could read and write and who knew Latin."²² For the purpose of this study that definition of the educated person will apply, although in the case of Heloise and her associates, education went well beyond that. For this study, scholar means one who is committed to learning. Educator means one who is involved in the instruction of others and who stimulates learning in others.

²¹ Ibid., 110.

²² Parks, 555.

CHAPTER 2

THE SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FACTORS THAT DETERMINED ACCESS TO EDUCATION IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY

In the twelfth century, access to education was greatly affected by class and gender. Opportunities were especially limited for women. Nonetheless, the career of Heloise demonstrates how education could be used by a woman to promote her convent and to further the scholarship of her associates. Heloise's date of birth is usually given as 1100. She died in 1163.

The educated person in the twelfth century "was one who could read and write and who possessed a knowledge of Latin."¹ The object of education was to enable the student to better understand Scripture and the Church Fathers.² To this end, students underwent a program of formal study known as the "seven liberal arts", which required acquisition of a certain amount of secular knowledge. This was followed by instruction in the psalter and church music and what was called "theology", although theology had not yet become a system. The liturgy was the medium which gave unity to these

¹ Parks, 555.

² Rashdall, 34.

studies."³ Such being the case, it was those who were directly involved in the celebration of the liturgy who had the greatest access to education.

One could receive an education in the early part of the century by attending a school attached to a monastery or cathedral, or less often, a convent that offered formal programs of study. Or one could employ a tutor. The upper classes had much greater access to education than did the lower class. Men had easier access to education than did women.

The feudal society which prevailed in western Europe was permeated with privilege and caste.⁴ It was a tripartite society composed of three orders (comprising 2 classes), commonly named the "bellatores" the "oratores" and the "laboratores." The bellatores, (those who fought) and the oratores, (those who prayed) belonged to the upper class: the laboratores, (those who worked) belonged to the lower class.

An early thirteenth century poem, *Miserere*, describes the situation:

Labours de clerc est Dieu prier
Et justice de chevalier.
Pain lor truvent li laborier.
Chil paist, chil prie, at chil deffent.
Au camp, a le vile, au moustier
S' entraident de lor mestier

³ Leclercq, Love of Learning and the Desire for God, 71.

⁴ Cantor, Norman, Medieval Society (London: Macmillan Company, 1969), 20.

Chil troi par bel ordenement.

The labor of a clerk is to pray to God, for the knight to do justice, and the laborer finds his bread. One provides food, one prays, and one defends. In the field, the town, and the church, these three help each other with their service, in a well ordered scheme.⁵

In this well ordered scheme, each order provided a service to society, and received education or training commensurate with its service of fighting, praying or working. A much greater percentage of society was trained than was educated. Those most likely to receive a education were men whose service was to pray.

In the feudal structure, the upper class (aristocrats) consisted of warriors, knights and nobles of greater or less degree (and their wives and children), who derived their revenue from the land and lived on the labors of the lower class. The service rendered by them was military in time of war and the giving of counsel in time of peace. Whoever was not born into this class had little hope of entering it.⁶

At the beginning of the twelfth century, the order of "oratores", whose service was to pray, was drawn almost always from the upper class. It consisted of monks, nuns, priests and canonists. Monks and nuns dwelt in a monastery or convent, lived according to a version of the Benedictine rule, and took the vows of poverty, celibacy,

⁵ Evans, Joan, Life in Medieval Times (Oxford, Univeristy Press, 1925), 5.

⁶ Bloch, Marc, Feudal Society (Chicago: University Press, 1961), 288.

stability, and obedience to an abbot or abbess. Monks were not necessarily priests though sufficient priests were ordained to satisfy the sacramental needs of the monasteries and convents.

The clergy were priests who lived in parishes and, at the beginning of the twelfth century, they were usually married. The movement to priestly celibacy had been initiated by Pope Gregory VII in the eleventh century but was not mandated until the Second Lateran Council in 1139. Canons were priests who were attached to a cathedral, the main church of the dioceses and the seat of the bishop. Some canons lived a communal life and adopted a rule of living, based on the rule of Augustine. These were known as "regular" canons. Other canons operated individually, lived apart from a community and were known as "secular" canons. Canons were responsible for the public prayers and the proper celebration of Christian feasts at the cathedral, as well as for teaching in the school. They also served as counsel to the bishop and administered the diocese.⁷

Being of servile birth disqualified one from the priesthood. However, an examination of the documents of forty two religious houses within the boundaries of modern day France, indicates that in the early twelfth century, one did not have to be noble to enter most religious communities, but one could not be a serf, a slave or a poor

⁷ Bokenkotter, Thomas, A Concise History of the Catholic Church (New York: Doubleday, 1966), 41-46.

peasant.⁸ A study done by Aloys Schulte in 1910 demonstrates that positions in cathedrals, monasteries, canonries and nunneries in Germany were reserved for those of noble birth. Entrants to the religious life were expected to bring an offering to defray the expenses which a new member would place upon a religious house. This made it almost impossible for the lower class to become priests. However, the gift could be in the form of "usefulness" and a peasant boy of extraordinary intellectual ability might gain access to a monastery school, where he would eventually serve society as a monk.⁹

At the lower end of the class structure were the peasants whose vocation it was to work at providing food and other life necessities. There were free peasants and unfree peasants (known as serfs), who owned no land but who worked it for the landlord. Serfs were attached to the land of the aristocrat in whose domain they lived. The serf was not free to change place of residence, to marry at will, or change occupation. Serfs could be bought or sold by the other two orders or exchanged between them. Serfs did not have parental rights over their children. An eleventh century deed of the monks of Marmoutier Monastery reads as follows:

In the year of the Incarnation of Our Lord 1087,
on the sixth day of June, in the time of Abbot

⁸ Lynch, Joseph, "Monastic Recruitment in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries " American Benedictine Review V. 26, 1975, 425.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 431.

Bernard, we proceeded to the division of the male and female children of several families.

We have received for our share, among the children of Renaud de Villana, a boy, Barthelemi, and three girls, Hersende, Milesende, and Letgarde; and among the children of Gauscelin, a girl, Aremburge, and a boy, Gautier. There was excepted from the division one very young girl-child, who remained in her cradle. If she lives, she is to be our common property until the conclusion of an agreement that shall assign her to one or other lordship.¹⁰

Peasants were free of military service and the nobles and the peasants were bound together in a protective relationship. The noble protected the peasant against the numerous invading forces and marauders, and the peasant provided the noble with food, clothing and services needed for the running of his estate. The roots of the system went back to Roman patrimonial proprietorship, which the Church and the Germans initiated and continued. The old Germanic concept of personal loyalty of all the members of the war-band to its chief was the foundation upon which feudalism was built. "Rome contributed the property relation, the Germans the personal relationship. Their fusion together formed the essential nature of feudalism."¹¹

Since each of the three orders received training or education commensurate with the service rendered, and the service by the members of the upper class who were not in religion was military,

¹⁰ Evans, 31.

¹¹ Thompson, James, Economic and Social History of the Middle Ages (New York: Frederick Unger, 1928), 700.

boys of the upper class were trained in the art of war and hunting. At the age of seven, noble boys were sent away from home to the household of another noble to receive training as "pages." A page was instructed in courtesy and good manners, and in the arts of hunting, riding and spear-throwing. His training also included "singing, dancing and the playing of a musical instrument." At sixteen the page became a "squire", and was trained in the art of warfare: how to tilt and use a lance, sword and battle axe, and how to take care of a horse.

Some sons of nobles remained squires all their lives, and returned home to care for their estates. Some made knightly vows. A "knight" was pledged to the protection of the Church and the succor of all who were in distress or in any way oppressed. Knights took part in expeditions to clear forests of trees, defy robbers, and take part in jousts and tournaments. A younger son of a noble family might attach himself to an older knight and follow him on his expeditions. This gave the young man training in the art of war, the vocational obligation of his class.¹² Training in the art of war and courtly manners was of great import to this class of people, and intellectual knowledge was often scorned. For this group, "good manners, and skill at chess and backgammon were considered more important than the ability to read and write."¹³

¹² Mills, Dorothy, The Middle Ages (New York: Van Rees Press, 1935)), 253-260.

¹³ Rowlings, Marjorie, Life in Medieval Times (New York: Paragon Books, 1979), 136.

The sons of the nobility who were intended for secular life were often taken on as "extern" pupils in monastery and cathedral schools but they "only skimmed the psalter" by way of education in these schools.¹⁴ Children of the aristocratic class were sometimes tutored by the chaplain in their homes. This tutoring was the usual mode of education for royal children. Examples of the upper nobility who had been thus educated in the early twelfth century included William IX of Aquitan who was the first of the troubadours to apply formal rules of poetry to his songs, thus "proving that he had received a sound literary training in Latin";¹⁵ Falk IV of Anjou wrote a short Latin history of the house of Anjou; Philip I of France "publicly read his own coronation oath in Latin." Examples from the lesser nobility include Geoffrey of Anjou who was "exceedingly well lettered and eloquent with both clergy and laity," and Henry the Liberal "who read Vegetius and Valerius Maximus in the original".¹⁶

Abelard, who was from the lesser nobility, states in the Historia Calamitatum:

My father had acquired some knowledge of letters before he was a soldier, and later on his passion for learning was such that he intended all his sons to have instruction in letters before they were trained to arms. His purpose was fulfilled. I was his first-born, and being specially

¹⁴ Thompson, J.W. Literacy of the Laity (Oxford: University Press, 1935), 123-124.

¹⁵ Ibid., 128.

¹⁶ Ibid., 128-130.

dear to him had the greatest care taken over my education. For my part, the more rapid and easy my progress in my studies, the more eagerly I applied myself until I was so carried away with my love of learning that I renounced the glory of a soldier's life, made over my inheritance and rights to the eldest son of my brothers, and withdrew from the court of Mars to kneel at the feet of Minerva.¹⁷

Conditions in lay society were not favorable to study, and "few laymen found either time or opportunity to acquire a knowledge of letters."¹⁸ All intellectual activity was confined to the cloister or to schools which were dependencies of the cloister, because "only among the clerical class was there any demand for learning."¹⁹

Monastery and cathedral schools were designed for the education of the applicants to the monastic or clerical way of life. Recruits were often handed over as "oblates" at a very early age and never saw their parents again. "Almost all of them passed quite naturally from the school, which was similar to a large novitiate to the community."²⁰ Orderic Vitalis, a twelfth century chronicler, as one such oblate:

When five years old I became a scholar at Shrewsbury and dedicated my first lessons to you, O God, in the church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul. The well known priest,

¹⁷ Radice, 68.

¹⁸ Thompson, J. W., 124.

¹⁹ Rashdall, 34-95.

²⁰ Leclercq, Jean, Monks and Love in Twelfth Century France, 10.

Sigward, taught me my letters, psalms, hymns, and other learning. Then, feeling that affection for my parents might deflect me from your worship, you led my father to give me entirely to you, a small boy did not presume to withstand his father, so I left my country, my parents, my kindred and friends. I was ten when I crossed the Channel to Normandy. I was received into the monastery of Saint Evroul at Ouche, near Lisieux and tonsured in clerkly manner. I have lived fifty-six years in this abbey.²¹

The two most famous monastic schools at the beginning of the twelfth century were those of Cluny and Bec. These were under the auspices of an abbot and were intended to educate future monks. Cathedral schools were under the auspices of a bishop, and were intended to educate future priests. Chartres, Tours, Liege and Notre Dame were the foremost cathedral schools.²²

Peasants and serfs were trained for their life's work by early apprenticeship at manual tasks such as plowing and harvesting the fields, milling grain, brewing ale, baking bread, grinding corn, caring for livestock, or serving in the household of nobles.²³ The peasant had little access to education, although as previously stated, males of outstanding intellectual ability might be received into a monastery school and could reach high positions in the church.²⁴ Female peasants did not have access to education.²⁵

²¹ Rowlings, 139.

²² Haskins, C.H. The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1927), 27.

²³ Bloch, 23.

²⁴ Leclercq, Monks and Love in Twelfth Century France, 5.

Education or training was designed to fit the individual for his or her appropriate station in the system. Since the system was based on class, class was the first determinant in accessibility to education. Gender was another determinant in accessibility to education. Females did not have access to education on an equal footing with males in any class. Cultural bias, derived from law and religious teaching on women, regarded females as inferior to males.

The early twelfth century was a time of "prevailing misogyny."²⁶ At the beginning of the twelfth century, "women were despised not only by men but often by themselves."²⁷ In an early twelfth century treatise in social relationships between men and women entitled De Amore, Andrae Capellani pointed out that "In men, excess in love or lust are to be tolerated, in women this is to be considered a crime." Capellani considered women of the lower class as mere objects to be used for the satisfaction of lustful desires: "as for relations with peasant women, desire can be satisfied without any obligation towards them: they may be used even by force of violence if necessary." Capellani attributed "all the vices of the world to women."²⁸

²⁵ Powers, 86.

²⁶ Labarge, Margaret, A Small Sound of the Trumpet, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 195.

²⁷ Tannahill, Rene, Sex in History, (New York: Stein and Day, 1980), 258.

²⁸ Leclercq, The Love of Learning and the Desire for God, 71.

A letter of Abbot Conrad of Marchtal, a member of the order of St. Norbert near Laon, written in 1120, states:

Recognizing that the wickedness of women is greater than all the other wickedness of the world, and that there is no anger like that of women, and that the poison of asps and dragons is more curable and less dangerous to men than the familiarity of women, we have unanimously decreed for the safety of our souls, no less than that of our bodies and goods, that we will on no account receive any more sisters to the increase of our perdition.²⁹

The Bible imbued Christian women with a sense of their own inferiority.³⁰ Heloise, herself lends credence to this view. In her letters, she often quotes Scripture to denigrate women: "It was the first woman who at the beginning lured man from Paradise, and she who became the instrument of his total downfall"; "Job, holiest of men, fought his last and hardest battle against his wife"; "Is it the general lot of women to bring total ruin on great men? Hence the warning about women in Proverbs." She refers frequently to the "weakness" of women and suggests that they are more easily tempted than are men.³¹

Women's access to education was curtailed by these cultural attitudes. The laws of society were made and administered by men

²⁹ Southern, Richard, Medieval Humanism, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1970), 314.

³⁰ Tannahill, 137-160.

³¹ Radice, 161-178.

"who generally considered women not only subordinate and inferior, but also threatening."³² This undermined all education for women.

Law was biased against women. Under feudal law, a woman was always in the custody of some male. First it was her father, and then her husband. A widow was in the custody of her eldest son. A woman could inherit a fief, but she could rule it only through her husband. She had no legal rights whatever against her husband.³³ These legal restrictions on women tended to relegate them to an inferior status and limited their access to education.

The education received by women was also curtailed by their physical limitations. Women were relegated to a subordinate position to men in feudal societies because "the function of the feudal class was to fight and it was thought that a woman could not do that and therefore she was held in less regard."³⁴ This low regard for women curtailed the education they received to the vocational. Educational access was also limited for women because of the hierarchical nature of the Church: "The hierarchy of the church was masculine, and therefore educational opportunities were more readily available to men than to women."³⁵ Education for women was limited almost exclusively to nuns and nuns were not educated on an equal footing

³² Labarge, 194.

³³ Bloch, 200.

³⁴ Powers, 81.

³⁵ Evans, 117.

with monks: "Education was considered desirable only in that it enabled nuns to follow the liturgy."³⁶

The teachings of the early Church Fathers also hindered the education of women:³⁷ Generally the Fathers had regarded women as instruments of the devil:

Do you not realize that Eve is you? The curse that God pronounced on your sex weighs still on the world. Guilty, you must bear its hardships. You are the devil's gateway, you desecrated the fatal tree, you first betrayed the law of God, you who softened up with your cajoling words the man against whom the devil could not prevail by force. The image of God, the man Adam, you broke him. It was child's play to you. You deserve death and it was the son of God who had to die. (Tertullian)

The whole of her bodily beauty is nothing less than phlegm, blood, bile, rheum, and the fluids of digested food. If you consider what is stored up behind those lovely eyes, the angle of the nose, the mouth and the cheeks, you will agree that the well proportioned body is merely a whitened sepulchre. (John Chrysostom)

One writer claims that

In order to protect women from evil outside influences, their education in any but the traditional subjects like music and embroidery was frowned upon, for ignorance was equated with innocence. In view of a Father of the Greek Church, St. Gregory of Nyssa, men were capable of coping with the consequences of knowledge, but the greater weakness of the female sex, as epitomized by Eve's

³⁶ McGrath, A.M., Women in the Church (New York: Image Books, 1976), 69.

³⁷ The teachings of the early Church Fathers were catalogued in the twelfth century by Peter Lombard, a student of Abelard's.

frailty in the garden, ill-suited women for study.³⁸

Another writer calls the twelfth century "patristic", and says that it prolonged "a mode of thought inherited from the Fathers of the Church."³⁹

If women's access to education was limited by cultural bias, it was also determined by the service they were expected to render society. Women were expected to serve society as wives or to undertake the duties of nuns in the cloister. These societal expectations determined the training or education the woman received.⁴⁰

Marriage was the destiny of most females. For many, there was no question of freedom to choose one's partner. Marriage between serfs was controlled by the lords and masters. The most widely documented restriction on peasants involved marriage. They were prohibited from marrying outside their lord's control except with his permission and this required payment of a "formarriage." When a mixed marriage was contracted (that is a marriage between peasants of different domiciles), bilateral agreements were worked between the lords involved. Usually the women were traded to the lord's of their husbands. When a woman was transferred, the receiving lord promised her original lord another woman of equal value.

³⁸ Warner, Marina, Alone of All Her Sex: The Myth and Cult of the Virgin Mary (New York: Vantage Books, 1983), 186.

³⁹ Leclercq, Monks and Love in Twelfth Century France, 32.

⁴⁰ Powers, 60-80.

Because the medieval economy was based on land, marriage between members of the upper classes was a business contract drawn to protect and enlarge the inherited holdings.⁴¹ Parents arranged the marriage of their children, particularly their daughters. Most females were married by the age of fourteen. Girls from the aristocratic classes were trained for their service as wives of noble men. It was not unusual for young girls of the upper classes to be sent away for their training, as were their brothers, to the castle of some knight or lord. Their training was almost exclusively in personal service, household duties, good manners, music, and pleasing conversation. "They learned to say their prayers, play the harp, and sing various poems," and "in general there was scarcely any intellectual element in it."

There were exceptions to this. A poem about one young woman reads: "She was thereto courteous, and free and wise and in the seven arts learned withouten miss."⁴² An early twelfth century poem written by the bishop of Rennes lauding Ermengard, daughter of Fulk of Rechin reads: "for being well versed in Latin."⁴³ Several other women are known to have received some education: Adelaide of Lorraine, the wife of Duke Simon of Lorraine was "sufficiently well instructed in letters to understand spoken Latin." Adelaide, niece of

⁴¹ Evergates, Theodore, Feudal Society in the Baillage of Troyes under the Counts of Champagne (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975), 22.

⁴² Graves, Frank, A History of Education During the Middle Ages (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1920), 60-68.

⁴³ Thompson, J.W., 129.

the archdeacon of Poitiers, was praised by Peter of Blois in one of his letters. The contemporary biographer of Marguerite, niece of Pope Calixtus II related that she had studied Latin and "acquired a creditable knowledge of the language." Beatrice of Burgundy, the second wife of Frederick Barbarossa, is said to have studied poetry and to have written her own epitaph in eight Latin verses. Agnes of Anjou paid an enormous price for a copy of a collection of the sermons of Haimo of Halberstadt, and thereby showed a more than casual interest. The countess of Toulouse signed her name to a document at Cluny Abbey "thus showing that she could write."⁴⁴ Thus, women of the courts where men were interested in literacy were probably as well educated as the men.⁴⁵

Several other women of this period were poets. These included Compiuta Donzella of Florence, Comtessa de Dia, and Wallada Zaidun of Spain. It can be inferred that French women at this time were also capable of writing poetry. A considerable range of poetry survives in Latin and Provencal by anonymous women.⁴⁶ Many women of noble birth wrote poetry pseudonymously.⁴⁷ Since it was the noblewomen of Champagne and Provence who were the patronesses

⁴⁴ Ibid., 138-139.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 129-130.

⁴⁶ Labarge, 223.

⁴⁷ McNamer, Sarah, "Authorship of The Finden Manuscript", paper delivered at the South West Regional Medieval Conference, Arizona, Spring, 1989.

of troubadours, it can be presumed that these women were able to read.⁴⁸

Educated women among the nobles were, however, the exception. In courtly circles, the object was to fashion ladies who would "shine in society". Young girls were taught the rules for playing the game of courtly love, and were given instruction for the care of their person and deportment "modelled on Ovid's Art of Love."⁴⁹

Girls of the upper classes occasionally were educated in convent schools "as extern pupils," but this was not a common practice. The Rule for Nuns which was compiled in 512 by St. Caesarius of Arles, ordered "That they ought not to receive girls, noble or commoner, for the purpose of either rearing or teaching them."⁵⁰ There is evidence that some convents did have schools, but these schools were not large. The average convent accommodated twenty nuns and there would have been room for only a handful of pupils.⁵¹ Fees were so high that many of the nobles could not afford to send their children to convent schools.⁵² There is no surviving evidence of what was taught in convent schools except inferences

⁴⁸ Powers, 85.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 76.

⁵⁰ Thompson, J.W., 51.

⁵¹ Labarge, 99

⁵² Powers, 81.

from what we know of the education of nuns themselves.⁵³ Girls of the upper classes were also afforded opportunity for education by private tutoring by chaplains or canons as we know from the education of Heloise.⁵⁴

The daughters of peasants were expected to become wives of peasants, and as such to work along with their husbands at manual tasks, or to work as household servants. These latter girls were apprenticed to their trade at a very young age and had no access to education. "Peasant women or general domestic servants received no education at all."⁵⁵ Females received training for the service they were to render society and that service was most often as a wife. This rule applied to all classes.

Women also served society as nuns in convents, where they had greater access to education. There were far fewer nunneries for women than there were monasteries for men. In the preceding century the great monastic houses were intended for men and convents for women had been outgrowths of these monastic houses and often were established to accommodate relatives of those who entered the monasteries. For example, Bernard of Clairvaux built such a convent to accomodate his mother, sisters and various relatives.⁵⁶ In the tenth and eleventh centuries several monasteries

⁵³ Ibid., 82.

⁵⁴ Radice, 67.

⁵⁵ Powers, 86.

⁵⁶ Baker, David, Medieval Women (Oxford: Blackwell, 1978), 56.

were founded in association with Cluny, but they included only one foundation for nuns before the beginning of the twelfth century. That was the convent at Marcigny, and it was founded for the special purpose of providing a retreat for women whose husbands had become monks of Cluny:

The circumstances and terms of the foundation illustrate the lowered esteem for women in religion. The nunnery was to be a place where mature women who were tired of matrimonial licence might purge themselves of their past errors and be worthy of attaining the embraces of Christ. Noble women who had been freed from matrimony chose this place, resigning themselves the more patiently to the loss of matrimonial joys.⁵⁷

In the early twelfth century, it was not unusual for married couples to enter monasteries and convents with their children. Between 21 and 52 percent of the nuns were, or had been married. As the twelfth century progressed and the laws of celibacy for clergy were introduced and the laws of primogeniture developed, which often forbade marriage to any but the oldest son, "many women of the upper classes were without marriage prospects."⁵⁸

There were therefore many women from the upper classes in the twelfth century who were neither married nor in convents. One can speculate that the service some of these women provided to society was as companions to other women. "There was no place in

⁵⁷ Southern, 311.

⁵⁸ Leclercq, Monks and Love in Twelfth Century France, 20.

feudal society for women who did not marry."⁵⁹ There is no evidence of their training being different to that of other upper class women.

Women who became nuns did have access to education and several nuns received recognition as writers in the twelfth century. Among them are Constance of Le Ronceray, Herrad of Hohenstaufen and Hildegard of Bingen. Constance of Le Ronceray, in Angres, wrote a letter in eighty-nine couplets in Latin in answer to a letter from her godfather, Baudri of Bourgueil. This poem showed she had an extensive knowledge of Scripture and the poetry of Ovid. Herrad of Hohenstaufen wrote and illustrated the Garden of Delights, a religious encyclopaedia which groups 1200 texts of various authors, and reproduces fifty-five sermons and fifty-five poems. Hildegard of Bingen wrote several books on medicine and theology.⁶⁰ Other religious women writers of the twelfth century included Relina of Hohenstaufen, Ida of Boullion, Christina of Makyate, Clemence of Barking Abbey, and Beatrice of Lacock.⁶¹ Their education may have been limited. For example, Hildegard of Bingen had only an elementary education.⁶²

⁵⁹ Powers, 46.

⁶⁰ Dronke, Peter, Medieval Women Writers (Cambridge: University Press, 1984), 59.

⁶¹ Labarge, .223.

⁶² Newman, Barbara, Sister of Wisdom (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987), 89.

Although several individual religious women writers are known, it is difficult to determine the intellectual level of the convents in the twelfth century because of the dearth of material on the subject. Nunneries offered to the main body of nuns "opportunities for education, organization and responsibility not easy for a woman to find elsewhere."⁶³ The illuminated manuscripts produced by convents testify to the nun's skill in art and writing.⁶⁴ The existence of abbesses is indicative of the level of education in some convents because being an abbess required administrative and business skills and "only a woman who was well educated, who had read widely of the literature that was at her command and who understood the medieval world of affairs, could occupy such a position."⁶⁵ All nuns had to know enough Latin to follow the liturgy and to chant the psalms. The psalter was quite complicated and could require quite an extensive knowledge of Latin.⁶⁶ Evidence shows that nunneries provided access to education for women and we know that some convents were of a definite intellectual bent. It further appears that Heloise received a good education at the convent of Argenteuil.⁶⁷

⁶³ Powers, 90.

⁶⁴ Mills, 189.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Personal interview, Malcolm Parks, Keble College, Oxford. October 1989.

⁶⁷ Radice, 67.

But at the beginning of the twelfth century, women of the poorer classes did not have access to convents. "Convents catered only to women of status."⁶⁸ "Large doweries were required of all those entering a convent."⁶⁹ The chronicle of the nunnery of Quedlinburg reports that when the widow of King Henry founded the monastery she took great care to see that no "low-born women," but only novices of the "highest nobility," were admitted, "because those who are well-born can scarcely ever become degenerate."⁷⁰

Several new orders for both men and women, based on the rule of Augustine, came into existence in the twelfth century. These new orders accepted recruits from the lower classes. Robert d'Arbissel founded a combined order for both men and women at Fontevrault in 1117. This institution accepted members of the lower class as well as "harlots, prostitutes and others of ill repute." D'Arbissel was "a romantic hero" who worked for the "restauration de la femme" and tried to remove the stigma of "the dangerous Eve." One of the buildings at Fontevrault was dedicated to the Virgin Mary and housed virgins, widows and matrons. Other buildings housed penitents under the patronage of St Mary Magdalene; the sick lived in a house dedicated to St. Lazarus; men were placed in a house dedicated to John the Evangelist "an act symbolic of the subservient role that men played at Fontevrault." Vitalis of Mortain built a

⁶⁸ Hunt, Noreen, Cluny (Indiana: Notre Dame Press, 1968), 186.

⁶⁹ Powers, 64.

⁷⁰ Southern, 230.

similar establishment at Neufbourg in 1120; Norbert of Xanten established a house that gave equal access to men and women at Premontre in 1121, its prime purpose was to care for the poor and the sick; Salomon built an abbey to house women at Noiyeau in 1109; and Ralph de la Futaie founded St. Sulpice for women in 1112.⁷¹

In the course of the twelfth century, then, women from the lower classes were admitted to certain order of convents and thereby to a certain education, although we may infer that this represented a very small proportion of women. Women of the upper classes had educational opportunity, although proportionately fewer women than men of this class had such opportunity.

The social and cultural factors, therefore, which determined access to education during the early life time of Heloise were class and gender, and males of the upper class had much greater access than did others. But attitudes to class and gender changed during Heloise's life time. Her adult life was spent in an atmosphere of change in the class structure, in the attitude towards women, and in education itself. These changes were largely due to the impetus of the Crusades.⁷²

As the twelfth century progressed, the "image" of women improved. It is claimed that fully half of the knights of France set off

⁷¹ Baker, 176-190.

⁷² Previte-Orton, C.W., The Shorter Cambridge Medieval History (Cambridge: University Press, 1924), 320-333.

for the Holy Land on public or private crusade during the first thirty years after the calling of the first crusade and with the exodus of so many men from their estates, women were provided the opportunity to show themselves as competent in management as were men, and to "enjoy the privileges generally reserved for those in power."⁷³

Upper class women, who had hitherto been dependent on husbands, sons, or fathers, now found themselves running estates, doing administrative work, and entering politics. "The Crusades opened up the world to women."⁷⁴

Another off-shoot of the Crusades that directly affected the image of women was the emergence of the cult of Mary brought back from Byzantium. The Virgin Mary had previously occupied a comparatively minor place in the western Christendom, although she had always been held in esteem by the Byzantine Church.⁷⁵ The cult of Mary introduced a feminine aspect into a predominantly male Church. The cult was taken up by many ecclesiastics of the day, the most famous among them being Saint Bernard. His newly formed Cistercian order of monks wore white in honor of Mary, they included the name "Mary" in their religious names, and built special lady chapels to her in their churches. Hundreds of Cistercian abbeys were founded in France in the twelfth century. The cult of Mary spread to noblemen, merchants and burghers, who commissioned

⁷³ Tannahill, 259.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 260.

⁷⁵ Warner, 208.

works of art and architecture in her honor.⁷⁶ "When Eve at last gave way to Mary, all women benefited."⁷⁷

A factor in enhancing the image of women was the introduction of troubadour poetry, with its theme of "courtly love" and admiration for women. A change in attitude towards the education of women can be gleaned from the "Romance of Flamenca," a troubadour poem of the twelfth century:

A woman is all the better if she is a little adorned with learning. For indeed you, Madam, tell me if you hadn't known as much as you do how would you have passed over these two years, during which you have suffered such cruel torments? You would have been dead with grief. But however great your sadness, it disappeared when you read a little. "Friend" said Flamenca, pressing her in her arms, "you speak wisely. For no repose is pleasant to a man who is ignorant of letters and you will ever see that persons who are learned regret that they are not more so."⁷⁸

Such changes in the image of women principally affected women of the upper classes. However, women of the lower classes were to benefit by the codification of canon law by Gratian. Gratian composed the Decretum in the twelfth century, and among the laws were those regulating marriage. This was a particular boon to women of the lower classes. Canon law recognized the husband's authority over his

⁷⁶ Ibid., 131.

⁷⁷ Tannahill, 259.

⁷⁸ Prescott, F. M., The Troubadours (London: Penguin books, 1963), 44.

wife, but it also insisted on the need for free consent by both partners to make a valid marriage. It required a single standard of morals for both sexes, and established women's rights to the inheritance of property. "This was a major advance for women."⁷⁹

The twelfth century saw a decided appreciation of the status of woman in the civilization as a whole.⁸⁰ For women this was "perhaps the most critical time since the neolithic age."⁸¹

We have no specific knowledge of the class status of Heloise, although, since she was a niece of a canon of Notre Dame, we can infer that she was not from the lower classes. Abelard was from the lesser nobility.⁸² In Heloise's second letter she suggests that she was of a lower class than he.⁸³ We do know, however, that she had the ability to read and write and that she possessed a knowledge of Latin, at a time when few people had an education.

⁷⁹ Labarge, xii.

⁸⁰ Painter, Sidney, Medieval Society (New York: Cornell University, 1951), 36.

⁸¹ Tannahill, 258.

⁸² Radice, 57.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 127.

CHAPTER 3

EDUCATION IN THE TWELFTH CENTURY

As was shown in chapter 2, those who had greatest access to education in 1100 were males who belonged to the clerical order. Education was in the hands of the Church. The Benedictine monasteries and the cathedral schools were the institutions of learning in Europe.¹ Every monastery and every cathedral had a school for the education of young clerks. Pupils were recruited when they were very young, and many schools allowed extern pupils who were drawn from the upper class. The object of education was to enable the student to better understand Scripture and the Church Fathers.²

Teaching was divided into three levels. "At the first level, writing, reading, singing, a little grammar and a knowledge of the calendar was dealt with."³ Children learned prayers by heart, they were taught to write on tables of wax, and taught how to work out the date of Easter with the aid of astronomical tables. At the second level, most schools followed a formal curriculum (depending on the availability of texts and teachers) composed of the seven liberal arts:

¹ Rashdal, Hastings, The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages Vol.1 (Oxford: University press, sixth edition, 1964), 34.

² Leclercq, Monks and Love in Twelfth Century France, 10.

³ Piltz, Anders, The World of Medieval Learning (Oxford: Blackwell, 1981), 15.

grammar, rhetoric, and logic (called the trivium); and arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music (the quadrivium). Students also learned prayers, the rule of the order, sermons, the lives of the saints. The third level involved the reading and interpretation of Scripture, and the teachings of the Fathers of the Church. The language of the Church was Latin, all subjects were taught through Latin, and a knowledge of that language was essential to every student.⁴ All of this learning was to culminate in the celebration of the liturgy (which was in Latin): "The liturgy was the medium which gave unity to all of these studies and was the manifestation of monastic culture."⁵

The concept for the seven liberal arts can be traced to the fifth century, where they were standardized in a book called De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii (On the Marriage of Mercury and Philology), by Martianus Capella.⁶ Grammar was considered necessary to an understanding of Scripture. A twelfth century treatise on the life of Hugh of Cluny, reads: "In this town he had his first taste of grammar by which he was introduced to the profundity of Sacred Scripture."⁷

Grammar meant Latin grammar as well as Latin literature. Priscian's Institutiones Grammaticae, written in the sixth century, was widely used, as was a book written by Donatus, a fourth century

⁴ Ibid., 15-27

⁵ Leclercq, Love of Learning and the Desire for God, 7

⁶ Piltz, 17.

⁷ Ibid., 23.

grammarians.⁸ William of Campeaux, a teacher of Abelard, was an authority on Priscan.⁹ Grammar books were often copied in verse to facilitate commitment to memory.¹⁰ It was principally taught by reading classical authors. Christianity had an unresolved conflict with Latin classics since the fourth century, when the Fourth Council of Carthage forbade bishops to read the "books of the gentiles."¹¹ In the ninth century there had been a revival of the Latin classics under Charlemagne, but whether or not pagan authors should be used to teach Latin grammar was still an open question in the twelfth century. "A segment of the church regarded the study of the poets as perilous to the soul. Priscan and Donatus were criticized for omitting the name of God in their texts of Latin grammar."¹² It was questioned whether the Vulgate only should be used in the teaching of grammar.¹³ Gratian, in 1140, questioned "whether knowledge of profane literature should be sought after by churchmen." Nicholas, the secretary to Bernard of Clairvaux, regrets the charm he found "in Cicero and the poets and in the golden sayings of the philosophers

⁸ Haskins, 93.

⁹ Radice, 61.

¹⁰ Graves, 20.

¹¹ Haskins, 95.

¹² Ibid., 96.

¹³ Sandys, J. E., A History of classical Scholarship (Cambridge: University Press, 1921), 615.

and the song of the Sirens."¹⁴ Gilbert of Nogent, who lived at the beginning of the twelfth century, "regretted the Latin poets of his youth."¹⁵ However, in 1078, Pope Gregory VII had ordered all bishops to have the secular arts taught in their churches.¹⁶ Secular knowledge was not to be an end in itself, but was to be seen in a higher perspective. "It was to be used to set the affections of men on the things above, to arouse a desire for virtue and a detestation of sin." Virgil was one of the most extensively read writers and his works were interpreted allegorically in much the same way as were the Scriptures.¹⁷ "Everything true or good or simply beautiful" that was written even by pagan authors, was thought "to belong to Christians." The works of Ovid were popular among writers in Champagne, where "earthly love was to be seen as a prototype of divine love." There were two attitudes and two tendencies, seemingly contradictory, the use of the classics and the distrust of them. The influence of classical authors is often manifest in the writings of monks and nuns of the twelfth century.¹⁸

¹⁴ Ibid., 618.

¹⁵ Norton, A. D., Readings in the History of Education (Cambridge: University Press, 1909), 64.

¹⁶ Previt-Orton, 778.

¹⁷ Piltz, 33-36.

¹⁸ Leclercq, Love of Learning and the Desire for God, 13-116. Leclercq observes that William of Saint Denis in his "Apologetic Dialogue" imitates the "Lives of Caesar" of Suetonius; William of Saint Theiry draws on Seneca; Heloise imitates Ovid; Thomas of Perseigne quotes Virgil and Ovid; Abelard quotes several Latin authors.

In the study of grammar, then, students used the grammar texts of Priscus and Donatus, the Scriptures, and the works of pagan Latin writers such as Virgil and Ovid.

Rhetoric was the study of the art of speaking well on civic and religious questions. However, in the study of rhetoric, secular knowledge was not an end in itself, but was to be seen in the higher perspective of arousing a desire for virtue. The purpose of rhetoric was to persuade the listener, and to "mould the feelings" towards a desire to serve God.¹⁹ Boethius' Categoriae and Deinterpretatione, Cicero's treatises in De Oratore and Ad Herennium were the texts in use, as were collections of monastic sermons.²⁰

Rhetoric equally emphasized the art of letter writing. The way of conversing through the written word harmonized with the silence enjoined by the Benedictine Rule, with the vow of stability, and with cloistered life. Writing a letter cost time and effort. One "engraved " a letter or "sculptured" it by striking a parchment, from which the letter was extricated "as if by ploughing or digging." The piece of parchment used on personal letters was often only scraps: "they were inferior in quality to the skillfully prepared skins reserved for the books copied in the scriptoria or for charters and public acts." Raw material was scarce and costly and was used with the greatest economy. Personal letters had a "public" quality about them. The letter writer took it for granted that the letter's contents would come

¹⁹ Piltz, 36.

²⁰ Leclercq, Love of Learning and the Desire for God, 75.

under the eyes of several others besides the receiver.²¹ Regular instruction in letter writing was given and since monasteries were built in isolated places and schools were separated from one another by wide stretches, the usual method of communication between scholars was by letter.²² Alberic of Monte Cassino wrote a text on letter writing in the middle of the eleventh century which was widely used and gave rules for the procedure.²³ Alberic's book on the art of letter writing, contained five distinct parts to a letter: the salutation, (a point on which medieval etiquette was very severe, the form of address being elaborately fixed for each dignity and station in society); the exordium, designed to put the reader in the right frame of mind and often consisting of a proverb or scriptural quotation; the narrative or exposition; the petition, which was likely to take the form of a logical deduction from the major and minor premises already laid down in the exordium and narration; and the conclusion.²⁴

The Italian master, Adelbertus, wrote a book called The Art of Letter Writing at the beginning of the twelfth century. Among other things, Adelbertus recommended variety in the use of certain cadences (*cursus tardus* and *cursus velox*) at the end of sentences,

²¹ Ibid., 176.

²² Haskins, 22.

²³ Graves, 20.

²⁴ Haskins, 144.

and his method "was the choice of many major Northern French writers of the age."²⁵

Thus, rhetoric, the study of the art of speaking well on civic and religious questions, was taught by references to Boethius' Categoriae and De Interpretatione, and Cicero' treatises in De Oratore and Ad Herennium, and by the letter writing guidelines of such masters as Alberic of Monte Cassino and Adelbertus.

Logic was the third subject of the trivium. It was the study of reasoning skills. The rules of right reasoning involved asking questions, defining terms, inquiry, and distinguishing truth from falsehood, and was considered important for the right understanding of Christian truth.²⁶ The question of central importance to scholars at the beginning of the twelfth century was "the reality of universals."²⁷ Platonic ideas had found their way into Christian thinking through Augustine in the fourth century, but very little of Aristotle had been translated. Plato's Timaeus, Phaedo and Meno were the chief "sources of the scholar's inspiration for logic" as well as Boethius' Consolations of Philosophy, (which contained some Aristotle) and Porphyry's Isagoge. Realism, which was based on Plato, "suggested the real existence of abstract ideas quite independent of particular things in which they are objectified, and was the generally accepted philosophy of the Church, and the one on

²⁵ Dronke, Medieval Women Writers, 110.

²⁶ Rashdall, p.36.

²⁷ Ibid., p.37.

which many Church doctrines were based."²⁸ Realism had already been challenged in the eleventh century by Nominalists, who held that universals were just names given to individual things, which alone had reality. Several of the combatants in that intellectual controversy were Beranger of Tours, who applied Nominalism to the doctrine of Transubstantiation and called the Eucharist a "symbolic ceremony." He was forced to retract his statement.²⁹ Roscellinus a canon of Compiègne (and a teacher of Abelard) at the end of the eleventh century, "applied Nominalism to the doctrine of the Trinity, and went as far as to suggest that the three divine persons of the Trinity were three gods."³⁰ Roscellian was forced to retract his statements before he could continue with his teaching. William of Champeaux (another teacher of Abelard) was the chief champion of Realism at the beginning of the twelfth century.³¹

Logic, then, involved learning reasoning skills, and logicians at the beginning of the twelfth century were involved in debating the "reality of universals" and "nominalism." The texts used were Boethius's translations of Aristotle's De Interpretatione and the Categoriae, as well as the Isagogue of Porphyry.

²⁸ Ibid., p.47.

²⁹ Schachner, Nathan, The Medieval University, (New York: Barnes Press, 1961), 23.

³⁰ Ibid., 24.

³¹ Radice, 12.

The quadrivium -arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music- had more of a practical rather than intellectual content.³² Arithmetic concerned simple calculation.³³ In geometry, pupils learned about geography and surveying. Astronomy was the study of the stars.³⁴ Music was mostly theoretical, but also practical for singing in the choir. Boethius' manuals of arithmetic and music were used for the teaching of those subjects. The Venerable Bede's Outline of Practical Astronomy was also popular.³⁵ "The quadrivium was chiefly important as supplying the skeleton outline of a wider course of study which was afterwards filled up by the rediscoveries of the twelfth century renaissance."³⁶ The real secular education of the middle ages was the trivium. "The only evidence we have of anyone having studied the quadrivium in the twelfth century is what is demonstrated in their business and administrative abilities."³⁷

John of Salisbury, a contemporary of Heloise, and a student of Abelard's, in his Metalogicus, describes the study of the trivium in the twelfth century under Bernard of Chartres:

³² Rashdall, 36.

³³ Roman numerals and not Arabic were in use.

³⁴ Rashdall, 35. He claims that this was important mainly for setting the date for Easter.

³⁵ Ibid., 36.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Personal Interview, Sister Benedicta Ward, Center for Medieval Studies, Oxford University, October, 1989.

Bernard of Chartres, the most abounding spring of letters in Gaul in modern times, followed this method, and in reading of authors showed what was simple and fell under the ordinary rules; the figures of grammar, the adornments of rhetoric, the quibbles of sophistries; and where the subject of his own lesson had reference to other disciplines, these matters he brought out clearly, yet in such wise that he did not teach everything about each topic, but in proportion to the capacity of his audience dispensed to them in time the due measure of the subject. And because the brilliancy of discourse depends either on propriety (that is the proper joining of adjective or verb with the substantive) or on metathesis (that is, the transfer of an expression for a worthy reason to another signification), these were the things he took every opportunity to inculcate in the minds of his hearers.

And since the memory is strengthened and the wits are sharpened by exercise, he urged some by warning and some by flogging and punishment to the constant practice of imitating what they heard. Every one was required on the following day to reproduce what he had heard the day before, some more, some less, for with them the morrow was the discipline of yesterday. Evening drill, which was called the declension, was packed with so much grammar that one who gave a whole year to it would have at his command, unless unusually dull, a method of speaking and writing and could not be ignorant of the meaning of expressions which are in common use. (The material, however, of the evening lesson was chosen for moral and religious edification, closing with the sixth penitential psalm and the Lord's prayer.) Before those for whom the preliminary exercise of boys in imitating prose or poetry were prescribed, he held up the poets or orators and bade them follow in their footsteps, pointing out their combinations of words and the elegance of their phrasing. But if any one had sewed on another's raiment to make his own work brilliant, he detected and exposed the theft, though very often he inflicted punishment. But if the poorness of the work had so merited, with indulgent mildness he ordered the culprit to embark on the task of fashioning a real likeness

of the ancient authors and he brought it about that he who imitated his predecessors became worthy of imitation by his successors.

The following matters, too, he taught among the first rudiments and fixed them in the students' minds; the value of order; what is praiseworthy in embellishment and in the choice of words; where there is tenuity and as it were emaciation of speech; where a pleasing abundance; where excess; and where the limit due in all things. History and poetry too he taught should be diligently read without the spur of compulsion and he insistently required that each pupil should commit something to memory every day; but he taught them to avoid superfluity and be content with what they found in the famous writers, and since in the entire preliminary training of pupils there is nothing more useful than to grow accustomed to that which must needs be done with skill, they wrote prose and poetry daily, and trained themselves by mutual comparisons.³⁸

While the seven liberal arts formed the central core of learning, each individual school also had its own archival material on which to draw. "Pupils, like John of Salisbury, were taught history, but the information here depended on the local annals of the church itself."³⁹ Variety was introduced in the personalities and level of scholarship of the teachers; and while pupils read the lives of the saints, the particular saints varied. They learned prayers and creeds by heart.⁴⁰

24. ³⁸ John of Salisbury, *Metagicus*, 1 (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956),

³⁹ Haskins, 136.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 137.

Abelard mentions in Historia Calamitatum, that at his trial he was "made to recite the Athanasian creed as any boy could do."⁴¹

All of this teaching culminated at the third level in the study of theology. The highest level of learning involved the study of the Scriptures and the commentaries of the Fathers of the Church. This was called theology. Interpretation was made difficult because Scripture was a collection of translated texts, and it was almost impossible to find anyone with a knowledge of the original biblical languages, Hebrew and Greek. "To be able to understand what was obscure, it was necessary to turn to traditional interpretations which had been given by the Church Fathers, in particular the four Doctors of the Church, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine and Pope Gregory the Great."⁴² Theologians looked on themselves as custodians of traditions and orthodoxy.⁴³

Commentaries on both the language and content of the texts were known as "scolia". Shorter comments on individual words and phrases (which were written in between the lines of the text or in the margins) were known as "glosses". The Benedictine Rule prescribed a method for study of Scripture which called for an exposition verse by verse from the glosses of the Fathers of the Church. "Sentences" were extracts taken from the Bible or the Church Fathers or from sermons preached on them. "Sentences were iterated

⁴¹ Radice, 84.

⁴² Piltz, 23.

⁴³ Ibid., 24.

by the teacher and expounded on and proved through citations from Scripture and the Fathers." The idea behind this method of teaching was to reinforce already held doctrines of the Church and to enable the ecclesiastic to study and meditate on the Bible and Scripture for himself. There was little interest in original inquiry.⁴⁴ Anselm of Laon, a teacher of Abelard's, followed the traditional lines of study of the Scriptures as prescribed by St. Benedict. "The aim of the scholastic was to defend the traditional doctrines of the Church against heresy."⁴⁵ The watchword of education was authority and conformity of the individual to the model set.⁴⁶ Anselm, in the preface to his Proslogion, protests that nothing in his doctrines is out of harmony with the Catholic Fathers, especially the Blessed Augustine. His "Credo ut Intelligam" (I believe so that I may understand) posits that pre-existent faith could be reinforced by the addition of knowledge and reason. Reason, according to Anselm, was the "handmaiden" of faith. Reason did not precede faith.⁴⁷

The system of interpretation ascribed four forms of meaning to the words of the Bible: the literal (historical) meaning, in addition to the three spiritual dimensions of meaning, allegory (spiritual mystery), tropology (practical application) and anagogy (hidden

⁴⁴ Leclercq, Love of Learning and the Desire for God, 69.

⁴⁵ Sikes, J.G., Peter Abelard (Cambridge: University Press, 1932), 1.

⁴⁶ Graves, 3.

⁴⁷ Anselm, Proslogian (Indiana: Notre Dame, 1979).

meaning regarding the future life.)" ⁴⁸ Rules for Christian Biblical criticism had been set down by Bernold of Constance who had died in 1100:

Take the total text into account. Compare different decisions with each other. One is often explained by another. Take account of the period and the environment, the people the regulations refer to and the reasons for making it. Make a clear distinction between discretionary directions which apply until further notice and universal and eternal regulations. Examine the authenticity of a text carefully and whether it has perhaps been falsely ascribed to an author or has been inserted spuriously in a genuine text.⁴⁹

At the beginning of the twelfth century, both Christians and Jews began to have renewed interest in the Bible.⁵⁰ Mystical interpretation of Scripture began to appear among Jewish scholars. Rabbi Shelomo Izaqui, also known as Rashi, headed an academy at Troyes, in Champagne, where he insisted on the literal interpretation of the legal prescriptions contained in the Pentateuch, as a "reaction against the allegorical interpretation given by the Christians." He wrote commentaries on every book of the Bible. His commentary on the "Song of Songs" is similar to that written by Saint Bernard some

⁴⁸ Smalley, 157.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 178.

⁵⁰ Leclercq, Love of Learning and the Desire for God, 139.

twenty years later. Rashi represented the bride and bridegroom as Israel and God. Bernard represented them as the Church and Christ.⁵¹

Interpreting the Scriptures and the teachings of the Fathers of the Church were the main focus of the subject known as theology, and as mentioned earlier, this was the final stage in formal education. Those who had mastered theology went on to teach others. Many teachers became abbots of their communities or bishops of their dioceses.⁵² William of Campeaux was regarded as a great teacher at Notre Dame until he was appointed Bishop of Chalons.⁵³

Text books were used for teaching, but they were expensive and in short supply. Books were made of parchment, since paper had not yet been introduced into the West and papyrus had passed out of general use in the earlier Middle Ages.⁵⁴ Manuscripts were copied in the scriptoria of monasteries and copying was regarded as a meritorious occupation. In Cluny Abbey, "copyists were freed from service in the choir."⁵⁵ The price of books made owning a library something only educational institutions or rich individuals could afford, as in the example of the Bishop of Barcelona, who in 1043, bought two volumes of Priscan from a Jew for "a house and a piece of

51 Ibid., 113.

52 Cantor, 351-365.

53 Radice, 13.

54 Haskins, 73.

55 Ibid., 76.

land."⁵⁶ Bernard of Chartres had a collection of twenty four books which he bequeathed to the cathedral library upon his death in 1130.

Each school had its library, which was not a room but an "armarium" or cupboard. A well appointed library had a Bible (which filled several volumes), service books of the church services, missal, antiphonary, lectionary, gradual, troper, ecclesiastical calendar, and one or more of the monastic rules. It also had books written by the Fathers of the Church, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, and Gregory. There would also be books of ancient learning, Martianus Capella, Priscian, and Boethius.⁵⁷

One method of acquiring knowledge was learning passages from books by heart.⁵⁸ William of Saint Denis said the following about Abbot Suger:

He was unable to forget the ancient poets, to such a point that he would recite for us from memory twenty and sometimes thirty more lines from Horace that contained something useful.⁵⁹

A term commonly used in medieval methods of teaching was "legere ab aliquo", to "read with." The grammar master listened to

⁵⁶ Ibid., 76.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 71

⁵⁸ Graves, 17.

⁵⁹ Panofsky, Erwin, Abbot Suger of Saint Denis, (London: Penguin Books, 1979), 6.

the pupil read and explain the text and "received his lessons."⁶⁰ Another method was having the master asking questions about the text and the pupil answering. For example: What part of speech is "arma"? A noun. Of what sort? Common.⁶¹ Since copies of books were scarce, the teacher often resorted to dictation, explaining the meaning as he read, and the pupils took the passage down and committed it to memory.⁶² Pupils "learned how to write with styluses on wax tablets and when they had mastered that, with quills on parchment."⁶³ Latin was compulsory for all conversation during school hours. Physical punishment was visited on those who failed to learn."⁶⁴ Abelard states that the uncle of Heloise gave him permission to "punish her severely" if she failed to learn.⁶⁵

Teachers at monastery schools (monks) and teachers at cathedral schools (canons) were ecclesiastics. As the twelfth century progressed however, lay teachers were not uncommon. Lay teachers were operative in Paris before the founding of the university at the end of the twelfth century.⁶⁶ However, education remained a

⁶⁰ Leclercq, Love of Learning and the Desire for God, 120.

⁶¹ Graves, 17.

⁶² Ibid., 19.

⁶³ Rowlings, 136.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 138.

⁶⁵ Radice, 67.

⁶⁶ Graves, 82.

monopoly of the Church and nobody could teach without permission of the bishop.⁶⁷

At the beginning of the twelfth century then, schools were either attached to a monastery or a cathedral; pupils were taught at three different levels; there was a set program of study that aimed at understanding of Scriptures and the Church Fathers; the method used by educators was to ask set questions to which the pupil gave standard answers learned by heart. The teachers were for the most part ecclesiastics. There were master teachers of theology who sometimes became heads of their communities.

Changes in the Twelfth Century

Several changes came about during the course of the twelfth century: centers of intellectual life changed; the curriculum changed, and a new method of teaching was introduced.

Monastic schools existed in rural society, isolated and without much occasion for the personal exchange of ideas.⁶⁸ With the growth of towns and the resulting change in demographics, cathedral schools began to assume a greater importance than the monastic, and by the mid twelfth century, monastic school had all but died out. In the towns, scholars were more easily accessible to each other and to

⁶⁷ Rashdall, 51.

⁶⁸ Cantor, 364.

students.⁶⁹ Eventually it was from the cathedral schools that the university came into being.⁷⁰

Cathedral schools were staffed by canons. The order of Augustinian canons had come into existence in the middle of the eleventh century. The "rule" or "canon" by which they lived originated in a letter of spiritual advice sent by Augustine to some holy women about daily living. The original rule suggested that they have all things in common, pray together at appointed times, dress without distinction, and obey a superior; but it was flexible and could be adapted by each community to its own particular needs. The canons attached to cathedrals conducted the liturgical celebrations and the running of the cathedral, taught at the school (scholasticus), and chose the bishop, with whom they shared the cathedral revenue. This revenue was handed out as "prebends" and individual canons could become quite wealthy. They were organized into a "chapter", under a dean and various lesser officers.⁷¹ Cathedrals became the intellectual centers as the twelfth century progressed, and the canons who taught in them (scholasticae) the intellectual leaders.⁷²

As monastic schools declined and cathedral schools gained prominence, scholars began to wander round from place to place in

⁶⁹ Ibid., 365.

⁷⁰ Rashdall, 62.

⁷¹ Southern, 242.

⁷² Haskins, 48.

search of the best education possible. Abelard had several teachers in his own wanderings.⁷³

In his Historia Calamitatum, Abelard mentions that his students followed him wherever he went:

I took myself off to a lonely spot, where I could stay hidden alone. But students began to gather together from all parts, hurrying from cities and towns to inhabit the wilderness, leaving large mansions to build themselves little huts, eating wild herbs and coarse bread instead of delicate food, spreading reeds and straw in place of soft beds, and using banks of turf for tables.⁷⁴

Teachers set up schools for these wandering scholars wherever there were sufficient students. Classes were usually held in the master's house, or, if that were unsuitable, the master hired a hall in some convenient place. The success of the school depended on the skill of the teacher.⁷⁵ The masters and students in these all male schools, lived in an extremely competitive environment. If a teacher did not appear interesting and important, he would lose his students, and if a professor was successful, it was due to the impression made on his audience by his mental and other qualities. "The academic lived entirely on his own wits; if he could not attract students, he had

⁷³ Radice, 57-67. Abelard refers to himself as a "peripatetic" scholar. "Peripatos" in Greek means to "walk about", and is derived from Aristotle's habit of walking about as he taught.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 88.

⁷⁵ Haskins, 45.

nothing to fall back on, and his career would terminate in miserable failure and poverty."⁷⁶

Centers of education then, changed during the course of the twelfth century from monastic and cathedral schools to cathedral schools (eventually universities) and to schools set up by master teachers. The curriculum also changed.

A noticeable change came about in the curriculum as a result of the re-introduction of ancient learning, through contact with the Arab world made by the Crusades. "An ardor for intellectual pursuits began to show itself in Europe."⁷⁷

Greek scientific-philosophical works, Plato, Aristotle, Euclid, Ptolemy, the Greek physicians, and texts of Roman law which had lain hidden for centuries were made available in Europe in the twelfth century as a result of Muslim scholarship. "Muslim scholarship had brought together Hindu, Greek, Judaic, Syriac, Christian, and Persian learning, and preserved and enriched classical education, which was now transferred to the West."⁷⁸

Latin learning had predominated in Western Europe. "The period before the twelfth century was distinguished by its ignorance of Greek."⁷⁹ The seven liberal arts drew on Latin learning only and

⁷⁶ Cantor, 364.

⁷⁷ Nakosteen, Mehdi, History of Islamic Origins of Western Education Colorado: University Press, 1964), 5.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 25.

⁷⁹ Haskins, 280.

knowledge of other classical cultures had not concerned western European scholars. This was not the case in the East and among the Arabs. Conquests made by the Arabs during the earlier centuries of Islam, brought them into close contact with some of the great civilizations of the world, and they had respected and preserved the learning of these cultures.⁸⁰ Islam had been tolerant and respectful of foreign ideas and religions and had preserved these ideas in their schools.

As the Greek language was re-introduced, translation became a widely practiced art in western Europe in the twelfth century. Peter the Venerable of Cluny (a friend and admirer of both Heloise and Abelard) commissioned a translation of the Koran from Arabic into Latin.⁸¹ The fields of philosophy, astronomy, mathematics and many others, also benefitted from translations: "Zealots for lost learning sought for it mainly in the translations from the Arabic, often by the medium of the Jews in Moslem Spain, as Gerbert of Aurillac (Pope Sylvester II) who introduced the abacus, had done long before."⁸²

⁸⁰ Nakosteen, 22-23. He relates that the academy of Jundi-Shapur in southeastern Persia was referred to by Nestorians as the "Beit Labat" (House of Learning). When the city surrendered to Islamic forces in 636, the university remained undisturbed and continued as a center for learning. Jundi-Shapur became an intellectual sanctuary for some of the great scholars of Greece and Syria who preserved important elements of scientific (especially medical) and philosophical learning of classical cultures as well as Hindu, Jewish, Persian, and even Chinese thought, and produced a scientific synchronism. He asserts that Jundi-Shapur continued as the scientific center of Islam until its destruction in 749, when its learning was transferred to Bagdad. From Bagdad it was transmitted to the Western world in the twelfth century Latin and Hebrew translations of Arabic works.

⁸¹ Waddell, Helen, The Wandering Scholar (London: Penguin Books, 1932), 120.

⁸² Previt-Orton, 620.

The later twelfth and thirteenth centuries were "golden ages for translators": Adelard of Bath, the tutor of Henry II of England, translated Euclid and wrote on the astrolabe; James of Venice, Burgundio the Pisan, Henry Aristippus of Catania, and Eugenius the Emir all translated from the Greek. Gundisalvi, Gerard of Cremona, Herman the German, Michael Scot and "others known and unknown, produced versions of Greek divinity, philosophy, medicine, astronomy, and mathematics from Arabic translations along with Arabic commentaries and original works."⁸³

The translations further introduced into European learning "new concepts of scholastic research, such as the mathematical, historical and experimental, and somewhat later, the neo-Aristotelian logical methods of inquiry."⁸⁴

Arithmetic and astronomy were helped by the introduction of Arab scholarship. Arabic notations were introduced in place of the Roman numerals and the study of arithmetic was thereby greatly simplified. "The complete works of Euclid were again available to the mathematician. The astrolabe for measuring distances between stars became known in Europe and the signs of the zodiac were added to astronomy."⁸⁵ Ibrahim al Fazare, an Arab mathematician, constructed the first astrolabe in the second half of the eight

⁸³ Ibid., 620

⁸⁴ Ibid., 126.

⁸⁵ Schachner, 15.

century.⁸⁶ Al Nairizi wrote a treatise on the atmospheric phenomena and the spherical astrolabe in the mid-ninth century. These were now available to western astronomers, as were the works of Ptolemy. Arab interest in scientific discoveries stimulated like interests in western Europe. "Practical achievements, like navigation, exploration, commerce, and industries were developed."⁸⁷

As new texts were translated, the curriculum changed: "Curricula were reconstructed and enlarged as this new knowledge became available to the scholar and the schoolman in abundance. The concept of the seven liberal arts gave way to an extensive system of new scientific knowledge and philosophic disciplines, modifying and replacing the traditional disciplines."⁸⁸

Another educational change was in the method of presentation of material. "A passion for inquiry took the place of the old routine."⁸⁹ This change in method is attributed to Abelard. Anselm of Laon, "one of the old routine," had said that he believed in order that he might understand. His method of education followed the line of learning by heart and accepting the doctrines and precepts of the church as they had been set by the Church Fathers. His aim as an educator was to indoctrinate his students with orthodoxy. Abelard in Historia Calamitatum, says that nothing can be believed unless it is

⁸⁶ Ibid., 145.

⁸⁷ Graves, 43.

⁸⁸ Nakosteen, 187.

⁸⁹ Rashdall, 32.

first understood.⁹⁰ Abelard felt that faith had to be supported by reason. In his Sic et Non, Abelard writes:

Constant and frequent questioning is the first key to wisdom. For through doubting we are led to inquire, and by inquiry we perceive the truth. As the Truth Himself says: 'Seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you.' Now when a number of quotations from various writings are introduced they spur on the reader and allure him into seeking the truth in proportion as the authority of the writing itself is commended.⁹¹

In Sic et Non, Abelard lists 158 questions concerning the Christian faith and ethics on which the Bible, the councils of the Church and the Church Fathers seem to have contradictory opinions. He gave no answers to these questions, but left the solving of them to the reader's own judgement. Abelard advocated investigation in the place of unquestioning adherence to tradition and authority. This method became known as the "dialectic" method, and it became the method used later in universities: "The skill involved in dialectical argument was to persuade one's opponent to admit certain propositions and then to argue from them so that he had to yield."⁹² Abelard, because of his introduction of the dialectic method, has been called "the true founder of scholastic theology."⁹³

⁹⁰ Ibid., 53-56.

⁹¹ Abelard, Sic et Non (Oxford: University Press, 1971), 178.

⁹² Rashdall, 43.

⁹³ Ibid., 64.

The introduction of the works of Aristotle threw up "the strongest challenge which the old order faced."⁹⁴ Old questions about universals or general and abstract terms, were again raised as translations of Aristotle became available. Nominalism and Realism had dominated the scene and seemed to be diametrically opposed to one another. Abelard is credited with offering the solution. "Abelard worked out a compromise between Nominalists and Realists. His doctrine was that universals were neither things nor terms but 'conceptions', useful for formulating ideas in the mind, but not necessarily real."⁹⁵ This leaned towards Nominalism and was later to bring Abelard into conflict with conservatives in the Church.⁹⁶

Abelard was among the great teachers of the twelfth century along with Hugo of Saint Victoire, Suger of Saint Denis, Bernard of Clairvaux, Otto of Freising and John of Salisbury. All of these teachers were men and were ecclesiastics. Abelard became Abbot of Saint Gildas in Brittany. Hugh became Abbot of Saint Victoire, Suger became Abbot of Saint Denis, Otto of Freising became Bishop of Friesing, and John of Salisbury became Bishop of Chartes.⁹⁷

Between 1100 and 1162, then, the centers of intellectual activity changed, the curriculum was extended, and the method of

⁹⁴ Ibid., 66.

⁹⁵ Cantor, 368.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 369.

⁹⁷ Cantor, 351-375.

dialectic was introduced. Teachers of note were men, and ecclesiastics.

During the childhood of Heloise, the intellectual centers were the monasteries and cathedrals, and she was schooled at Argenteuil, a sister house of Saint Denis. The curriculum consisted of the seven liberal arts, and her letters show she had a thorough grounding in these. Latin was the essential language for the scholar. Her letters are written in Latin. The principal method of education was learning by heart. Heloise quotes, with apparent ease, many writers studied in the arts curriculum, as well as long passages from Scripture.

By her late adolescence, centers of intellectual activity were changing to cathedral schools. Heloise lived with her uncle close to Notre Dame Cathedral. Educational methods were changing as dialectic was introduced. She was tutored by the originator of the dialectic method, Abelard, and her letters show that she was skilled in dialectical argument.

By her mature years, new texts had been introduced by way of Arab scholarship. As more material became available, knowledge of other languages besides Latin was an asset to those engaged in scholarship. Heloise knew both Greek and Hebrew, and is reputed to have taught Greek and Hebrew to her nuns. Biblical criticism was fashionable among Jewish and Christian scholars. Heloise's and Abelard's Problemata show that she had a great interest in the subject.

While access to education was very limited for women in the twelfth century, Heloise was unique in having been provided rare

educational opportunities. She was educated to the highest level, and used her education to promote the welfare of the convent of which she became abbess and to further the education of her associates.

CHAPTER 4

THE EDUCATION OF HELOISE

Not many people, women or men, received an education in the early twelfth century. Education, at any level, was accessible only to a few males and to fewer females. The business of education was in the hands of the Church, and it was conducted in monastery and cathedral schools. Teaching was given at three levels. At the lowest level, the pupils learned how to read and write, and acquired an elementary knowledge of grammar, music and arithmetic. At the second level, the formal program of study was undertaken and this included the trivium, grammar, rhetoric and logic, and the quadrivium, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music. All subjects were taught through the medium of Latin. At the highest level, students furthered their knowledge of theology and philosophy. The person who had been educated to the highest level often became a master teacher and taught others, and many of these teachers became abbots of their communities or bishops of their congregations.

Heloise was educated to the highest level, and there is external and internal evidence of her scholarship. The external evidence is contained in writings of her contemporaries: the *Historia Calamitatum* of Abelard, the letters of Peter the Venerable, Guillaume Godel and Hugh Matel, and the official documents of the

Paraclete Abbey where she served as Abbess. There is also external evidence from later commentators: M. Villenave, Jean de Meun and Francois Villon.

Abelard states that before he met her, he already knew of her renown throughout the realm as a scholar:

In the extent of her learning, she stood supreme.
A gift of letters is so rare in women and it added greatly to her charm and won her renown throughout the realm.¹

Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny, wrote to her:

I had not yet passed the bounds of youth and reached early manhood when I knew of your name and your reputation, not yet for religion but for your virtuous and praiseworthy studies. I used to hear at that time of a woman who although still caught up in the obligations of the world, devoted all her application and knowledge of letters, something which is very rare, to the pursuit of secular learning, and that not even the pleasures of the world, with its frivolities and delights, could distract her from this worthy determination to study the arts. At a time when nearly the whole world is indifferent and deplorably apathetic towards such occupations, and wisdom can scarcely find a foothold not only, I may say, among women who have banished her completely, but even in the minds of men, you have surpassed all women in carrying out your purpose, and have gone further than almost every man.²

¹ Radice, 66.

² Ibid., 277.

Hugh Matel, Canon of the Abbey of St. Leon at Toul, wrote to her that the report had reached him of how she surpassed her sex "by writing, by versifying, and by inventing new combinations of well-known words."³ Guillaume Godel, a monk of Saint Martial of Limoges, a little time after the death of Heloise wrote that "she was exceedingly erudite in both Hebrew and Greek letters."⁴ In the calendar of the Paraclete, the recording of her death is followed by the words:

Heloise, Mother and first Abbess of this place, famous for her learning and her religion.⁵

A century after her death, Jean de Meun wrote in *The Romance of the Rose*:

Peter Abelard who loved the Abbess of the Paraclete, that Heloise. She was a wise, well educated maid. Not only had she read and studied books, but learnt of woman's nature in herself. It was her education, I suppose, that taught her how she best could hold in curb her woman's nature.⁶

³ McLeod, 90.

⁴ Ibid., 17.

⁵ Lalore, 5.

⁶ Moody, Helen, The Debate of the Rose (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 117.

In the fifteenth century, Francois Villon, the first to translate her letters from Latin into French, refers to her in his ballad Des Dames du Temps Jadis as "la tres sage Heloise" (the very wise Heloise).⁷ M. Villenave (eighteenth century), after studying the constitution of the Paraclete wrote: "The twelfth century did not know a more profound theologian nor a more learned and eloquent writer than Heloise. "⁸

Five literary works of Heloise offer internal evidence of her educational level. These consist of three letters that she wrote to Abelard; a letter which she wrote to Peter the Venerable after the death of Abelard; and the Problemata, a series of questions on problem passages in Scripture which she directed to Abelard with a letter introducing them. These writings show that she was educated to the highest level; that she had a knowledge of Latin commensurate with that of a scholar; that she was familiar with the works of many Latin poets and writers; that she was proficient in the art of letter writing; that she could argue with the skill of a trained logician; that she had an extensive knowledge of Scripture; that she was familiar with the writings of the Church Fathers; and that she had a knowledge of philosophy. The Problemata in particular reveals that she was a proficient theologian and effective teacher.

⁷ Braak, S., Anthologie de la Litterature Francaise (Amsterdam: J.M. Meulenhoff, 1931), 38.

⁸ Morten, H., The Letters of Abelard and Heloise (London: J. M. Dent, 1901), 122.

In the early twelfth century, the study of grammar meant Latin grammar as well as Latin literature. Grammar was taught by reading classical authors such as Virgil and Ovid in the original language. All of the writings of Heloise are in Latin. She knew the Latin language well enough to pose theological questions. Her letters show her familiarity with the writings of the classical poets and writers, and she drew on her knowledge of them in advancing propositions. We have examples of this in her first letter to Abelard. Here she gives a direct quotation from the Roman writer Seneca's first century work, Epistula ad Lucilium:

Thank you for writing to me often, the one way in which you can make your presence felt, for I never have a letter from you without the immediate feeling that we are together. If pictures of absent friends give us pleasure, renewing our memories and relieving the pain of separation even if they cheat us with empty comfort, how much more welcome is a letter which comes to us in the very handwriting of an absent friend.⁹

In this letter, she reminds Abelard of his debt to and his neglect of the community of the Paraclete. She cites Cicero's In Catalinam to back her argument: "If the whole world kept silence, the facts themselves would cry out."¹⁰ In arguing against marriage in this same letter, she repeats part of a dialogue of the fourth century

⁹ Seneca, Letters from a Stoic (London: Penguin Books, 1988), 110.

¹⁰ Cicero, Selected Letters (London: Penguin books, 1986), 111.

Greek writer, Aeschines Socraticus (then available only in Latin translation):

Unless you come to believe that there is no better man nor worthier woman on earth you will always still be looking for what you judge the best thing of all to be the husband of the best of wives and the wife of the best of husbands.¹¹

There are further examples of her knowledge of Latin writers. In her second letter to Abelard, written in reply to a self-pitying letter from him, she repeats the words of Seneca, "Why is it necessary to destroy life before death comes?"¹² In beseeching him not to write such letters since humans have little command over their destiny, she quotes from Lucan's Pharsalia :

May it be sudden whatever you plan for us; may man's mind be blind to the future. Let him hope on in his fears.¹³

In her third letter to Abelard she argues for the spirit behind human action and she gives the words of Persius: "Do not look outside

¹¹ Aeschines Socraticus, The Speeches of Aeschines (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1919), 114.

¹² Seneca, 70.

¹³ Lucan, Pharsalia (London: Penguin classics, 1957), 17.

yourself."¹⁴ She quotes from Cicero in remonstrating with Abelard for his failure to attempt to alleviate her grief:

And yet you have it in your power to remedy my grief, even if you cannot entirely remove it. As one nail drives out another hammered in, a new thought expels an old, when the mind is intent on other things and forced to dismiss or interrupt its recollection of the past. But the more fully any thought occupies the mind and distracts it from other things, the more worthy should be the subject of such a thought and the more important it is where we direct our minds.¹⁵

In discussing the rules of food and drink for her nuns, she reminds Abelard of the different nature of women by twice drawing upon the writings of Macobius Theodosius:

Aristotle says that women are rarely intoxicated, but old men often. Woman has an extremely humid body, as can be known from her smooth and glossy skin, and especially from her regular purgations which rid the body of superfluous moisture. So when wine is drunk and merged with so general a humidity, it loses its power and does not easily strike the seat of the brain when its strength is extinguished.¹⁶

And again:

A woman's body which is destined for frequent purgation is pierced with several holes, so that it

¹⁴ Persius, Satires (Indiana: University Press, 1961), 17.

¹⁵ Cicero, 75.

¹⁶ Macobius Theodosiu, Saturnalia. (London: Penguin Books, 1988), 76.

opens into channels and provides outlets for the moisture draining away to be dispersed. Through these holes the fumes of wine are quickly released. By contrast, in old men, the body is dry, as is shown by their rough and wrinkled skin.¹⁷

Also on the rule about food, she quotes from Ovid:

When wine had sprinkled Cupid's thirsty wings
He stays and stands weighed down in his chosen place.
Then laughter comes, then even the poor find plenty,
Then sorrow and care and wrinkles leave the brow.
That is the time when girls bewitch men's hearts,
And Venus in the wine adds fire to fire.¹⁸

From her letters, then, since she quotes from Aeschines Socraticus, Aristotle, Seneca, Cicero, Macobius Theodosius and Ovid, it is apparent that Heloise knew the Latin authors well. It is clear she had studied grammar, the first subject of the trivium.

It can also be established that Heloise had studied rhetoric, the second subject of the trivium. Rhetoric concerned itself with the art of speaking well on civic questions, and equally emphasized the art of letter writing. Her discussion on the rule of Saint Benedict, in her third letter to Abelard, demonstrates her rhetorical skill. She argues for a new rule for her community:

At present the one rule of Saint Benedict is professed in the Latin Church by women equally with men, although as it was clearly written for men alone, it can only be fully

¹⁷ Ibid., 81.

¹⁸ Ovid, Heroides and Amores (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1963), 233-4.

obeyed by men.¹⁹

She systematically set out her arguments as to the rule being unsuitable for women. She pointed to rule 55 about dress and asks "how can women be concerned about these drawers, cowls and scapulars?" She questioned rule 11 on the reading aloud by the abbot and asks how nuns are "affected by the ruling of the Abbot when he shall read aloud the Gospel himself and afterwards start the hymn?" She quoted rule 58 about the Abbot's table set apart for him for pilgrims and guests, and questioned whether an abbess should offer hospitality to men or be allowed to eat with men. She called attention to provisions of the rule which nuns cannot obey without danger to themselves, such as gathering in the harvest, and asks "has it ever been the custom for convents of nuns to go out to do this, or to tackle the works of the fields?"²⁰ She questioned in what order the psalms are to be said as stated in rule 18; how the night office is to be said on Sunday (rule 11). She commented on rule 48 regarding daily manual labor; on rules 2 and 64 which propose what an abbot ought to be and the type of man he should be; on rules 35-41 which deal with weekly servers in the kitchen, the sick, old men and children, the weekly reader, the measure of food, the measure of drink, wine, hours of meals, silence after compline, those who come late to work or table, satisfaction made by those excommunicated, and those who

¹⁹ Radice, 160.

²⁰ Ibid., 162.

make mistakes in the oratory. These comments by Heloise on the rules which her community had to follow show her proficiency in speaking on civic matters.

Letter writing was an important aspect of rhetoric. Formal rules for letter writing had been set by Alberic of Monte Cassino in the eleventh century. Alberic's rules stipulated that there were five parts to a formal letter: the salutation; the exordium, designed to put the reader in the right frame of mind; the narrative or exposition; the petition; and the conclusion.²¹ Each of the letters of Heloise follows the format of Alberic, as can be easily seen in the shortest of her letters which is the one written to Peter the Venerable. She starts with the salutation:

To Peter most reverend lord and father and venerable abbot of Cluny, Heloise, God's and his humble servant: the spirit of grace and salvation.

The exordium follows:

The mercy of God came down to us in the grace of a visit from your Reverence. We are filled with pride and rejoicing, gracious father, because your greatness has descended to our lowliness, for a visitation from you is a matter of great rejoicing even for the great. Others are well aware of the great benefits conferred on them by the presence of your sublimity, but for my own part, I cannot even formulate my thoughts, much less find words for what a benefit and joy your coming was to me.

She moves on to the narrative:

²¹ Haskins, 144.

Our Abbot and Lord, on the 16th of November of the past year, you celebrated a Mass here in which you commended us to the Holy Spirit. In chapter you fed us by preaching the word of God. You gave us the body of our master and so yielded up the privilege which belonged to Cluny. To me, too, whom (unworthy as I am to be called your servant) your sublime humility has not disdained to address as sister in writing and speech, you granted a rare privilege in token of your love and sincerity: a tental of masses to be said on my behalf by the abbey of Cluny after my death. You said also that you would confirm this gift in a letter under seal.

She then goes on to the petition:

Fulfill then my brother, or rather my Lord, what you promised to your sister, or I should say to your servant. May it please you to send me also under seal an open document containing the absolution of our master, to be hung on his tomb. Remember also, for the love of God, our Astralabe and yours, so that you may obtain for him some prebend either from the bishop of Paris or in some other diocese.

She ends with the farewell:

Farewell; may the Lord keep you, and sometime grant us your presence.

Heloise's knowledge of the art of letter writing went further than facility with the rules of Alberic of Monte Cassino. Her choice of sentence-endings, and "use of elaborate rhythmic parallelism in phrases and clauses letters (especially when intense emotion is expressed)" follow the model of the Italian master Adalbertus. She

may have been taught to compose in the Italianate style which was quite new in France at the time of her adolescence.²²

Thus, Heloise was proficient at both speaking on civic matters and in the art of letter writing. These indicate that she had studied rhetoric, the second subject of the trivium. "She observes the rules of rhetorical propriety."²³

Logic, the third subject of the trivium, was the study of reasoning skills and related methods of asking questions, defining terms and attempting to distinguish truth from falsehood. The letters of Heloise demonstrate her reasoning ability. In her first letter to Abelard she started out by noting that he had written a long letter of consolation to his friend, and then asked why he had not spoken words of consolation to her in her sorrow, whose claim on him was greater:

You wrote your friend a long letter of consolation prompted no doubt by his misfortunes, but really telling your own. I beg you then as you set about tending the wounds which others have dealt, heal those wounds you yourself inflicted. You have done your duty to a friend, but it is a greater debt which binds you in obligation to us who can properly be called not friends but daughters.²⁴

²² Dronke, Medieval Women Writers, 111.

²³ Southern, 96.

²⁴ Radice, 111.

The type of argument she employs in this passage is the result of "scholastic instruction." It was necessary to show that "the request was reasonable, that the recipient had the power to grant it, and that the petitioner deserved to receive what was asked."²⁵

External evidence of her skill at logic is given in the Historia Calamitatum. Abelard recounts how Heloise argued against marriage after the birth of their son. She reasoned that marriage was no life for a philosopher, and she makes much of the indignities of married life:

Apart from the hindrance to such philosophic study, consider, she said, the true conditions for a dignified way of life. What harmony can there be between pupils and nursemaids, desks and cradles, books or tablets and distaffs, pen or stylus and spindles? Who can concentrate on thoughts of Scripture or philosophy and be able to endure babies crying, nurses soothing them with lullabies, and all the noisy coming and going of men and women about the house? Will he put up with constant muddle and squalor which small children bring into the home? The wealthy can do so, you will say, for their mansions and large houses can provide privacy and, being rich, they do not have to count the cost nor be tormented by daily cares. But philosophers lead a very different life from rich men, and those who are concerned with wealth or are involved in mundane matters will not have time for the claims of Scripture or philosophy.²⁶

²⁵ Southern, 96.

²⁶ Radice, 71.

These arguments put forward in the letters of Heloise show her to be a skilled logician. She had studied the subject of logic.

While it can be concluded, then, that Heloise had studied the trivium her knowledge of the quadrivium is not so apparent, as is the case with other writers of this period.²⁷ The quadrivium included arithmetic (simple calculation), geometry (elementary geography and surveying), astronomy (study of the stars in order to be able to set a date for Easter) and music (necessary for singing in the choir). The thrust of education was the trivium and the quadrivium was for practical purposes only.²⁸ However, it can be presumed that she knew the quadrivium by the fact that Abelard wrote music for her community, that she established a new liturgy at the Paraclete, and by her successful running of the day to day affairs of a large abbey. An interest in astronomy may be suggested from the fact that she called her child Astrolabe, an instrument for measuring distances between stars, which had recently been introduced in Europe.

And so evidence shows that Heloise had been educated at the second level. Her education at the third level is also evident from her extensive knowledge of Scripture, first shown in her three letters to Abelard. She quotes from Scripture (both the Old and the New Testaments) seventy-four times. The passages she quotes are not

²⁷ Personal Interview with Sister Benedicta Ward, Center for Medieval Studies, Oxford University, October, 1989.

²⁸ Rashdall, Vol.1, 34.

mere proverbial wisdom or commonplace sayings, but are carefully chosen to buttress her arguments.

In her first letter to Abelard, she castigates him for his neglect of her and the community of nuns that he had founded while seeing to the needs of a less receptive community of monks. She backs up her reprimands of him by appropriate Scriptural quotations. She quotes from Paul's letter to the Romans and she paraphrases it: "I (you) did not want to build on a foundation laid by another" (15:20). She quotes from the first letter to the Corinthians, "I planted the seed and Apollos watered it, but God makes it grow" (3:6). She paraphrases from the gospel of Matthew, "in vain you throw the pearls of your divine eloquence to the pigs" (7:6); quotes from the gospel of John, "love following upon love" (1:16); refers to the book of Genesis which tells of Lot's wife turning back (19:26); and quotes from the book of Jeremiah, "You cultivate a vineyard of another's vines which you did not plant yourself, and which has now turned to bitterness against you" (2:21).

In Heloise's second letter to Abelard she recalls the times she and he had spent together as lovers, and the tragedy that had followed. The letter contains eighteen allusions to Scripture in nine pages, all of them related to their plight. She refers to the gospel of Matthew, "Each day has trouble enough of its own." (6:34). She quotes from Proverbs:

But now, my son, listen to me, attend to what I say.
Do not let your heart entice you into her ways do not
stray down her paths; she has wounded and laid low

so many, and the strongest have all been her victims. Her house is the way to hell, and leads down to the halls of death (7:42-27.)

She quotes Ecclesiastes:

I put all to the test, I find woman more bitter than death; she is a snare, her heart a net, her arms are chains. He who is pleasing to God eludes her, but the sinner is her captive. (7:26-27)

She refers to the seduction of Samson by Delilah in Judges 16:4, and alludes to 1 Kings to make a point about her own relationship with Abeldard:

Only a woman he had slept with could reduce to folly Solomon, wisest of men; she drove him to such a pitch of madness that although he was the man whom the Lord had chosen to build the temple in preference to his father David, who was a righteous man, she plunged him into idolatry until the end of his life, so that he abandoned the worship of God which he had preached and taught in word and writing (11:1-8.)

She quotes from Job "Job fought his last and hardest battle against his wife who urged him to curse God "(2:9-10); again from Job "I speak out in bitterness of soul"(10:1); from Paul's letter to the Romans, "Who is there to rescue me out of the body doomed to this death" (7:24); from the Psalms, "searches our hearts and loins and sees in our darkness"(8:10); and "turn from evil and do good" (37:27); and from the book of Isaiah, "O my people, those who call me happy

lead you astray and confuse the path you should take." (3:12); and from Ezekiel, she quotes:

Woe upon you women who hunt men's lives by sewing magic bands upon the wrists and putting veils over the heads of persons of every age (13:18.)

In the book of Sirach she finds "The sayings of the wise are sharp as goads, like nails driven home" (12: 2), and "Do not praise a man in his lifetime" (11:28); in the book of Jeremiah, "The heart of man is deceitful and inscrutable, who can fathom it?" (17:9); in the book of Proverbs "a road may seem straightforward to a man yet may end as a way to death" (14:12.) She quotes from Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, "Power comes to its full strength in weakness" (12:9), and argues from the second letter to Timothy "He cannot win a crown unless he has kept the rules" (2:5).

In the third letter of Heloise to Abelard she asks him to write a rule for her nuns and gives her own ideas about what that rule should be. There are fifty applicable scriptural allusions either by references or direct quotations. From the gospel of Matthew (12:34), "A man's words are spoken from the overflowing of the heart;" from the book of Genesis (33:13), "If I drive my herds too hard on the road they will all die in a single day;" from the letter of James (2:10 and 11), "For if a man keeps the whole law but for one single point, he is guilty of breaking all of it" and "For he who said 'You shall not commit adultery,' also said, 'You shall not kill'"; from Paul's letter to the Ephesians (5:18), "Wine which leads to lechery is drunk with

enjoyment"; from the gospel of Luke (6:40), "Everyone will be fully trained if he reaches his teacher's level"; from the second letter to the Corinthians (12:9), "My grace is enough for you. In weakness power reaches perfection; "from the letter to the Romans (4:15 and 5:20), "Because law can bring only retribution," and "but where there is no law there can be no breach of law;" from the first letter to Timothy (5:14), "It is my wish therefore, that young widows shall marry again, have children and preside over a home. Then they will give no opponent occasion for slander;" from the gospel of Luke (17: 10 and 10:35), "When you have carried out your orders say, 'we are useless servants and have only done our duty';" and, "But if you gave more in addition, I will repay you on my return;" from the gospel of Matthew (24:12), "Because of the increase of evil, the love of most will grow cold;" from the book of Proverbs (20:1), "Wine is reckless, and strong drink quarrelsome; no one who delights in it grows wise" and

Who will know woe, and quarrels, brawls, bruises without cause and bloodshot eyes? Those who linger late over their wine, and look for ready-mixed wine. Do not look at the wine when it glows and sparkles in the glass. It goes down smoothly, but in the end it will bite like a snake and spread venom like a serpent. Then your eyes will see strange sights, and your mind utter distorted words; you will be like a man sleeping in mid-ocean, like a drowsy helmsman who has lost his rudder, and you will say: 'They struck me and it did not hurt, dragged me off and I felt nothing. When I wake up I shall turn to wine again.'

She quotes from Proverbs (21:4):

Do not give wine to kings, O Lemuel, never to kings,
for there is no privy council where drinking prevails.
If they drink they may forget what they have decreed
and neglect the pleas of the poor for their sons.

She quotes from the book of Sirach (29:2):

Wine and women rob the wise of their wits and are a
hard test for good sense.

She refers to Romans (13:10, "love is the fulfillment of the law" and to 1 Timothy (1:5), "love that springs from a pure heart" when pointing out the difference between a Jew and a Christian. She refers to the righteousness of faith as given in Romans 3:27-2, to Abraham and faith as given in Romans 4:2-3, and to Romans 4:5 on faith. She quotes directly from the letter to the Romans, "The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking but justice, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit"(14:20-21); refers to the danger of giving scandal as written in Galatians 2:11ff, and comments on the use of food by quoting from 1Corinthians 8:8 and 10:25-26 and twice from the letter to the Colossians: 2:16 and 20:22: "If you died with Christ and passed beyond the elements of this world, why do you behave as though still living the life of the world?," and "Do not touch this, do not taste that, do not handle the other"; and points to Luke 10:7 to prove a point about receiving hospitality; and quotes 1 Timothy 4:1-6:

The spirit says expressly that in after times some will desert from the faith and give their minds to subversive doctrines inspired by devils who speak lies in hypocrisy They forbid marriage and demand abstinence from certain goods, though God created them to be enjoyed with thanksgiving by believers who have inward knowledge

of the truth. For everything that God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected when it is taken with thanksgiving, since it is hallowed by God's own word and by prayer. By offering such advice as this to the brotherhood you will prove a good servant of Jesus Christ, bred in the precepts of our faith and the sound instruction which you have followed.

Heloise uses a quotation from the gospel of Matthew, chapter 12, to demonstrate the simplicity of the apostles, who picked the ears of corn in the company of Jesus on the Sabbath; she distinguishes between what is clean and unclean by quoting Matthew 25: 19, "To eat without washing hands does not defile a man"; notes the ethic of intention by quoting Matthew 5:28, "If a man look upon a woman with a lustful eye, he has already committed adultery with her in his heart" and John 3:15, "murder proceeds from the heart"; continues this ethical argument by quoting from Romans 2:16, "who will judge the secrets of men in accordance with his gospel" by referring to the widow offering two coins worth a farthing in Mark 12:42-44; sees resolution in a quotation from Genesis 4:4 "The Lord received Abel and his gift with favor"; and gives advice by adopting from 1 Timothy 4: 7-8:

Keep yourself in training by the practice of religion.
The training of the body brings limited benefits, but
the benefits of religion are without limit, since it holds
promise not only for this life but for the life to come.

Heloise repeats from Genesis 27:6ff, "Jacob provided a meal for his father from domestic meat and did not go after wild game as did

Esau"; from Psalm 56:12 "I have bound myself with vows to thee o God, and will redeem them with due thank-offerings"; and refers to Acts 15:10, on the freedom of the Gospel being a lighter burden than the law. She alludes to the teachings of Jesus on the lightening of the load in Matthew 11: 28-30, "Come to me all you whose work is hard and load is heavy" and sustains her argument by quoting from Acts 15: 10-11:

My brothers, why do you provoke God by laying on the shoulders of these converts a yoke which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear? No, we believe that it is by the grace of the Lord Jesus that we are saved and so are they.

She is familiar with Psalm 50:12-15:

If I am hungry I will not tell you,
for the world and all that is in it are mine.
Shall I eat the flesh of your bulls
or drink the blood of the he goats?
Offer to God the sacrifice of thanksgiving
and pay your vows to the Most High.
Call upon me in time of trouble
and I will come to your rescue, and you shall honor me.

She knows 1Timothy 5:16:

If any among the faithful has widows in the family,
he must support them himself: the Church must be
relieved of the burden, so that it may be free to
support those who are widows in the full sense.

In making suggestions for the care of her community, Heloise alludes to Acts 6:5, where the apostles appointed seven deacons, to minister to devout women, and alludes to John's gospel, 19:26, "God

provided his mother with an apostle to take care of her rather than her own husband;" draws on 2 Thessalonians 3:10, "A man who will not work will not eat;" refers to the story in Luke 10:39ff about Martha and Mary; and suggests that it is not unbecoming for men occupied with earthly matters to serve those who are devoted to the spiritual, as taught in 1Corinthians 9:11. She argues from Numbers 18:21 that the tribe of Levi should have no patrimony in the land in order to better serve the Lord, to make her point about those in spiritual life being supported by those otherwise occupied.

And so from these many and varied quotations it is abundantly clear that Heloise had not only studied the Scriptures but also that her knowledge was thorough and that she could apply it when addressing real life situations and problems. Her interest in Scripture is very apparent.

It is also evident that Heloise was familiar with the patristic writers, a knowledge essential to the student of theology. Here, she also drew on the writings of the Church Fathers to bolster her arguments. In her first letter, she mentioned the Fathers' treatises for instruction of holy women, and notes the "care with which they are composed," in contrast to the lack of care that Abelard had shown for his community. In her second letter, in which she frequently referred to her own (and Abelard's) faults and weaknesses and repentances, she has recourse to the teachings of the Fathers. She quotes from Saint Gregory:

Whoever hates his faults and confesses them must still confess them in bitterness of spirit, so that this bitterness

may punish him for what his tongue, at his mind's bidding, accuses him.²⁹

She quotes from Saint Ambrose:

I have more easily found men who have preserved their innocence than men who have known repentance.³⁰

She quotes from Saint Jerome:

I confess my weakness, I do not wish to fight in hope of victory, lest the day comes when I lose the battle. What need is there to forsake what is certain and pursue uncertainty?³¹

Her third letter shows an extensive knowledge of the teachings of the Church Fathers. In formulating a set of rules by which her community will live, she draws from the patristic teachings. She quotes from Saint Jerome several times: "It is difficult to preserve modesty at table,"³² "Virtues which exceed all bounds and measures are to be counted among vices."³³ She refers to his Epistula 22:

But if those who are virgins are still be saved, because of other faults, what will become of those who have prostituted the members of Christ and turned the

²⁹ The Fathers of the Church, Vol 63, (Washington, Catholic University Press, 1954), 43.

³⁰ The Fathers of the Church, Vol 26, (Washington: Catholic Univerity Press, 1954), 10.

³¹ The Fathers of the Church, Vol 53, (Washington: Catholic University Press, 1954), 16.

³² *Ibid.*, 210.

³³ *Ibid.*, 130.

temple of the Holy Spirit into a brothel? It were better for a man to have entered matrimony and walked on the level than to strain after the heights and fall into the depths of hell;

She refers to Epistula 52:

Never smell of wine, lest you hear said of you those words of the philosopher 'This is not offering a kiss but proffering a cup.' The Apostle equally condemns priests who are given to drink (1 Timothy 3:3), and the Old Law forbids it (Leviticus 10:9): 'those who serve the altar shall not drink wine or strong drink.' By 'strong drink' in Hebrew is understood any drink which can intoxicate, whether produced by fermentation, or from apple juice, or from honey-comb which has been distilled into a sweet, rough drink, or when the fruit of the date palm is pressed into liquid, or water is enriched with boiled grain. Whatever intoxicates and upsets the balance of the mind, shun it like wine.

She further refers to Jerome's exhortation to women of sacred calling to avoid contact with women of the world (Epistula 22,16.) Heloise also makes reference to the teachings of Saint Gregory given in the 24th chapter of his Pastoral:

Therefore men are to be admonished in one way women in another; for heavy burdens may be laid on men and great matters exercise them, but lighter burdens on women, who should be gently converted by less exacting means.

She shows that she is familiar with the writings of Saint Augustine on the celibate life:

Let her who has not begun think it over and her who has made a start, continue. No opportunity must be given to

the enemy, no offering taken from Christ.³⁴

She knows Augustine's views on marriage:

Continence is a virtue not of the body but of the soul. But the virtues of the spirit are displayed sometimes in works, sometimes in natural habits, as when the virtue of martyrs has been seen in their endurance of suffering. Also, patience was already in Job; the Lord knew this and gave proof of knowing it, but he made it known to men through the ordeal of Job's testing.³⁵

And she speaks of Augustine's views on continence:

So that it may truly be better understood how virtue may be in natural habit though not in works, I will quote an example of which no Catholic is in doubt. That the Lord Jesus, in the truth of the flesh, was hungry and thirsty and ate and drank, no one can fail to know who is faithful to his Gospel. Yet surely the virtue of continence was as great in him as in John the Baptist? For John came neither eating nor drinking and men said he was possessed. The Son of man came eating and drinking and they said, "Look at him a glutton and a drinker, a friend of tax gatherers and sinners!" (Matt. 11:18-19). After which he added, 'And yet God's wisdom is proved right by its own children,' for they see that the virtue of continence ought always to exist in natural habits but is shown in practice only in appropriate times and seasons, as was the virtue of endurance in the holy martyrs. And so just as the merits of endurance are not greater in Peter who suffered martyrdom than in John who did not, so John who never married wins no greater merit for continence than Abraham who fathered children, for the celibacy of the one and the marriage of the other both fought for Christ in accordance with the difference

³⁴ The Fathers of the Church, Vol. 27 (Washington: Catholic University Press, 1952) , 183.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 35.

of their times. Yet John was continent in practice as well, Abraham only as a habit. At the time after the days of the Patriarchs, when the Law declared a man to be accursed if he did not perpetuate his race in Israel, a man who could have continence did not reveal himself, but even so, he had it (Deuteronomy 25:5-10). Afterwards, 'the term was completed' (Galatians 4:4) when it could be said 'Let the man accept it who can,' (Matthew 23: 12) and if he can, put it into practice but if he does not wish to do so, he must not claim it untruthfully.³⁶

She had studied John Chrysostom, and quotes from his seventh sermon on the letter to the Hebrews to support her own argument on the necessity for perseverance:

There are many ways whereby a man may struggle to charm that beast. What are they? Toil, study, vigils. 'But what concerns are they of ours, when we are not monks?' Do you ask me that? Rather, ask Paul, when he says 'Be watchful in all tribulation and persevere in prayer' (Ephesians 6:18), and 'Give no more thought to satisfying the bodily appetites' (Romans 13:14). For he wrote these things not only for monks but for all who were in the cities, and the layman should not have greater freedom than the monk, apart from sleeping with his wife. He has permission for this, but not for other things. And in everything he must conduct himself like a monk. The Beatitudes too, which are the actual words of Christ, were not addressed to monks alone, otherwise the whole world must perish and he would have confined the things which belong to virtue within narrow limits. And how can marriage be honorable when it weighs so heavily on us?

And so it can be concluded from the knowledge of Scripture that she demonstrates, and from her knowledge of the teachings of

³⁶ Ibid.

the Church Fathers, that Heloise had studied theology. Heloise was educated to the highest level of learning of the time.

The question arises as to how and where Heloise acquired her knowledge. Since both Abelard and Peter the Venerable mention that she was learned at an early age, it can be inferred that much of this learning was acquired while she was at the convent in Argenteuil. It is not articulated in the letters what learning Heloise acquired from Abelard, who was generally regarded as one of the leading teachers of the early twelfth century. There is an indication that she studied ethics under his tutelage in that she writes about the ethic of intention on which Abelard had written a book.³⁷ Abelard was the originator of the dialectical method, and since Heloise was skilled in the art, it is possible she learned this skill from him. In their letters, they both often cite the same passages from Scripture. They cite the same writers, Lucan, Horace, Persius, Cicero, Seneca, Augustine, Saint Gregory, Ovid, and most often Jerome, suggesting they may have studied these writers together.

In his letter to the nuns of the Paraclete, Abelard twice states that Heloise knew Greek and Hebrew as well as Latin, and urges that she teach these languages to her nuns. It is not known whether Abelard himself knew either Greek or Hebrew.³⁸ Guillaume Godel further testifies to Heloise's knowledge of these languages. The nuns

³⁷ Radice, 32.

³⁸ Abelard often quotes from Jerome and it has been suggested by Smits and Southern that he saw himself as another Jerome in giving advice to holy women. Jerome believed that Hebrew was the original language.

of the Paraclete continued to recite the divine office in Greek on the feast of Pentecost "to commemorate their first abbess." until the convent was closed.³⁹ How Heloise could have learned Hebrew and Greek is a matter of speculation. It may have been through private tutors while still residing with her uncle Fulbert, whom Abelard describes as "doing everything in his power to advance her education," and as "always ambitious to further his niece's education in letters."⁴⁰ Fulbert employed Abelard, "confident that she would profit from his teachings."⁴¹ It is quite possible that he employed others for the same purposes.

There is evidence that several of her contemporaries knew Hebrew. Saint Stephen Harding, Abbot of Citreau, corrected the Hebrew text of the Old Testament in 1109 with the help of the Jews.⁴² Andrew of Ste. Victoire, in Paris, learned Hebrew from local rabbis.⁴³ Much work was being done in exegesis by Jews of northern France in the twelfth century. Rabbi Shelomo Izhaqui (Rashi), wrote many biblical commentaries and operated a Jewish academy at Troyes (eighteen miles from the Paraclete) at the beginning of the century. Izhaqui's work was continued at Troyes by his secretary,

³⁹ Morten, 122.

⁴⁰ Radice, 66-67.

⁴¹ Ibid., 61.

⁴² Smalley, Beryl, The Study of the Bible in Medieval Times (Oxford: Blackwell, 1952), 53.

⁴³ Ibid., 149.

Shemiah, and then by a series of rabbis, Joseph Kara, and Rashbam and Rabenna Tamand, who adopted his method of interpretation.⁴⁴ There was much scholarly communication between Jewish and gentile communities.⁴⁵ And there was a "free flow of ideas" between Jews and Christians.⁴⁶ A Christian Biblical student, Sigbert of Gembloux, who was teaching at Mentz at the end of the eleventh century, "was very dear to the Jews because he was skilful in distinguishing the Hebrew truth from other editions."⁴⁷ Jewish communities were thriving at Reims, Melun, Corbeil, Laon, Chalons, and Nogent-sur-Seine.⁴⁸ The hamlet of Quincy (two kilometers from the Paraclete) still has a Rue aux Juifs and a twelfth century synagogue. Biblical Hebrew was certainly known in the France of Heloise's day. It is therefore likely that Heloise was tutored in Hebrew at the request of her uncle while still a child, or learned Hebrew as an adult from the local Jewish community.

Acquiring a knowledge of Greek would have been more difficult. A Greek reader was not available for even the most elementary instruction in the language before the ninth century. Attempts were made in that century to fill this gap, and one part of a

⁴⁴ Leclercq, Monks and Love in Twelfth Century France, 12.

⁴⁵ Chazan, Robert, Medieval Jewry in Northern France (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University press, 1973), 59.

⁴⁶ Leclercq, Monks and Love in Twelfth Century France, 112.

⁴⁷ Smalley, 76.

⁴⁸ Chazan, 62.

work which could have served as a reader was preserved and copied at Saint Denis.⁴⁹ This indicates that there was interest in the Greek language at Saint Denis, of which Argenteuil, the place where Heloise was raised, was a sister convent.

Greek was still almost entirely unknown in the western world in the twelfth century, and no text books for general use had yet been compiled. Greek had been known in Italy since the ninth century, when refugees from the Orthodox Church fleeing iconoclasm had made their way there. A Greek speaking Pope, Nicholas I, was elected in the ninth century. Three Greek passages were included in the Mass in the ninth century: the Gloria (sung in Greek), the Kyria, and the Trisagion (Holy God, Holy Almighty, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us.)⁵⁰ Parts of the Latin Mass were preserved in Greek at Saint Denis.⁵¹

John of Salisbury, a student of Abelard's, tells us that he acquired a knowledge of Greek in the course of his travels.⁵² There is no evidence that Heloise traveled to Italy, although there has been a suggestion that she may have done so to study under Adelbertus.⁵³

⁴⁹ Bischoff, B. The Study of Foreign Languages in the Middle Ages (Oxford: University Press, 1932), 246-275.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 260.

⁵¹ Ibid., 248.

⁵² McLeod, 17.

⁵³ Peter Dronke of Cambridge University and Gillian Knight, medieval scholar at Sommerville College, Oxford, in personal interviews, October, 1989.

There is the speculation that Fulbert employed tutors of Greek for her. She may also have had local sources available to her as an adult, since Greek was beginning to seep into France throughout the twelfth century as a result of the Crusades. The fact that most of the problems that Heloise wants answered by Abelard in the *Problemata* are from the New Testament (which was originally written in Greek) suggests that her interest in that language was serious. The convent of which she was abbess had a Greek name.

Heloise was highly educated, as can be seen from her writings and from the comments of her contemporaries. She had a knowledge of the seven liberal arts; she knew Scripture and the writings of the Church Fathers, thus demonstrating her education in theology; and she knew Hebrew and Greek.

The education of Heloise seems to have been unique. Several women from this period, along with Heloise, were proficient in Latin: Adelaide of Lorraine, Adelaide of Poitiers, Marguerite, niece of Pope Calixtus II, and Beatrice of Burgundy.⁵⁴ There is no indication that these women knew Greek or Hebrew. There were many women authors of the period: Hildegard of Bingen, Constance of Le Ronceray in Angres, Herrad of Hohenstaufen, Compiuta Donzella of Florence, Comtessa de Dia and Wallada Zaidun of Spain and Tibors D' Aurenga of Provencal. Hildegard's schooling had been quite rudimentary, and she had no specialist training in philosophy or theology. None of the women whose works have come down to us seems to have had the

⁵⁴ Thompson, 138-139.

extent of knowledge evidenced in the letters of Heloise. Indeed Heloise appears to be the only woman of her time to have received such an education.⁵⁵ Peter the Venerable noted that Heloise "has surpassed all women" in knowledge.

Heloise may also have been the last woman of her time to have such an education. Monastic rules introduced by the Cistercians forbade the recruitment of children.⁵⁶ By the middle of the twelfth century, monastery schools had closed down.⁵⁷ Cathedral schools became the main institutions of learning and their object was to train boys for the priesthood. When universities were founded towards the end of the century, women did not have access to them. Access to education for females became more difficult than it had been in former centuries. Heloise may well have been the last woman in medieval times to be extensively educated.⁵⁸ In any case, she received an education highly unusual for a woman. Her knowledge of scholarly subjects went far beyond that of contemporaries of her sex.

The education and scholarship of Heloise was not wasted, but rather bore much fruit. Many men who had received a similar education became teachers of others and heads of their communities. And so with Heloise. She became Abbess of the Paraclete, and served in that capacity for more than thirty years. She used her education to

⁵⁵ McLeod, 17.

⁵⁶ Leclercq, Monks and Love in Twelfth Century France, 9

⁵⁷ Lynch, 429.

⁵⁸ Personal Interview with Sister Benedicta Ward, October, 1989.

promote the welfare of the convent of which she was abbess, and she used her education to advance the learning and scholarship of her associates.

CHAPTER 5

HELOISE AS ABBESS

External and internal evidence reveals that Heloise received the education usually not available to a woman in the twelfth century. There is a prodigality of evidence that Heloise used the skills she had acquired in her education to promote the welfare of her convent as Abbess.

Heloise's career as a nun began when she was about nineteen years old. She "publicly bound herself to the religious life" at the convent at Argenteuil, and she "quickly took up the veil which had been blessed by the Bishop," in obedience to the wishes of Abelard.¹

It is significant that Heloise was accepted at the convent quickly. There were many more recruits than monasteries or convents could accept, and the candidate had to either offer a gift of land or money or else have proof of usefulness to the community.² Heloise could have made a gift of money to the convent through her

¹ Radice, 76.

² Lynch, 427-443. The potential entrant made a formal request to the superior and community members. Those who were doubtful about chances of reception came accompanied by "kin, friends, and others whose prestige could sway the decision." One of the major obstacles to reception was if the entrant's spouse would not agree. Canon law had not yet been codified but texts from the Decretum of Burchard and Ivo of Chartres established that neither husband nor wife could become a religious without the freely given consent of the other.

uncle Fulbert, but it is unlikely she did this given the circumstances that immediately preceded her application. Therefore it can be presumed that the convent community considered her useful. She had a reputation for learning as is known from the Historia Calamitatum, and this would have been useful to the convent since it was a teaching establishment, and, of course, she had been educated there.

The obituary roll of the Blessed Vital, Abbot of Savigny who died in 1122, gives evidence of the learning of one of the members of this community at the time when Heloise lived there as a nun.³ This obituary roll was sent to two hundred and seven religious houses, and the inscription written by one of the nuns of Argenteuil reads:

May the soul of the Lord Abbot and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in the true peace which is Christ. We have prayed for yours, pray for us and ours; for Count Baudouin, Abbess Basilia, Abbess Adela, Abbess Judith, the nun Adela, Mother Eremburge, Adelaide, Havide, Dodon the lay brother, and for all whose names God may write in the book of life. Amen.

This is followed by a poem:

The deserted flock weeps for the tender shepherd who has

³ It was the custom among religious houses at the time to announce the death of an important person by circulating among other monasteries a long roll of parchment giving the announcement and a eulogy of his or her life. At each monastery, one of the religious would acknowledge the receipt of the tidings, together with a promise to pray for the deceased and a request for similar prayers for his or her own community.

left it, and all the multitude of the faithful must comfort the wretched sheep.

Alas for grief! Neither sorrow nor groaning can restore to life him whom death has carried off in its voracious jaws. Therefore what use are tears? What avails such great and widespread sorrow? Grief achieves nothing, nay it is harmful. But although it does no good to, I weep. It is human to grieve for the death of a father. It is likewise pious to rejoice if reason can be strong enough to banish sadness. For such a death we believe not to be death but life, and he who so dies to the world lives in God. May he pray for us, who all pray that we may come at last to the life in Christ. Amen.⁴

It has been speculated that Heloise was herself the author of this document, and this leads to the possibility that she may have been at that time the Prioress of the convent. We know from one of the letters of Abelard that she was Prioress of Argenteuil at some point:

God's grace has bestowed on you all essentials to enable you to instruct the erring, comfort the weak and encourage the faint hearted, both by word and example, as indeed you have been doing since you first held the office of prioress under your abbess.⁵

One of the responsibilities of the prioress was the education of the nuns, novices and children brought up in the convent.⁶ Heloise may have been an educator of her community at an early stage in her religious life.

⁴ McLeod, 89

⁵ Radice, 23.

⁶ Ibid., 119.

The nuns were expelled from Argenteuil in 1129. Among the reforms made by Suger when he became Abbot of Saint Denis was the repossession of property belonging to the abbey. Argenteuil had belonged to Saint Denis at the time of Charlemagne and it was reclaimed by Suger to be used as a novitiate. A document drawn up by the Papal Legate, Matthew, Bishop of Albano, records that at a meeting at St Germain des Pres in 1129 of ecclesiastics and King Louis to consider reform in the monasteries of France, "there was a sudden outcry in the hearing of everyone against irregularities and evil repute of a certain monastery of nuns called Argenteuil, in which a few nuns living in manifold infamy, to the dishonor of their order, had by their impure and disgraceful ways defiled the whole neighborhood of that place."⁷ There are no records of whether the nuns were given an opportunity to defend themselves. Pope Honorius III, in a bull to Abbot Suger confirmed the restitution of Argenteuil to Saint Denis with the stricture that places be found in other monasteries for the nuns. Abelard at this time invited Heloise and the "companions who would not leave her" to come to the Paraclete, a small abbey founded by him in the parish of Quincy in the diocese of Troyes (about forty miles from Paris), and he gave it to them as a gift.⁸ The small community from Argenteuil took over the

⁷ Panofsky, Erwin, Abbot Suger of St. Denis (London: Penguin books, 1979), 8.

⁸ Radice, 97.

Paraclete, either in 1129 or shortly thereafter. Heloise became its first abbess. She remained its abbess until her death in 1163.

To evaluate the performance of Heloise as an abbess it is important to understand how an abbess functioned at this time. The function of an abbess was manifold:

An abbess was an important person both in the convent and the outside world. In general ecclesiastical lists, the abbess ranks below the bishop but above the priest. She not only had the responsibility for ruling her own community but represented it on outside business.⁹

The abbess was seen as landlord, employer of the local people, and administrator of charity to the poor and to travellers.¹⁰ The abbess had the power of a bishop within the limits of her house and, like him, bore a crozier as a sign of her rank.

The abbess had a two fold income. She drew spiritualities from the churches which were in her keeping and temporalities by means of her position as landlord and landowner. The first requirement of an abbess was to have a head for business.¹¹

An extensive study on foundations for nuns in the Middle Ages, shows that the customs and therefore responsibilities of the abbess

⁹ McGrath, 66.

¹⁰ Labarge, 98.

¹¹ Eckenstein Lina, Women Under Monasticism (New York: Russell and Russell, 1963), 204. The coat of arms engraved over the front door of the present Paraclete chateau, which dates to the mid seventeenth century, shows a bishop's crosier, indicating that the abbess of that time carried the authority of a bishop.

varied greatly from one abbey to another and from one region to another. The power and therefore the responsibility of the abbess, depended on the particular abbey. The founder of the abbey either wrote the rule, or had it written, based on the sixth century rule of Benedict. The rule of each abbey followed the ideals of the founder.¹² As an abbey was founded, requests for rights and privileges were sent to Rome for approbation, and the Pope could change the terms at his discretion. Privileges for abbeys would accumulate over the centuries, or sometimes erode because of abuses of those rights. The Abbess Sancha Garcia at the abbey of Las Huelgas in Spain, heard confessions until ordered by Rome to stop. The clergy often received their churches from an abbess. Some abbesses enjoyed all the privileges accorded a bishop except the power to ordain, though from the early seventh to the late tenth century some abbesses had ordained deacons and deaconesses that were attached to their foundations. Several abbesses kept vestiges of ancient privileges, which allowed them to read the gospels at matins.¹³

Women often became abbesses of convents for purely social reasons, such as being of royal birth or from the higher ranks of society, regardless of their personal capabilities. Such abbesses were a constant source of distress to the hierarchy of the church because

¹² Morris, Joan, The Lady was a Bishop (New York: Macmillan, 1973), 60. Abbot Hugh of Cluny founded the convent for nuns at Marcigny at the end of the eleventh century; a monk, Robert D'Arbissel founded the abbey at Fontevault in 1119; King Henry II of England founded the priory of Amesbury; Abelard founded the Paraclete.

¹³ Ibid., 64.

of their use of their authority. Such nuns "rejoiced in vigorous and consistent royal backing" and "saw no need to kowtow to ecclesiastics."¹⁴ Abelard decried the practice of having noble born women as abbesses regardless of qualifications: "We should never let this selection (of abbess) be made from the nobility or the powerful in the world except under pressure of great necessity and for sound reason, for their authority becomes dangerous to the convent."¹⁵

The duties that went with the privileges of the abbess varied. In the early twelfth century, at the abbey of Las Huelgas, the abbess had the duty to confer benefices on the clergy of her own choice, and to appoint priests to the churches in her separated dioceses.¹⁶ She also had the duty to punish any priest preaching heresy in her dioceses, to unite parishes, to transfer the benefices from one church to another, to rebuild churches, and to examine the veracity of cases of public criminals who claimed special pardon. She also heard matrimonial cases and criminal cases from among her subjects. She issued licenses to priests to say Mass in her churches.¹⁷ The abbesses of the Quedlinburg Institute in Germany "were in control of the whole town, its people, churches, hospitals, clergy, canons and

¹⁴ Labarge, 105.

¹⁵ Radice, 202.

¹⁶ The abbesses diocese was called "separate" because it was not subject to any bishop, and the abbess was directly dependent on the Holy See.

¹⁷ Morris, 86.

canonesses. The abbess also normally had a seat on the Imperial Diet." Abbesses often found themselves engaged in argument with local abbots or bishops. Many abbeys had houses for both men and women (sometimes called "double" monasteries.) Many instances of strife between abbesses and men of her order or local bishops have been reported.¹⁸

Widows were preferred as abbesses because of their "knowledge of secular life." Statistics of recruitment of nunneries in France during the twelfth century show that between 21 and 52 percent of nuns had been married, and brought to their convents capabilities that virgins entering at an early age would not have.¹⁹ At Fontevault Abbey, the rule required that the abbess be a widow.²⁰

Abelard saw the advantage of having a woman with experience of the world as abbess. He considered it most unfortunate when a virgin was appointed to this position:

¹⁸ Ibid., 35-61. A bull of Innocent III in 1207 to the Bishop of Halberstadt states that the Bishop had no jurisdiction over the Abbess. A papal document dating to 1072 shows that at the priory of Saint Radegonde (a double priory which housed men and women) there was a considerable amount of friction between the canons and the women's orders. In 1072, Pope Alexander II, laid down the rights of the abbess over the canons. It was stated that the abbess alone had the right to invest the abbot. This strife between abbesses and abbots was not confined to Germany. In France, in 1128, there was an argument which resulted in litigation between the Abbess of Jouarre and the Bishop of Meaux, where the Abbess apparently "held jurisdiction over the people, the clergy, and the members of the community of the Abbey." Morris, 35-61.

¹⁹ Leclercq, Monks and Love in 12th century France, 12.

²⁰ Labarge, 20.

I am much surprised that the pernicious practice has arisen in the Church of appointing virgins to this office rather than women who have known men, and often of putting younger over older women.²¹

At the time Heloise became Abbess of the Paraclete, then, the duties of an abbess were varied. An abbess could expect to be a landlord, employer of the local people, and administrator of charity to the poor and to travellers. She might be expected to send requests for rights and privileges to Rome. Her duties might extend to conferring benefices on the clergy, appointing priests, punishing those who preached heresy, uniting parishes, transferring benefices from one church to another, rebuilding churches, examining the veracity of cases of public criminals, hearing matrimonial cases and criminal cases from among her subjects, issuing licenses to priests to say Mass, exercising extended control over laity, clergy, and institutions, and arguing with local abbots or bishops.

In the rule which Abelard suggested for the Paraclete, at the request of Heloise, he stipulated that "Everyone must do everything in accordance with the Abbess' decisions and judgement; the Abbess takes the place of a commander who is obeyed by all in everything."²² Abelard also suggested that the abbess have jurisdiction over the monks and lay brothers who were attached to the abbey for spiritual and other services to the nuns. Abelard considered "sanctity" as the most necessary virtue to an abbess; this

²¹ Radice, 200.

²² Ibid., 201.

was followed by "sobriety, sparce living and humility." He mandated that the abbess be close to her community and not live in greater luxury or comfort than her subordinates:

She must not have a private apartment for eating or sleeping but should do everything along with the flock entrusted to her and be better able to make provisions for them the more she is present in their midst. She should be brought to the office not come to it herself. If she is not learned she should accustom herself not to philosophical studies nor dialectical disputations, but to teaching of life in performance of work.²³

Heloise assumed the governance of the Paraclete possibly as early as 1129, when she was 29 years old. She developed the abbey by extending its property, solidifying its holdings, obtaining various privileges for it, and adding six daughter houses. A new rule was written, probably by Heloise herself, for her community, and it is speculated that she instituted a new liturgy for the nuns.

There is evidence of Heloise's performance as abbess from external and internal sources. External evidence is given by Abelard in Historia Calamitatum. Internal evidence comes from the Chartulaire (the official documents) of the Abbey of the Paraclete, dating to the time of its foundation and now kept in the Bibliotheque Publique, at Troyes.

A description of what the Paraclete was like when Heloise came there is given in Historia Calamitatum. Abelard recites a history of the early days of the abbey and states that the property was " so

²³ibid., 199-208.

poor that it could barely provide for the needs of one man." He had received it from Count Theobald of Troyes and Champagne.²⁴

Abelard built an oratory of reeds and thatch, "dedicated to the Holy Trinity," and his students enlarged the oratory and "improved it by building in wood and stone." They also built themselves little huts of reeds, and ate "wild herbs and coarse bread."²⁵ Abelard named the place the Paraclete, in memory of the comfort he had found there. He left the Paraclete to take up the abbacy of Saint Gildas de Rhuys in Brittany, some 350 miles away. He wrote in Historia Calamitatum that in "abandoning the place he had not made provisions for celebrating the Divine Office at his oratory."²⁶ When Heloise and her companions were forcibly expelled from Argenteuil, Abelard returned and invited Heloise along with some other nuns from the same convent who would not leave her, to come to the Paraclete, which he turned over to the nuns as a gift, with the approval of the local bishop.

Heloise lost no time in solidifying this transaction. She wrote to the Pope requesting confirmation of her right to Abelard's property (and future property which she anticipated receiving), and asking that there be no outside interference. A charter of Pope Innocent II, dated November 11, 1131, reads:

²⁴ Ibid., 86.

²⁵ Ibid., 88.

²⁶ Ibid., 96 -97.

Bull of Innocent, servant of the servants of God, to his beloved daughters in Jesus Christ, Heloise, prioress, and to her sisters present and future, serving under the divine yoke in the oratory of the Holy Trinity in the diocese of Troyes and the parish of Quincy on the river Arbusson. We are pleased to grant from the kindness of our souls, all of your reasonable demands. So, dear daughters in Jesus Christ, we give our assent to your just request. We give under the protection of the Apostolic See the monastery of the Holy Trinity in which you perform the divine service and we make this privilege known to the faithful by this document, stating that whatever possessions you have at the moment justly and legitimately, and all those that, with the help of God, you will be able to acquire by the concession of the Popes, the liberality of the Kings and of the princes, and the gifts of the faithful, and others, you will be assured of holding in perpetuity. We grant you also without any reservation, the possession of the tithes on the lands that you cultivate at your own cost and the tithes on your animals. Nobody will have the right or the temerity to trouble this monastery, to take its possessions, to hold them back to diminish them or to put any legal trouble on them. Your goods will be conserved to you in integrity for your usage only in perpetuity. In return for this privilege which the Roman Church grants to you, you will pay every year, six nummos to the palace of the Lateran.²⁷

As early as 1131, then, Heloise secured her holdings at the Paraclete in return for paying a tax to the Lateran palace. It also appears from this document that the nuns were cultivating the land and had acquired some animals.

²⁷ Lalore, 10.

The Historia Calamitatum indicates that the property Heloise received from Abelard was not able to support her community. Abelard states that the nuns lives were "full of hardship," and that they suffered the "greatest deprivations" for a while after they came to the Paraclete, but that the local people became "sympathetic and kindly disposed towards them."²⁸ A letter from the Bishop of Melun in 1134, makes reference to the deprivation of the nuns and to the assistance which he gave them:

To remedy, in however small a way, the poverty of the poor servants of Christ who, in the monastery of the Paraclete serve God devotedly under the sublime vow of religion, we, Manasses, by the grace of God humble slave and servant of the church of Melun, grant them in perpetuity by the right of charity of the episcopal law the eight part of the tithe of the major and minor tithe of Mesnil-Amelot, half of the minor tillet and a quarter of the minor tithe of Saint- Mesmes. We give them moreover, all that they and those who come after them can acquire in a just manner in our dioceses.²⁹

Heloise's extant letters show her to have been a skilled writer, trained in rhetoric and dialectic, able to posit problems and propose solutions. It is evident that Heloise used her letter writing skills to alleviate the poverty of her nuns and to develop the Paraclete. The document called "Charts of Henri, Archbishop of Sens," dated 1136,

²⁸ Radice, 97.

²⁹ Lalore, 20.

shows that Heloise had written to the Archbishop for tithes on some property left vacant by two gentlemen, Robert Goes de Turre and Girard Ispanel:

We bring to the knowledge of the faithful that Heloise the venerable Abbess of the Paraclete and of the very saintly community of the same place, has asked humbly that we, the archbishop, give them the tithe of Lisines, that Robert Goes de Turre and Girard Ispanel had for a long time and which they will never claim any more. Approving of the pious request of the nuns, we grant them the possession of this tithe in perpetuity.³⁰

Heloise as Abbess requested exemption from taxes from King Louis VI of France. The Chartulaire records a copy of a royal bull of 1135 titled "Letter of Exemption of any Taxes." This document states:

We, Louis, by the grace of God, King of France, make it known to all our sons in the church, both now and hereafter, that for the love of God and the salvation of our souls, we grant in perpetuity to the nuns of the Paraclete that they not pay any tax on the things or property that they buy, (they or their servants), or on what they sell of their own possessions to meet their needs. So that this clause stays firm and respected we order that this be put in writing so that it cannot be infringed upon later. We corroborate this with the authority of our seal. Done at Saint Germain-on-Laye in 1135, the 27th year of our reign and the 3rd of our son Louis.³¹

³⁰ Ibid., 25.

³¹ Ibid., 44.

This exemption is confirmed in another document by Louis VII in 1146. Heloise persevered in her request for tax exemption. Sixteen other letters, written between 1146-1163, refer to royal exception from paying taxes.³²

Heloise carried on a correspondence with every pope who was elected during her abbessy. The Chartulaire contains fourteen papal bulls issued by a succession of popes: Lucien II, Eugene III, Anastasius IV, Adrian IV, and Alexander III. It is apparent that as each pope was elected, Heloise wrote to him in the interests of her abbey, and that the Paraclete was well regarded by the Vatican. A bull from Adrian IV, dated February 1156, was sent in answer to her request to bury lay brothers in the Abbey cemetery:

Adrian, Bishop, to his beloved daughters in Jesus Christ, Heloise and other sisters, greetings and apostolic benediction. Because of the good reputation of your convent, God has enjoined us and the apostolic office imposes on us the obligation to approve your just requests and to grant generously all that is necessary for your upkeep and peace of mind. It is therefore, beloved daughters in our lord, that wishing to bring our aid to your work, we grant by episcopal authority to you and to those who come after you, the permission to bury in your abbey your brothers who do not have a cemetery. The wrath of almighty God and the blessed Peter and Paul will descend on him who dares to run counter to this right.³³

³² Ibid., 46.

³³ Ibid., 54.

Proper burial of her friends was a concern of Heloise's. In a second bull, dated November in 1156, Adrian granted her request to bury in her cemetery benefactors of her Abbey who had been excommunicated by the "fault of others."³⁴

Every time that the nuns make demands that are reasonable, we must, without hesitation, accede to their desires. It is fitting therefore, beloved daughters in Christ, that we give favorable consent to your just requests. We grant by apostolic authority that you be permitted to receive for burial in your cemetery those who have benefited your convent and who, by the fault of others and not of their own, have come under excommunication. We permit you to bury them with the other faithful.³⁵

Heloise's business and administrative abilities, and letter writing skills, resulted in the accumulation of considerable property for the needs of the abbey and its dependant foundations. These possessions are summed up in the bull of Pope Eugene III dated 1147. The listing show the assiduity with which records were kept at the Paraclete, and are a testimony to the good will it enjoyed. Many of these possessions appear to have been acquired in small rations. These include a meadow, a hogshead of grain, a mill or a room in a house, and some were acquired by purchase. The bull reads:

³⁴ Abelard had been excommunicated after the Council of Sens in 1140, but that excommunication had been lifted at the request of Peter the Venerable before Abelard died in 1143.

³⁵ Lalore, 69.

We confirm in perpetuity to the Abbess and to the nuns of the Paraclete the possessions of which the names follow: the lands on which your monastery is built; the agricultural lands and its crops on Mont Limarse; the property which you were given from the sale of Milon; two arpents of land in front of your monastery; another piece of land in the same place; the field of Fountain Aman; all the land that Renault possessed in the parish of Quincey on the two banks of the river Ardusson; the Moulin Brule; a field and a few other pieces of land which Hilduin, dean, Seguin, his brother and their parents gave to your monastery; half of the bakery in Quincy and the vineyards of Baboel de Chalaute; the feudal property of Arpinus, at Mery-Sur-Seine and at Milon in the direction of the Seine where the monastery is built; the land of Buisson; the lands that you possess in Fontenay le Pierreux, in the forests of Brosses and in the valley of Fayel; four ousches of the land in Ferreux; half of all the forests and the land of Furnelles; ten arpents of land in Saint Pierre de Bocennay; the third of the grain mill and the sixth part of the fuller's mill that Marie de Barbuise owned in Pont-sur-Seine, and a piece of land in Pomeriaux; a hog's head of grain that the illustrious Thibault gives you every year and all the fish of his mill pond in Pont-sur-Seine; the vineyard that Herfride de Chalautehas offered you and twelve denier in La Saulsotte; a vineyard in Chalaute and taxes of five sous in the same place; in Montpothier, a tax of three sous; the land of La Croix; all the land that Renaud son of Milon owned in Mergers; the use of the forest of Courgivaux, the use of the forests of Pouy of Marcilly-le -Hayer, of Charmoy and all the forests on Emselme de Traimel, for pasture of animals as well as for construction and other usages; the taxes of five sous on the bridge of Baudement; payment of six sous by the mill of Canturane, five sous by the ouche of Teoldus of Courgivaux: the vineyard of Fontaine-Bethon and all that Guillaume owned on the plain of Guandeleu; the vineyard of Saldon. Of the gift of Gauthier de Courtemain, two measurements of grain every year. The land of La Motte Tilly; that which you legitimately possess of the gift of Hernufle of Insula at Villeneuve l' Archeveque and in Tancault. The land of Espiney and that of Gumei, and of Somme-Fontaine; Sainte Lupien and Tremblay; the mill of Bassin; half of the mill of Fontaine Aman;

a part of the mill of Païen de Ferreux; your land in Planty; taxes of six deniers of Hubert of Trancault; all that Thescelin owned in the same place, except the people; the land of Ami, a knight, in Somme-Fontaine; the part that Eremengra de Postel owned in the mill of the canons of Villemaur, and what he owned of the garden past the bridge over the Vanne.; a part of the fish harvest that Felix, a knight, had from the waters of Bocennay and a part of his lands in Scrobis and the taxes of two sous from the same Felix; the land where your barn is and one ouche in the same spot; the land given to you by Amaury and Hilduin; the meadow in Vergeron; the lands that you have in Quincy; a quarter of the meadow of Mella; four aperts of meadow close to La Motte Tilly; half of the mill of Quincy; all the inheritance of Geoffrey; half an arpent of Potangis from the gift of Hugues Le Bouc in the vineyard in Montapon, as well as the house in which he lived and the cellar; the inheritance of Guerin in La Saulsotte; a vineyard in Sezanne; a piece of land between Pisy and Aisy; the mill of Bercenay-le-Hayer; the mill, a piece of land and meadow in Marcilly-le Hayer; an eight part of the forests of Pouy and another part yet of the same forest which was a gift of Gauthier Rongefier; four arpens of land and forty sous of payment which were the gift of Heloise de Villar as well as a piece of land a vineyard and a house; the property of Raoul Gai in the forest of Fresnoy; sixteen settlers of grain given by Count Thibault from his mill in l'Etang; a barrel of grain of the mill in Changi; fifteen settlers of grain of the mill of Planches; the mill of Paroy-Jutigny; half of the mill of Crevecoeur and the vineyard in Scolastique; half of the bakery of the viscountess; half of the meadow under the church of Saint Nicholas at Nogent sur Seine; the vineyard of Paule and Ermeline; the inheritance of Pierre de Valle and three deniers of payments of Ponne; the vineyards of Gaucher the mason; an arpent of vineyard and land and fourteen deniers of payments of Frodmond the Pelerin; the vineyard of Hugues Butar; the vineyard of Rahald; six arpens of land of Pierre de Pont; four arpents of Alburge of Pont; two arpents and an acre of Goucher; six arpens of Ada D'Altomuro; one arpents and a half of meadow and half of the house of Emmeline Rebursata; an arpent and a half of meadow of Bone de Pouvan; twelve deniers of tax of the meadow of Theodore Goherel; the house

and the inner court of Ascran; the houses of Rahal of Paul, of Hugues Butar, of Loherin of Adem, of Jean le Perent and half of the house of Isembar; the house of Bonnel and half another house, three rooms and a vineyard of that same house; a hogs head of grain and twenty chickens of Marguerite Viscountess of Marolles-sur-Seine; the mill of Roches; a quarter of the house of Andree; six arpents of land in Champ Leve and eighteen arpents underneath Mont on Hannepont; a quarter of the land of Villa-Creu; half of the orchard of Filiniaco; a vineyard and three sous of Evrard; the inheritance of the wife of Païen the saddle maker, and three sous of payment at Lisines and the house of the same Païen in Provins; the land of Roual, canon, in Lisines; half of the house de Latre, the gravedigger of Saint Nicholas; seven sous of tax in Chalautre; twenty sous in Provins; twenty sous in Lisines; seven sous and a half of the oldest Tescia; seventeen sous from Mont-Hannepont; four sous and two deniers of Brouatte; two sous of Godefroy de Monetier; twenty sous from the lands of Corilet; the land of La Greve; the gift of Haton Bishop of Troyes, half of all the tithes of Saint Aubins and half of the candles of the purification of holy Mary; all the tithes of Avant-les-Marcilly; the Saint Peter collection received in offerings in the church of Trancault and a part of the tithe of the same town; the third of the offerings made and the tax of the cemetery; the largest part of the tithe of Perigny-le-Rose; the amount you own of the tithes of Barbuise and of Saint Parres; the tithes of Quincy, and of Ormeaux; two parts of the tithes of Coucheveau; that which you possess of the tithe of Villagruis; the third of the tithe of Norgent; the tithe that you have at Ossey-les-Trois-Maisons, at Maupegni and Saint Flavit; that which you own in Marigny-le-Chatel in tithes and offerings in the two churches of Bocennay, Ferreaux and la chapelle-Godefroy, Queudes, Chalautre, Maizieres La Grande-Paroisse, Bernieres; that which Pierre the chaplin in Perigny-la Rose has given you in his vineyard and other things. of the donation of Henri the archbishop of Sens; the tithes of Lisines and Cucharmoy; the monasteries of Trainel and La Pommeraie.³⁶

³⁶ Ibid., 71-76.

Caring for such vast holdings called for considerable bookkeeping and business acumen. Many of the gifts to the Paraclete were direct gifts. They may have been from young women from wealthy families who traditionally brought lands and tithes with them as dowries when they were received into the convent. Benefactors to the Paraclete are mentioned by name in the bull of Eugene III: Thibault, the Count of Champagne and his son Henri; Anselm of Trainel; Hugo and Henri of Sens; Haton, Bishop of Provins; Manesses, Bishop of Melun; and the archdeacon of Chalon.

Some of the property was acquired by purchase. A document dated April 29, 1140 mentions gifts of "grain, oats and rye" to the nuns, as well as "mills, vineyards and forests," and "carts with straw of the Paraclete that go to the barn of the monks of Saint Pierre de Trois going through the forests of Pouy." The same document mentions the purchase of land: "a piece of land that the nuns had bought at the other side of Pont, of the monk Hugues;" "Milo de Nogent approved the acquisition by the convent of the Paraclete for 120 pounds the third of the major and minor tithes of Chalaute and various other pieces of land;" "Simon of Nogent sold land and the use of the woods at Quincy to the Paraclete for repairing its mill."³⁷

Heloise exerted considerable business skills. There is also evidence that she was an able litigator. There were several

³⁷ Ibid., 66-68.

disagreements between the nuns of the Paraclete and local abbots and bishops about property rights. A document entitled "Letter of Agreement between Valluisent and us," dated in 1144, recites that the Abbot, Norpel, "cedes to the nuns an oak forest that is next to the road, from Pouy to Bagnaux," with the restriction that that wood will never be cut "except for the passage of parts along the road." The agreement "reserves the acorns so that the pigs of the Paraclete can pasture there if the Abbot of Vauluisant would not give his permission." It ends "Norpel, the Abbot of Vauluisant, and Helvide, Abbess of the Paraclete, having stopped all the quarrels which existed between their two convents and have made a pact to take care of peace and charity."³⁸ A document of 1156 titled "An Agreement on the Tithe of Saint Aubin," indicates that the monks of Saint Pierre de Trois and the nuns of the Paraclete both claimed the tithe on the lands that the nuns cultivated in the territory of Saint Aubin. The nuns of the Paraclete claimed that "they possessed in full the tithes of their work." Heloise seems to have brought a peaceful end to the dispute with the Lord Abbot Pierre. Another document dated 1162, entitled "The Tithe of Cuchermoy," reads:

Renaud, Abbot of Saint Jacque in Provan, and our whole convent, bring to the knowledge of the faithful present and future that a disagreement existed between the convent of the Paraclete because we refused to give to the nuns the tithe on our agricultural products that is in the region of Cuchermoy; a long contest has taken place

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 78.

between us and on council of wise men we have decided on an agreement.

It is also apparent from the Chartulaire that Heloise had to cope with interference from the local bishop. In 1136, Pope Innocent II at her request, sent a bull to the Abbey stipulating that the nuns "shall not be forced to leave their convent to receive benediction and consecration," and forbidding the interference "by bishops or any other person in the election of the Abbess."³⁹

Her ability as abbess is further demonstrated by the fact that six daughter houses were founded between 1142 and 1164. These were Sainte Madeleine-de-Trainel, La Pommeraie, Laval, Noefort, Saint-Flavit and Saint-Martin-de-Boran. The first two of these houses are mentioned in the bull of Eugene the Third in 1147. Hugo, Archbishop of Sens, in a document dated in 1142, describes the installation of the nuns that came from the Paraclete to the monastery of Saint Madeline de Tranel, given them as a gift by the priest Gundric.

In the name of the Holy and indivisible Trinity we, Hugo, by the grace of God Archbishop of Sens, bring to the knowledge of all the faithful now and hereafter, that we have given outright to dame Heloise, Abbess of the Paraclete, the convent of the blessed Marie Madelaine offered by the priest Gundric and all its outbuildings. We have asked Anselm, the lord of that land of Tranel, to take care of the servants of Christ who have come to

³⁹ Ibid., 78.

that monastery and to take care of their needs for the love of God and the salvation of his soul. We have also noted that the same Anselm has given, or is going to give later of our feudal property to the needful community. We have made this concession before all the people and, receiving the nuns with honor, we have introduced them to the places where they have to live and serve God.

This has been done with the approval of Manasses of Garlande, Archdeacon of Sens, Julien, Bishop of Orleans, Renault, the Archdeacon of Provan, Matthew first cantor of the church of Sens; in the presence of the Lord Anselm his wife and his sons.⁴⁰

A bull of 1147 from the same bishop tells how the abbey of Pommeraie was given to the Paraclete by the Countess of Blois. It further gives instructions for the choice of the abbess and the rule that will be followed:

Hugo, by the grace of God Archbishop of Sens, wishes to bring to the knowledge of all the faithful now and hereafter, that Heloise, Abbess of the Paraclete, by the intervention of religious people, has been given by the Countess of Blois, after her approval and by the consent of her whole chapter, the place of La Pommeraie, to build an abbey. The following conventions have been established. It is agreed that the abbess of the Pommeraie who has been nominated, dame Gertrude, a noble and honest woman, shall be elected at the Paraclete from the ladies of that house. Others who will succeed her in the same monastery will be elected by canon law according to the customs of the other communities and will be chosen from the nuns of the convent of La Pommeraie if that is possible. If not, the nuns of La Pommeraie have to go to the Paraclete and there provide themselves with an abbess, and they will not have the right to have recourse for that election to another convent because it

⁴⁰ Ibid., 71-73.

is not permitted to observe another rule than that of the Paraclete. The abbess of La Pommeraie, once a year will go to the Paraclete to be instructed in the rule. Conversely the abbess of the Paraclete will go once a year to Ponneraie and, sitting in chapter, will amend the rule of the monastery if necessary, or will talk about questions that flow from it. For the concession of this place, the Countess has given to the church of the Paraclete three hogs heads of grain every year of her mill in Provan under Crevecoeus with the approval of her sons the Counts Henri Thibauld and Etienne and has promised to guarantee this stipulation. This was to the liking of the Abbess of the Paraclete and her whole chapter. The Abbess and the Countess promised that what was just stated would not be changed either by the authority of the popes or by any other person but that those conditions could only be abolished by the consent of both parties. The Abbess and the Countess have nominated me as mediator of this agreement.⁴¹

There are no records of how the other four convents came under the authority of Heloise, but the Priory of Laval is shown as dependent on the Paraclete in the bull of Anastius IV in 1154, and the convents of Noefort and of St. Flavit in the bull of Adrian IV in 1157, and the priory of Saint Martin de Boran in the Bull of Alexander III in 1163.⁴²

It can be inferred that the skills acquired by Heloise in her schooling were called into play in the acquisition and administration of such vast holdings, as well as in the settling of disputes. The

⁴¹ Ibid., 74.

⁴² Ibid., 77.

Paraclete grew during the abbessy of Heloise to encompass property extending into five Departments of modern day France.⁴³

It is also evident that Heloise's education was used in the composition of the rule by which the nuns of the Paraclete and its dependent houses lived. Heloise did not consider the rule of Benedict, under which she had lived for several years before she went to the Paraclete, suitable for women. In Letter Five she asked Abelard to prescribe a rule "suitable for women and also describe fully the manner and habit of our way of life, which we find was never done by the holy Fathers." Her letter reads in part:

At present the one Rule of Saint Benedict is professed in the Latin Church by women equally with men, although as it was clearly written for men alone, it can only be fully obeyed by men, whether subordinates or superiors.⁴⁴

In asking for a new rule for her nuns, Heloise drew from her knowledge of Scripture, for she refers to the books of Numbers, Proverbs, Sirach, and Deuteronomy; the gospels of Luke, John, Mark and Matthew; Paul's letters to the Thessalonians, Romans, Corinthians, Ephesians, Galatians, Colossians, Timothy; the letter to the Hebrews; and the letter of James. She also referred to the Church Fathers, Jerome, Chrysostom, Augustine and Pope Gregory and she drew on her knowledge of the secular classics by referring to

⁴³ The departments of Aube, Yonne, Seine-et-Marne, Marne and Saint Martin Aux Nonnettes. A French department is similar to an American county.

⁴⁴ Radice, 160.

Aristotle, Ovid, Virgil and Marcobius Theodosius. She used her skill in rhetoric to persuade Abelard of the need for a new rule, setting out her argument clearly and concisely, and backing it up with references to Church law, which had not yet been codified, and by recourse to Church history.⁴⁵ Her concern for her nuns shows itself in her questioning of the dress for women, food that should be eaten, wine, continence, the offices of the Church, the ordering of services and work.⁴⁶

It is clear that Abelard followed her directions in formulating the rule for nuns. Letter Seven of Abelard gives his responses to her questions and his prescription as to the duties of the Abbess, the Sacristan, the Chantress, the Infirmarian, the Cellaress, the Wardrober, and the Portress. He recommended that some officers be chosen from the less learned nuns, so that "others may make use of greater freedom for their studies."⁴⁷ Abelard also recommended that a monastery of men of the same religious life be near at hand, to care for the external affairs and the spiritual needs of the women. The maintenance of the properties was to be in the hands of these men. Lay brothers were to be used as emissaries, since an abbess should not be absent for "external concerns," and "everything outside

⁴⁵ Ibid., 160-165.

⁴⁶ Heloise seems to have been unique among abbesses in asking for a new rule. Waddell points out that she was voicing objections to the rule of Benedict which "seems to have been no great problem for most abbesses living within the Benedictine tradition of that or any other age." Waddell, C., iv.

⁴⁷ Radice, 219.

should be the brothers' concern since men should sweat over men's work."⁴⁸ Abelard mandated that the men "shall impose nothing against the will of the abbess, do everything at her bidding, make profession to her and promise obedience." An abbot was to direct those monks, and act as pastor to both them and the nuns.⁴⁹

The only extant rule of the Paraclete dates to the fifteenth century. It is contained in document 802 of the Chartulaire at Troyes. It reads in part:

We follow the way of the apostles living communally. In our way of living, we observe poverty and humility; in our hierarchy, obedience; in our regime of discipline, communal life after the example of the apostles. From whatever source come the temporal goods that we have, we divide them equally between us if that is possible. If there is not enough for all we give the largest part to those among us who have the most need of it. Since we renounce the world and fight in the service of God, our duty is to stay faithful to our vows of chastity and to make an effort to please the Lord within our powers and following the extent of his gifts. According to our rule, when the Lord in his protection gives us some lands, we give a certain amount for religious service. Our rule is appropriate to our vows. The practices observed at the mother house are faithfully observed in the daughter houses. Thus we have uniformity. ⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Ibid., 213.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Lalore, 40.

The last two lines suggest that this rule was instituted in the twelfth century at the time when the daughter houses were being established. The six daughter houses came under the auspices of Heloise between 1147-1163. The rule would therefore have been written by Heloise herself.

The rule reflects the writer's concern for every aspect of life for the religious :

On the habit: our habit is rough and simple of lamb's skin and linen material and wool. To make it, we choose not precious materials but that which we can procure and make at the cheapest price. We have to be content with what is enough and we don't always have enough.

On the beds we have mattresses, pillows, and linen sheets; that is what we give to everybody. If there are some who don't receive their share, they will take that as being in accord with the vow of poverty.

On food: we eat any kind of bread, wheat bread if there is wheat, bread of whatever kind if we don't have wheat.

In the refectory the dishes of which the meat is excluded, are composed of vegetable and garden products.

In the chapter: of the offices from the calendars of October until Easter, on the sign of the prioress, we make the usual prayers, on feast days bowed and on other days prostrate. After prime, we go to chapter and there we make public confession and penance according to the amount of sins and regarding the person who holds chapter.

As far as the brothers are concerned, all the times that they have committed a grave sin, they will be called to chapter and reprimanded in the presence of the total chapter so that their confusion will be bigger. After compline, we go to the dormitory and every one goes to her bed and goes to sleep totally clothed without opening her belt.⁵¹

⁵¹ Ibid., 81.

The rule is based on that of Benedict. The Second Lateran Council of 1139 had forbidden "the detestable custom of certain women" to live outside the rule and still be "reckoned in common repute as nuns."⁵² The rule differs from that recommended by Abelard. Abelard had suggested only lamb's wool for clothing, and had not allowed wheat bread.⁵³ Heloise used Abelard's suggestions as a source, but the rule of the Paraclete appears to be hers.

Scholars speculate that Heloise instituted a new liturgy for the Paraclete, although there is no direct evidence for this. New liturgies were instituted for the rising Cistercian order, and Jean Leclercq claims that "the convent of the Paraclete under Heloise adopted the Cistercian liturgy."⁵⁴ In addition, the Problemata suggests that Heloise revised the liturgical works of the Paraclete.⁵⁵ This is further supported by "traces of possible Cistercian influences" in the Paraclete liturgy.⁵⁶ Finally, Abelard wrote hymns for the nuns, and this indicates an interest in new liturgy.⁵⁷

⁵² Waddell, C., 33.

⁵³ Radice, 227.

⁵⁴ Leclercq, Monks and Love in Twelfth Century France, 119.

⁵⁵ Mary Martin McLaughlin in a personal interview, December, 1989.

⁵⁶ Waddell, C., 111.

⁵⁷ Radice, 290-295.

Thus, as Abbess of the Paraclete, Heloise extended the property of her abbey, defended its rights, and secured privileges for its welfare. Every time a new pope ascended, she took care to regulate all the business of the convent by having the Pope confirm the rights and privileges of the Paraclete. She resolved disagreements with local abbots and bishops. She established a new rule for her nuns, and may have established a new liturgy. Heloise was Abbess of the Paraclete for thirty years, during which the convent grew from a few run down huts to a prosperous abbey with six dependent houses. In thus promoting the convent, Heloise drew heavily upon the literary skills, dialectic techniques, and knowledge that she had acquired as part of her education.

CHAPTER 6

HELOISE AS SCHOLAR EDUCATOR

Heloise was abbess of the Paraclete for over thirty years. Evidence from both external and internal sources demonstrates, that during her abbessy, Heloise was committed to learning and was a teacher of her associates. External evidence of her commitment to learning is found in the writings of her contemporaries: the Chartulaire of the Paraclete, the letters of William Godel, Hugh Matel, Peter the Venerable and Letters Seven and Nine of Abelard. Internal evidence of the scholarship of Heloise, and that of her associates, can be found in the Problemata, and in the Institutiones Nostrae.

The Chartulaire of the Paraclete records the death of Heloise thus:

Heloise, Mother and first Abbess of this place, famous for her religion and her learning.¹

Thus her community of the Paraclete considered her "famous" for her learning. William Godel, a monk of Saint Martin of Limoges in 1173, spoke of Heloise as a "religious and learned woman," and

1 Lalore, A. Le Chartulaire de L'Abbay de Paraclet, p.5.

one versed "in Latin and Hebrew."² Hugh Matel, Canon of the Abbey of St. Leon at Toul, wrote to Heloise:

If I had wings, I would come frequently to you in person, and learn from you. Your wisdom is even more great than you fame has announced. Your pen surpasses or is the same as the pen of the Doctors.³

The letter of Peter the Venerable to Heloise speaks of Heloise's "zeal for learning", and he expresses the hope that the "holy women who serve the Lord with you may be fired with your word and example." He alludes to Heloise's knowledge of Hebrew: "the name Deborah, as your learning knows, means 'bee' in the Hebrew tongue." He bemoans the fact that she is not at Cluny Abbey: "if only our Cluny possessed you! I would have preferred your wealth of religion and learning to the richest treasures of any king."⁴ And so Heloise received high praise for her scholarship from her contemporaries and peers.

Letter Seven of Abelard, in which he suggested the rule for the nuns, gives a high priority to learning. In this letter, Abelard placed much emphasis on study. He called for a set time for reading, "For the food of the soul and its spiritual refreshment is the God-given understanding of Scripture." He quoted from

² McLeod, Enid, Heloise, p.17.

³ Charrier, Charlotte, Heloise Dans L'Histoire et dans La Legende, p.277.

⁴ Radice, p.279-280.

Palladius in order to encourage their desire to learn: "It behooves the soul which professes to live in accordance with the will of Christ either to learn faithfully what it does not know or to teach plainly what it knows." He threatened that "boredom with learning is the beginning of withdrawal from God." He stated that "to read without understanding is to mis-read," and quoted Jerome, "Love knowledge of letters and you shall not love the vices of the flesh." He exhorts that those with the gift of learning should continue to learn and should instruct others: "Those of you who have been given the grace of learning must work to be instructed in the things which are God's in order to be able to instruct others." He praised the "blessed woman" in Luke's gospel, who "put everything aside to sit at the Lord's feet listening to his words."⁵ Heloise had asked Abelard to write a rule, and had given her ideas on what that rule should be.⁶ She seems to have used Letter Seven as a source when the rule for the Paraclete and its dependent houses was written some years after the death of Abelard. It can be presumed that teaching and learning were prevalent at the Paraclete.

⁵ Ibid., p.260-265.

⁶ The works of Abelard had twice been declared heretical by Church councils, and it is unlikely that a rule written by him would be accepted by Church authorities.

Further external evidence of Heloise's commitment to learning and teaching is found in Abelard's Letter Nine. In this letter, addressed to the nuns of the Paraclete, he states:

Your abbess already has three languages. With such a guide, betake yourselves for study so that whenever an uncertainty may arise through the diversity of translations, you may yourselves settle the question, and you have no need as had Saint Jerome, either of a long journey or great expense in order to learn these tongues; since as I have said you have a mother equipped for this study.

Abelard says further:

You have a master in your Abbess who has all that is necessary both as a pattern for virtue and for instruction in letters; for she is not unfamiliar not only with Latin but also with Greek and Hebrew letters, and appears to be the only woman now living who has attained that knowledge of the three languages which is extolled above all things by Saint Jerome as a matchless grace.⁷

The fact that Abelard so strongly promotes her knowledge of Latin, Greek and Hebrew, and her capacity for instruction, and encourages the community to avail themselves of her expertise, and that others so richly praise her learning, lead to the conclusion that Heloise was a serious scholar and teacher.

Abelard twice mentions that Heloise knew Hebrew. Saint Jerome had employed a Jewish Rabbi, Baraninas, to teach him Hebrew since he considered it essential to an understanding of

⁷ Migne, A. Paterlogia Latina, Vol.178, 324-326.

Scripture.⁸ Though there is no evidence that Abelard knew Hebrew, many scholars have compared Abelard to Jerome and believe that Abelard saw himself as a second Jerome instructing holy women. "Quotations from Jerome are numerous in Abelard's work. His teachings have a Jeromian flavor. Like Jerome, he was an admirer of Origen, and offered spiritual guidance to nuns."⁹ And "Abelard saw himself as a modern Saint Jerome. He was forced to make the directing of the religious life of his nuns the chief employment of the years from 1131- 1135."¹⁰ Others observe that Heloise as a scholar "saw herself as a Marcella to Jerome."¹¹ Marcella, seven centuries earlier, had sought the advice of Jerome on the training and education of nuns. Heloise also sought the advice of Abelard on the same subject.

The Problemata is a series of questions on Scripture which Heloise addressed to Abelard, and to which he replied. It clearly shows Heloise's continued interest in Biblical study. This writing contains forty one questions on Scripture, and one question on ethics, which Heloise had probably studied earlier with Abelard. Sources within the Problemata show that Heloise saw herself in a Marcellan role. In her letter to Abelard, which introduces the set

⁸ Jerome Epistulae lxxxiv, 3.

⁹ Smits, E.R. Letter VII-XIV of Abelard, p.119.

¹⁰ Southern, p.91.

¹¹ Smits, p.114.

of problems, she writes: "Saint Jerome greatly commended and vehemently approved of Saint Marcella's course of study which boiled down to questions about the Sacred Scripture." She goes on to quote Jerome regarding Marcella:

I know her ardor, I know the faith which she has as a flame in her breast, to transcend sex, to forget human beings, and to bang the gong to the scroll of divine matters, to cross the Red Sea of this world. As soon as I got to Rome, no sooner did she see me than she interrogated me somewhat concerning Scripture. She questioned everything and with a sagacious mind considered widely, so that I felt myself to have, not a disciple, but rather a judge.

Heloise comments on the progress Marcella made "so that she came to distinguish herself as a teacher for others interested in learning in the same field of study."¹² Heloise saw Marcella as a role model for herself in her relationship with her community.

Heloise was committed to learning and to promoting the scholarship of her associates. It is apparent from her introductory letter that not only Heloise, but also her nuns, were engaged in the study of Scripture. She noted that Abelard had recommended to his "spiritual daughters" the study of Scripture, as "a mirror of the soul, " and that he declared no "spouse of Christ should be allowed to be lacking this mirror, if she would wish to please Him to whom she belongs." Heloise assured Abelard that she and her sisters "have been excited to the utmost" by the study of Scripture, and

¹² Appendix: letter of introduction.

are "seized by the love of letters."¹³ The problems she set Abelard were posed in the name of her community "as they daily occurred to us." In problem fourteen she wrote, "We diligently request "; in problem thirty-six "We ask you to explain"; and in problem thirty-nine "We also ask "; in problem forty-one "We ask." It is evident that members of her community were interlocutors with her, and her letter at least suggests that the community had read many commentaries on Scripture. In problem thirty-four, Heloise asked a question on 1 Samuel, 2: 5, and stated, "For although Scripture does not define how many children Phenenna had, nonetheless many commentators construe her as having had more than Hannah, which would mean seven."¹⁴

The Bible was the most important book of the twelfth century scholar, and that "theology represented the highest branch of learning."¹⁵ Heloise and her nuns were engaged in this highest branch of learning, as is evident from the questions posed in the Problemata. The system of interpretation of Scripture ascribed four categories of meaning to the Bible: the literal (historical), allegorical (spiritual), anagogical (hidden meaning regarding the future life), and tropological (practical

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Appendix: problem thirty-four.

¹⁵ Smalley, Beryl, The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages, p.xiii.

application).¹⁶ A text was taken from Scripture and then examined and interpreted on one or more of these levels. The literal method embodied "knowledge about a series of tangible events in the past". In the allegorical method "the apparent sequence of events can be described as portents of a mystery to come." The anagogical method "takes us upwards from spiritual mysteries to the highest and most holy secrets of heaven", and the tropological meaning "the moral application which is displayed in the improved life and in external actions."¹⁷

Heloise was obviously familiar with the four levels of interpretation. In the Problemata, her questions are faithful to the text of Scripture, and she draws forth from Abelard literal, allegorical, anagogical and moral interpretations as responses.

Problem three poses the question:

What does it mean that the Lord frequently, when interrogated by others and responding to them, should say "You have said" or "You say" or even to many questioners should respond "You say," as if asserting that they had spoken what they had merely inquired about in their doubt. So then to Judas asking "Surely it is not I, Rabbi, who is to hand you over?" the Lord answered, "You have said so" (Mt 26:25.) Also interrogated by Pilate as to whether he was the Son of God, he responded similarly (Mt.26:64.) Even when the people asked 'If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly' (Jn. 10:24) or, 'Then you are the son of God?' Jesus answered "You say I am" (Jn.18:37.) Asked finally by the Governor,

¹⁶ Ibid., p.157.

¹⁷ Piltz, p.30.

that is by Pilate, whether he was the King of the Jews, Jesus replied "You say so" (Mt. 27:11.) These responses seem to create a not unmerited doubt. For a person who inquires whether this or that is so, in speaking does not really say that this is or that, but with doubt seeks whether either is the case.

Abelard interprets the passage literally by relating a series of events from the past, using quotations from the Old and the New Testament.¹⁸

Problem fourteen evokes an anagogical interpretation from Abelard, "taking us upwards from spiritual mysteries to the holy secrets of heaven:"

Heloise asks:

What does it mean when the Lord, in describing the minds of the faithful and computing the good things by which they can deserve blessedness, calls them blessed in a number of ways, in which they are, just as though each and every one would suffice to make a person blessed, as is declared to be the case in the rewards attached to them? And so it is said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Mt 5:3) And similarly in the other individual beatitudes a reward is posited, from which each and every grace would seem to suffice for salvation. We diligently request that they be distinguished from each other, by which means it may become better apparent whether each will individually suffice, if they do not happen to occur in the same person simultaneously.

¹⁸ Abelard's complete answer to each of these successive questions is given in the Problemata appended to this study.

Abelard replies by analyzing the beatitudes and interpreting them as a means to attain the joys of Heaven, thus giving an anagogical interpretation of the passage.

Problem eight likewise draws an anagogical response.

Heloise asks:

There is no question that the Lord, on behalf of the adulteress who was to be set free, responded to the Jews, "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her" (Jn 8:7), and thus rescued her. Now since he did not permit her to be stoned except by one lacking sin, he would seem to forbid any human being from wielding the rod of punishment, since no one is clean of sin, not even an infant having a single day of life upon the earth.

Abelard responds to the story of the woman taken in adultery by interpreting it in the light of heavenly reward or punishment.

In problem twenty, Heloise asks:

We also inquire what it means when he adds the following: "Do to others whatever you would have them do to you. This is the law and the prophets" (Mt 7:12). For if anyone should wish another to consent to him in wrongdoing, would he have to give consent to the other in a similar matter?

Abelard gives a moral interpretation referring to precepts of the natural law concerning love of one's neighbor, and to the dictates of conscience regarding right and wrong. "Nothing in one's conscience approves that we should give consent in wrongdoing,

but only in doing those things which it considers good and worthy of being done."

In problem thirty-three, Heloise poses the question:

And what does this mean: "Hannah prayed, and said: 'My heart exults in the Lord,'" etc. (1 Sam 2:1) For this canticle has the words of thanksgiving or prophecy more than of prayer.

Abelard uses allegory to show Hannah as a fore shadowing of Mary:

Insofar as I can determine, before the canticle, she had prefaced a prayer, by which her canticle, or the action of thanksgiving, might become more acceptable to God. First, concerning the prayer it says, "She prayed," and then concerning the canticle it is added, "and she said, 'My heart rejoices, etc.'" For it is the custom of the Church to place a prayer before each of the individual Hours which are to be sung to the praises of God. We read of many canticles belonging to holy women, both to barren women who are to become mothers of prophets, such as Deborah (Jdg 5:1ff), Judith (Judith 16:2ff), and Hannah, the mother of Samuel, as likewise to the virgin who would become the mother of the Savior, Mary, the mother of the Lord, singing about the birth assigned to her by the Lord (Lk 1:16ff). The Church is accustomed frequently to have recourse to the Canticle of Hannah, just as to that of the great Virgin, not only because of the sanctity of the mother, or of the dignity of the birth conceded to her in Samuel, by whom the school of prophets was said to have begun, and who was first offered by his mother to the Lord; but even more, because nothing else in their canticles sung before the time of the prophets seems to have so clearly foretold Christ and his kingdom as Hannah does now. For thus does she

speak of the Father of Christ, and of Christ Himself: "The Lord judges the ends of the earth.

Now may he give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed" (1 Sam 2:10). For there was not yet a king established in Israel, to whom this gratification of the prophetess would pertain. She merited to be the first to openly express the true Christ, that is, the Messiah; she manifestly preannounced the future which Mary sings as fulfilled, as if the prophetic words as well as the birth giving act of the barren woman had been instructive of the Virgin's faith.

It can be seen from the types of questions posed in the Problemata that Heloise pursued the study of Scripture and was conversant with the four types of interpretation. The questions asked and the detailed answers given portray a serious interest in the dialogue on both sides, and an ongoing interest. Her community is presented as co-questioner with her. The Problemata shows that Heloise was committed to learning and was an educator. She lived for more than twenty years after the Problemata was written. There is no reason to suppose that she lost interest in learning during her last twenty years, particularly since her community remembered her as "famous for her learning."

That Heloise created an atmosphere of study at the Paraclete can also be seen from the manuscript Institutiones Nostrae, a collection of monastic customs redacted from the rule of the Paraclete. The rule of Benedict was that on which the rule for the Paraclete was based, but Benedict's rule was modified and

embellished by Heloise to suit the purposes of her community. The Institutiones Nostrae served as a complement to the rule of the nuns of the Paraclete and its dependent houses.¹⁹ This manuscript shows that times were set apart for study and for reading at the Paraclete to a far greater extent than was required by Benedict. Section XI, B, of Institutiones Nostrae deals with "the order of daytime exercises in the winter season, " and lines 15-18 read:

Finis gratiis in ecclesia, ingredimur capitulum, et conveniunt sorores laicae, et exponitur aliquid aedificationis in communi audientia referente illa cui iniunctum fuerit.²⁰

At the end of the thanksgiving prayer in church, we enter the chapter room and the lay sisters assemble, and something of an edifying nature is expounded for all to hear by one especially assigned for this.

This passage suggests that in winter, the nuns gathered for a line by line explanation of a text of Scripture given by one of the nuns. Rule 38 of Benedict calls for reading during meals by one "designated for the week," but states that only the Abbot "may say something for the purpose of edification."²¹ Since it is not mentioned that the expounding was done by the Abbess or

¹⁹ Waddell, Peter, The Paraclete Statutes, p.31.

²⁰ Migne, p.315..

²¹ Doyle, L. Saint Benedict's Rule for Monasteries, p.57.

Prioress, it can be presumed that at the Paraclete and its dependent houses, the expounder was from the rank and file of the nuns. Furthermore, the expounding was done in chapter rather than at meal times (as in the Benedictine rule), when the lay nuns were assembled. The language used was Latin. We can infer from this that the nuns of the Paraclete were literate, and capable of expounding on Scripture, and that this was done on a daily basis at least during the winter months.

Heloise's rule set much more time aside for both public and private reading than was required in the Benedictine rule. Lines 24-25 of Section XI B of Institutiones Nostrae reads: "Post vespers, statim accedimus ad collationem, nulla divertente alicubi." ²² (After vespers, we immediately go to community reading and no one turns aside elsewhere.) Rule 42 of Benedict calls for community reading after supper.²³ The reading is specified as "the Lives of the Fathers, or something else that may edify the hearers." ²⁴ But no other time is specified in the rule of Benedict for community reading.

²² Migne, p.315.

²³ Doyle, p.61.

²⁴ In the Old French Ordinary of the Paraclete which dates to the end of the thirteenth century the readings were from the Desert Fathers with the occasional lives of the Saints, and during Lent and Holy Week from Saint Augustine and from the Gospel of John, Waddell, p.170.

For Heloise's community, reading times were dispersed throughout the day. Lines 13-15 of Section XI D, "The order of exercise on fast days," reads:

Priatis diebus summo mane cantatur prima: postea sedemus in clauastro usque ad Tertiam legentes et contantes et operantes"²⁵

On fast days, prime is sung at high morning: afterwards we sit in the cloister until Terce, reading or singing or working.

A siesta was taken in the afternoon on fast days, but those who preferred to read were allowed to do so. Section XI E, lines 7-9, reads: "Post gratiarum actionem imus in dormitorium, et licet dormire, legere, operari in lectulis sine alicuius inquietatione."²⁶ (After grace after meals, we go to the dormitory, where we may sleep, read or work in bed but without disturbing anyone.)²⁷

On a daily basis, ample time was set apart for reading. Rule 16 of Benedict, designates that seven times, dispersed throughout the day, be set aside for prayers: Morning Office, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers and Compline.²⁸ Heloise's community observed these times of prayer, but the hour or two hours

²⁵ Migne, 316.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Fast days were observed between Ash Wednesday and Easter, on Rogation days, and on vigils of feasts of the Lord and the saints, Waddell, p.183

²⁸ Doyle, p.36.

between prayer times seems to have been set aside for reading. Section XI, B, lines 10-11, states: *Post Sextam vacamus lectioni usque ad Nonam.* (After Sext we give ourselves to reading until None.) This would have allowed an extra hour or so for reading. Time was given to private reading after the general meeting of chapter concluded and before Terce began. Section XI, E, line 15, states:

Post Primam sequitur Missa matutinalis. Inde itur in capitulum. Egressae capitulum sedent in clauastro legentes et operantes usque ad Tertiam

The morning Mass follows Prime. From there they go to chapter. Upon leaving chapter they sit in the cloister, reading and working until Terce.

Further emphasis on reading is suggested in Section XI, D, line 19, which states: "*Nulli licet sedere in clauastro sine opera vel lectione.*" (No one is allowed to sit in the cloister without work or reading), and in Section XI, E, line 14: "*Deinceps in clauastro sedemus legentes et operantes.*" (From then on we sit in the cloister reading and working.)²⁹

The Institutiones Nostrae suggests that the nuns had compulsory public reading and time set apart for private reading beyond what was required in the Benedictine rule. They also had a daily exposition of Scripture. This indicates that an atmosphere of study prevailed at the Paraclete and its dependent houses.

²⁹ Migne, 315-317.

It can be concluded from the Problemata and from the Institutiones Nostrae that Heloise was seriously committed to learning and to teaching and that her nuns spent much time in study. Heloise shared the benefits of her education with her associates.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Heloise is remembered primarily as a tragic romantic heroine, and her scholarly and educational achievements are overlooked. However, Heloise was no mere romantic heroine, or adjunct to the life of the great Abelard. She was an educated and scholarly person in her own right, assumed major responsibilities in the life of the Church, and vigorously promoted the education and scholarship of the women under her care at a time when such education and scholarship were rare in most orders of society, even among men.

Abelard was a strong influence in the life of Heloise. She enjoyed the blessings of love and marriage with him. But when the marriage ended tragically, Heloise set her courage, determination, intellect, and love of learning to work as Prioress of the convent at Argenteuil, a position which carried with it the responsibility for educating the nuns, novices, and children who boarded at the convent. As Abbess of the convent of the Paraclete, Heloise further used her education to promote the welfare of the convent by corresponding with popes, kings, bishops, and other people of influence and means. Because of her leadership, her convent enjoyed a reputation for scholarship centuries after her death. Heloise was Abbess of the convent of the Paraclete for over thirty years, and was

widely regarded by her own age as a highly capable administrator, legislator, theologian, and educator. She lived to be sixty three years old.

By contrast, Heloise's romantic involvement with Abelard lasted for about eighteen months, between her seventeenth and nineteenth years. While she sought Abelard's advice on spiritual and scholarly matters for ten years while she governed the Paraclete, twenty of the thirty years that she was Abbess were served after his death.

Yet Heloise is remembered mainly for her association with Abelard. In the eight centuries that have passed since her death, much has been written about Heloise as one of two characters in a love story. By the early thirteenth century she had become a romantic legend. The great Chronicle of Tours presented Abelard as a philosopher and heretic. While it did portray Heloise as a religious and learned woman, it was her loyalty to Abelard's memory that was of import. This loyalty reached its zenith in her death and burial:

She indeed when she was dying, as she lay in her last illness, directed that when she was dead she should be lain in the tomb of her husband. When they deposited the body of the Abbess Eloisa in the tomb of her lover, Peter Abelard, who had been there interred twenty years, this faithful husband raised his arms, stretched them, and closely embraced his beloved Eloisa.¹

¹ Morten, 132.

Jean de Meun made reference to the letters of Abelard and Heloise in the fourteenth century. In his poetic work, *The Romance of the Rose*, he referred to "the wise Heloise" for whose sake Abelard, the great teacher of the age, "underwent such punishment." He had Heloise utter the words, "Oh wretched that I am I, who was born to be the cause of so great a misdeed," and, "Oh greatest and known destruction; it is through women that the greatest men are destroyed." de Meun wrote: "Heloise loved Abelard like one beside herself," and, "I scarcely can believe that such another woman ever lived."² de Meun's interest was in Heloise's attachment to Abelard.

A fifteenth century unpublished work called *The Letters of Heloise of the Paraclete* opens with the lines:

All who want to understand this book should know that when Master Peter Abelard had held sway a long time and practiced his arts, his conscience caught up with him. He founded an abbey near the Seine in the region of Champagne, known as the abbey of the Paraclete. In this abbey a nun was elected whose name was Heloise. This Heloise was well versed in the knowledge of the seven arts, and, in accordance with the nature of the seven arts, she had seven graces; namely the avoidance of bad speech, the shunning of bad hearing, of bad sight and bad behavior, the living without covetousness and without sinful touch; above all she hated wantonness. Because of this, all who want to be tried in the art of love and to keep and maintain it must praise Heloise.³

² De Meun, *The Romance of the Rose* lines 10-16.

³ Dronke, Peter, *Abelard and Heloise in Medieval Testimonies* (Glasgow: University Press, 1979), 29

While this author allowed that Heloise was educated, his emphasis was on her shunning of bad behavior, as a role model for a women wishing to know the art of love. He seemed uninterested in the use of her education for any other purpose.

Alexander Pope's poem, published in 1717 and entitled Eloisa to Abelard, portrays Heloise as a love sick recluse yearning for her lover. The poem opens with the lines:

In these deep solitudes and awful cells
Where heavenly pensive contemplation dwells,
And ever musing melancholy reigns;
What means this tumult in a Vestal's veins?
Why rove my thoughts beyond this last retreat?
Why feels my heart its long forgotten heat?
Yet, yet I love! From Abelard it came,
And Eloisa yet must kiss the name.⁴

The several novels and plays that dealt with Heloise and Abelard portrayed her only as a lover. George Moore wrote the novel Heloise and Abelard in 1932. The work concentrated on Heloise as a sighing nun always longing for what has been:

And then her thoughts suddenly breaking away from him and from herself, she said: Every nun, except the old one in whom life is nearly dead, burns in the springtime as I do. We are always remembering what has been. Only the very young who have no past to embitter the present, nor any thoughts of any future, are happy in the springtime.⁵

⁴ Morten, 97-109.

⁵ Moore, George, Heloise and Abelard (London: William Heinemann, 1930), 389.

The 1970 play written by Ronald Millar, *Abelard and Heloise*, shows an Heloise who spent her adult life pining with frustrated sexual desire.

Many books have been written on the contribution of Abelard to scholarship.⁶ His works have been translated into all modern languages. Scholars who have devoted themselves to studies of both Heloise and Abelard have concentrated on the authenticity of the correspondence between them. The scholarly achievements of Heloise have largely gone unnoticed, as is apparent by the fact that appended to this study is the first complete English translation of the *Problemata*. As a literary figure, Heloise is presented as a woman overpowered by love and attachment to a man. Her scholarship has not been given the seriousness it deserves.

Unfortunate as that might be, the life of Heloise as scholar, abbess and educator speaks for itself. The love of Heloise for Abelard indeed shines through the pages of her letters, but it was her intellect, scholarly effort, and prudent governance of their mutual sisters in the Church which commanded Abelard's respect in those after years, and which gained the recognition and respect of her contemporaries. Current scholarship should likewise recognize her scholarly achievements, and the contribution her unusual education made to these accomplishments. Scholarship also needs to examine the historical and cultural attitudes which have allowed gender to

⁶ Among them are Luscombe, D., The School of Abelard; Portalie, E., Pierre Abelard; Sikes, J. G., Peter Abelard.

overshadow the real contribution of Heloise, and have allowed her to be stereotyped as a romantic heroine.

Heloise is now buried in the cemetery of Pere Lachaise in Paris along with Abelard. Their sarcophagi have been moved several times since the original burial at the Paraclete. The inscription on the side of the present tomb was taken from the grave at the Paraclete. It reads:

Hic sub eodem marmore jacent hujus monasterii conditor
 Petrus Abelardus et Abbatissa prima Heloissa;
 Olim studiis, ingenio, amore, infaustis nuptiis
 et poenitentia, nunc aeterna, quod speramus,
 felicitate conjuncti.
 Petrus obiit XX Aprilis anno MCXLII
 Heloissa, XVII Mai MCLXIII.

Under this marble lies the founder of this monastery,
 Peter Abelard, and the first Abbess Heloise;
 formerly (joined) by study, temperament, and love, in an
 unfortunate and regrettable marriage but now forever,
 we hope, happily joined together.
 Peter Abelard died on April 20th 1143,
 Heloise on May 17th 1163.

Within ten years after Heloise's death, universities had become established in western Europe, and these institutions did not admit women as students. This, combined with the monastic rules introduced by the Cistercians forbidding the recruitment of children, made education much less accessible to women. Heloise may well have been the last woman in the middle ages to have been formally educated.

It is paradoxical that Abelard, who was so interested in the education of women, should, because of his introduction of the dialectical method, be known as "the father of the university." It is also poignant that the works of Aristotle, introduced into Europe in the twelfth century, were not interpreted by Abelard, but were left for interpretation by Thomas Aquinas in the next century. The question needs to be examined whether the interpretation of Aristotle by Aquinas has adversely affected the historical attitude towards women, and been a factor in the lack of seriousness towards their scholarly contributions.

The revelation of Heloise's real accomplishments, in contrast to her reputation as a literary figure, prompts the further question: How much has been lost to scholarship and other fields of human endeavor in the intervening eight centuries because of gender? To paraphrase Gray's *Elegy*, how many Miltons here have lain unsung, and how much the poorer is humankind as a result?

To Heloise we leave the last word:

In whatever corner of heaven god shall place me,
I shall be satisfied. No one will envy another there
And what each one has shall suffice.⁷

⁷ Radice, 136.

APPENDIX

THE PROBLEMATA

The Letter of Heloise to Peter Abelard

Saint Jerome greatly commended and vehemently approved of Saint Marcella's course of study, which boiled down to questions about the Sacred Scriptures, and extolled her by means of so many songs of praise, as your prudence knows better than my simplicity. Concerning which, when Jerome wrote his commentary on the letter of St. Paul to the Galatians, thus did he recall in the first book: "I know her ardor, I know the faith which she has as a flame in her breast, to transcend sex, to forget human beings, and to bang the gong to the scroll of divine matters, to cross the Red Sea of this world. Certainly, as soon as I got to Rome, no sooner did she see me, that she might interrogate me somewhat concerning the Scriptures. Nor indeed, in the pythagorean manner, did she consider whatever I might respond as correct, nor did prejudged authority without reason hold any weight for her, but she questioned everything, and with a sagacious mind considered widely, so that I felt myself to have not a disciple but rather a judge."

Certainly in her study she knew how to make progress, so that she came to distinguish herself as a teacher for others interested in learning in the same field of study. Whence, writing "Ad Principiam Virginem," among other things he invokes the following documentation:

You have there Marcella and Asella in study of the Scriptures and in sanctimony of mind and body; through whose green meadows and the varied flowers of sacred books another leads you to him, valley.' (Song of Songs 2:1) Another Lord's flower herself deserves to listen with you, 'as a lily among thorns, so is my beloved among women.' " (Song of Songs 2:2)

What purpose do these things serve, O beloved to many, but most beloved to us? These are not examples, but admonitions, so that because of these things you may remember what you should do, and not be sluggish in resolving your debt. You have gathered the handmaidens of Christ and your spiritual daughters in their own oratory, and bound them to the divine service; you have accustomed us to turn our attention to the divine words, and to perform the work of sacred reading and always to exhort to the utmost. Very often you recommended the teaching of Sacred Scripture, calling it a mirror of the soul by which its beauty or deformity may be perceived, so that no spouse of Christ should be allowed to be lacking this mirror, if she would wish to please Him to whom she belongs. Moreover, you used to add for our own exhortation that Scripture read but not understood is like a mirror placed before eyes unseeing. Although by means of these admonitions both I and our sisters have been excited to the utmost, and we fulfill our obedience to you in this matter as much as we can, as we perform the work of this study, seized by the love of letters (about which the aforementioned Doctor in a certain place recalled: "Love the knowledge of the Scriptures, and you shall not love the vices of the flesh"), we are disturbed by many questions, we become sluggish in our reading, and are led to love less what we are most ignorant of in the sacred word, until we feel unfruitful the

labor in which we are engaged. Therefore as disciples to our teacher, as daughters to our father we send certain small questions, praying and begging that you will not disdain to turn your attention to solving them at whose exhortation and command we have mainly undertaken this course of study. Not holding to the order of Scripture in these questions, but as they daily occurred to us, we set them down and direct that they be solved.

The first problem of Heloise

What does it mean that the Lord in the Gospel of John promises concerning the Spirit that he would send, saying: "And when he comes he will convict the world in regard to sin and righteousness and condemnation: sin, because they do not believe in me; righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will no longer see me; condemnation, because the ruler of this world has been condemned." (Jn 16:8-11)

The solution of Abelard

By means of the Apostles, whom he shall fill, the Spirit will convict not just one part of the world but all of it, in regard to sin persisting or retained by human beings, for this reason, that they have not believed in me.

The Spirit will convict the world in regard to righteousness offered by means of myself present but not accepted, since then after I have been here they will not be able to recover me gone to the Father and no longer visible here.

The Spirit will convict the world in regard to condemnation, that is in regard to condemnation of the preceding things, of sin or of

righteousness when those things which make people wicked or just may consist in works more than intention, and they discern merits not so much according to the soul as according to operations, as the Jews did exceedingly, regarding no one as damned, whatever he wills, provided that he not complete it with a work.

Whence the Apostle Paul also writes to the Romans: "Israel, who pursued the law of righteousness, did not attain to that law." Why? Because it pursued not by faith, but by works. So, although the law forbids concupiscence also, they do not consider this sin such that it would be enough for damnation.

Our Lord now says that this error is to be convicted, by which the prince of this world is judged. He the very Devil, who rules the carnal and the lovers of this world, and is the author and origin of all sin, not by what he did, but by what he willed in his presumption, was condemned in an instant and fell so gravely.

The second problem of Heloise

What does this mean in the Epistle of James: "For whoever keeps the whole law, but falls short in one particular, has become guilty in respect to all of it. For he who said, 'You shall not commit adultery,' also said, 'You shall not kill.' Even if you do not commit adultery but kill, you have become a transgressor of the law." (Jas 2:10-11)

The solution of Abelard

All the precepts of the Law together, not separately, are the Law itself. Whoever therefore should keep the whole law except for one commandment becomes guilty of them all, which means, that he

is condemned because he did not keep all the precepts, which accepted together, as said, are the Law itself. And if he should openly say: Although no one can become a fulfiller of the Law in observing one commandment of it, nonetheless he can become a transgressor of the Law if he violates a single precept of it.

Whence immediately the Apostle, explaining what he had said, "guilty in respect to all of it," added, "you have become a transgressor of the Law," from which it can be seen that one neglected a precept which had been commanded equally with the rest. From the other thing which the Apostle added, "For he who said you shall not commit adultery also said you shall not kill," by no means would God have established the thing to be neglected, and so the transgressor has become guilty in respect to all of it.

When therefore he remarks, "For he who said you shall not commit adultery also said you shall not kill," is as if he were saying: So I spoke rightly that one in transgressing one is guilty of them all, which means that he is condemned for this, that in not keeping all he despised God. For God himself, who gave the Law, ordered this commandment to be followed just as much as that one, which means, all of them, not just one out of them all. And as he becomes a transgressor of the Law by this means in transgressing one precept, thus becoming guilty of all as was explained, but also is condemned for this reason, that he has not fulfilled them all.

The third problem of Heloise

What does it mean that the Lord frequently, when interrogated by others and responding to them, should say 'You have said,' or

'You say,' or even to many questioners should respond 'You say,' as if asserting that they had spoken what they had merely inquired about in their doubt.

So then to Judas asking: 'Surely it is not I, Rabbi, who is to hand you over?' the Lord answered, 'You have said so.' (Mt 26:25) Also, interrogated by Pilate as to whether he was the Son of God, he responded similarly (Mt 26:64).

Even when the people asked, 'If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly (Jn 10:24),' or, 'Then you are the Son of God ?' Jesus answered, 'You say I am.' (Jn 18:37) Asked finally by the governor, that is by Pilate, whether he was the King of the Jews, Jesus replied, 'You say so.' (Mt 27:11)

These responses really seem to create a not unmerited doubt. For a person who inquires whether this or that is so, in speaking does not really say that this is or that, but with doubt seeks whether either is the case.

The solution of Abelard

In this real matter, these responses of the Lord provoke the difficult or even insoluble question whether what the Lord replies ('You have said,' or 'You all say,' or 'You say') should refer to the words of the preceding questioners, so that he should assert that these words had been in them, which is hardly appropriate. Hence when to Judas, asking whether he is the one who would betray him, Jesus replies, 'You have said it,' rather than, 'You are saying it,' he has taken notice of that pact which he had already entered into with the

Judeans, promising to betray him to them because of avarice for the money promised.

To the high priest who asked whether he was the Christ, the Son of God, he replies, 'You have said it,' which is to be taken this way: that he, who at that time denied that Christ, whom he was looking at, was the Son of God, had once frequently confessed it in reciting the Law and the Prophets.

To the Judeans, asking whether he was the Messiah, or whether he was the Son of God, he replied, 'You all say it,' using a verb in the present tense to them just as to Pilate, signifying that the day was already present in which they should say it. For where they mocked him, saying, "Prophecy! O Christ, who is it that struck you?" (Lk 22:64), or: 'Hail, King of the Jews!' (Mt 27:29), they detested him for whatever reason for truly being the Christ, that is the anointed, perhaps in this miming the prophecy of Caiaphas, who said: 'It is better for you that one man should die than that the whole people should perish' (Jn 18:14)

But also in the testimony of the crowd which received him with palm branches, he himself is also 'the Son of David,' according to Matthew (Mt 21:9), and in him the kingdom of David has come, according to Mark (Mk 11:10), and 'Blessed is the King who comes,' according to Luke (Lk 19:38), and finally, according to John, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel' (Jn 12:13).

By no means were they saying this because of delusion, as above, but by faith. This is like what he says to the Judeans: 'You say

it,' as if he were saying: 'Many there are among you who not only say this with your lips, but also hold it in your hearts.' For even though those who were asking this may not have said it or believed it, nonetheless when he said "You say it," he referred not to those persons who were present but to the people itself.

So likewise when he spoke to the Judeans about Zacharia, 'whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar' (Mt 23:35), it must be taken as referring not to those who were then Judeans, but as about the people itself from which they came. So too Joshua, when he speaks of Israelites come to spy (Josh 2:2ff), bases this not on the persons themselves, but on the people itself.

We read also, on the day of the Passion, that the Centurion, and those who with him were guarding the crucified Lord, when he expired, and they saw the veil of the Temple rent, and the earthquake, and the tombs opened, said: 'Truly, this was the Son of God!' (Mt 27:54) 'When all the people who had gathered for this spectacle saw what had happened, they returned home beating their breasts' (Lk 23:48).

This, then, is like, as we said, what he responded to the Judeans who asked if he was the Son of God; he responded: 'You are saying it,' which means 'The day is already present, or the time is at hand, in which you should confess this of me.'

Likewise to Pilate, asking whether he was the King of the Jews, he replied 'You are saying it' rather than 'You have said it.' The Gentile was ignorant of the prophecies and had not read those words where the Christ had been promised, and his kingdom prophesied,

according to which, 'His kingdom will have no end' (Lk 1:33), or: 'Say to Daughter Sion: behold your king has come' (Mt 21:5); yet nonetheless on that day Pilate frequently asserted in words, and on the very title written on the Cross recalled what he said to the Judeans: 'Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?' (Jn 18:39), and again, 'Shall I crucify your King?' (Jn 19:15) Even when he asked the Lord, 'Are you the King of the Jews?' and he responded, 'Do you say this on your own, or have others told you about me?,' again Pilate said, 'I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests handed you over to me. (Jn 18:33-35)

See how often and how openly Pilate professes him King of the Jews, and calls the Jewish people his nation. When the Lord says, 'Do you say this on your own, or have others told you about me?' it is as if he had said: 'Do you seek this for yourself, that you may know the truth, or by the artifice of the Judeans, as if you were one of them, that you might take this occasion to kill me?'

Finally, what Pilate had said in words, he confirmed by writing the title in the script of three languages, so that by all who approached Jerusalem it could be read, and he might be understood to be the true King of the Jews. For it read: 'Jesus the Nazorean, the King of the Jews.' (Jn 19:19) When he added, 'the Nazorean,' he carefully distinguished this Jesus from others who, among the ancient people had been marked, not properly but by denomination, with this name, such as Joshua, Jesus the priest, or Jesus ben Sirach.

The high priests of the Judeans, on the other hand, were greatly indignant about the honor of this inscription, as though it

were written that they had crucified their own king unto their condemnation, and said to Pilate: 'Do not write 'The King of the Jews,' but that he said, 'I am the King of the Jews.' (Jn 19:21)

But as it had been prophesied 'Do not destroy, David' in the title of the Psalm (Pss 57:1, 58:1, 75:1), as if Pilate understood this as addressed to himself, he answered, 'What I have written, I have written.' (Jn 19:22) It was as if he had said, I foresaw what was to be written, I signed without any retraction or correction, as this had been written first in his mind and only secondly exhibited in letters.

This doubling of words, 'What I have written, I have written,' signifies perseverance or immutability of the fact, like 'They went forth, they went forth' (Ps 126:6)

The fourth problem of Heloise

How can this be, which the Lord replies to the Jews seeking signs, concerning the time of his burial: "Just as Jonah was in the belly of the whale three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights." (Mt 12:40)

It is agreed that the Lord was taken down from the Cross and buried on Friday, and lay in the tomb on Saturday, and on the next night, in the last darkness of Sunday morning rose again. Therefore it is certain that for only one whole night preceding the Saturday, and for one whole day of Saturday itself was he in the tomb, and Jerome commenting on the Letter to the Galatians asserts that he rose again in the last hours of the night.

The solution of Abelard

When the Lord says "three days and three nights," it is not to be taken that through three whole days and nights would he be there, but that he would lie buried for a period of time bounded by three days along with their nights.

Hence it is well when he says "three days and three nights" to add "just like Jonah," whom the fish vomited up onto dry land on the third day, and so was in the belly of the whale through only one whole night and one whole day.

So take the time containing three days with their nights, from the beginning of the night of the Preparation Day until the end of Sunday, and you will find in that space of time, though not through that whole time, three days and three nights lay the Lord in his tomb.

For it is not necessary that something happening within a certain time take place through all of that time. Perhaps also when it says "in the heart of the earth," it speaks not so much about the burial [on the very inscription of the Cross it seems he was accepted as Lord, as Matthew recalls he told the Jews] but rather about the hearts of human beings, during at least that time of desperation about Christ when the disciples and even his own mother were gravely shaken in faith.

Whence Augustine remarks in a chapter of his *Quaestionum veteris et novae legis*: "Even Mary, through whom the mystery was accomplished of our Savior's incarnation, had her doubts at the Lord's death so that they came to be resolved at the Lord's

resurrection; for all doubted at the death, and because all ambiguity was cut away at the resurrection of the Lord, she was said to be pierced by a sword.

For "the heart of the earth" was still like an earthly and fleshly heart, not yet made spiritual by the firmness of faith or the ardor of charity, which is to say a human heart, as long as human beings in that time frame considered Christ more flesh or man than God, more earthly than heavenly.

So to the Jews, seeking a sign of power so that they would recognize him as God, he responded rather that he would give them the sign of Jonah, which means that they should be able to recognize the weakness in him, just as Jonah cast into the sea was thought to have more injustice than religion, and this was attributed to him as his own fault so that he was even deserving of condemnation.

The fifth problem of Heloise

The Evangelists have left us a great deal of doubt concerning the apparitions which the Risen Lord made to the women. Mark and John insinuate that he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, who came early in the morning, when it was still dark, to the tomb, and saw the stone rolled away from the tomb, and after she announced this to Peter and John and these ran together to the tomb and returned, she saw two angels and then Jesus, whom she thought to be the gardener. (Mk 16:1ff; Jn 20:1ff) And this first apparition was said to take place to her alone.

But Matthew remarks that she came to the tomb with another Mary and then after an earthquake the angel descended and rolled

away the stone and announced that the Lord had risen, and Jesus appeared to these two women, who clung to his feet. (Mt 28:1ff)

Mark remarks that Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James and Salome came early in the morning to the tomb, when the sun was already risen, asking each other who would roll away the stone for them from the entrance of the tomb. When they looked and saw it rolled away and knew from the angel speaking to them and from the empty tomb that the Lord had risen again, they came out of the tomb and fled trembling, telling none at all about this because of their fear. (Mk 16:1ff) To this is immediately added: "When he had risen, early on the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene. She went and told his companions, and they did not believe." (Cf Mk 16:9-11)

Luke on the other hand remarks that Mary Magdalene and Johanna and Mary the mother of James and those women who accompanied them came very early in the morning to the tomb, and found the stone rolled away from the tomb, and entering did not find the body of Jesus, and informed by angels about the resurrection of the Lord, announced this to the disciples, and they did not believe them. (Lk 24:1ff)

Juxtaposing therefore the words of the Evangelists, first we inquire how, according to John, Mary Magdalene coming to the tomb early while it was still dark saw the stone taken away, and later, as Mark says, she and Mary the mother of James and Salome very early in the morning came to the tomb, when the sun was already risen, telling one another: "Who will roll away the stone for us?" For if

Mary Magdalene had already seen the stone rolled away while it was still darkness, that is when it was night, how now that the sun had risen does she inquire with the rest about rolling away the stone, which she had already seen rolled away before?

Next it seems one must inquire also how in Mark the women are said to have told no one about the resurrection of the Lord because of their fear, while the other Evangelists assert the contrary.

Finally John remarks that Mary Magdalene, no one else with her, before she had seen Jesus, told Peter and John that he had been taken from the tomb, and they immediately ran there. Luke, on the other hand, remarks that the same Mary and many other women with her, after learning that the Lord had risen, announced this to the disciples, and then Peter ran to the tomb.

The solution of Abelard

Only John recalls Mary Magdalene and no other women at the resurrection of the Lord, not because she alone was present at the events which took place, but because he commends her devotion as much greater than that of the others, and by her exhortation and example the rest of the women were greatly encouraged.

For just as she had been more fervent in love than the others and more solicitous of the joy of the resurrections, she came first and fearlessly while it was still night to the tomb, and came back again for them, inquiring intently whether anyone by now was convinced of the resurrection of the Lord. When she had found no one, she returned to the tomb with others when the sun was already rise, and then the rolling away of the stone took place, although John had

seemed to indicate that this rolling away had already taken place and been seen by Mary before. But Mary, before the other women, for she was more concerned than they, found the stone rolled away and believing the Lord taken away, returned quickly and told this to Peter and John. Then returning with them to the tomb after their departure from the tomb, she stood outside the tomb weeping, while the others who were present were not thus daring to approach, then she was the one who was worthy to see first the angels and then the Lord, and after that the other Mary, who according to Matthew had come with her before, approached, and fearful by now of the guards who were present, they both were consoled when the guards were terrified and struck as if dead by the earthquake and by the appearance of the angel seated upon the stone, which had rolled away.

When these two went forth to tell the disciples what the angel had decreed, Jesus appeared to them together, appearing for the second time.

However other women, who had been more timid and weak in faith, were undeserving to see the Lord at that time, but when the angels were speaking had heard of him risen again.

And so while not all of them were apprised of this in the same way, at first they all were silent and delayed announcing this to the disciples, since they were still frightened and overwhelmed by the angelic vision, and fearing that they would not be believed, until with more of them gathered together they would be able to speak more confidently.

Then afterward, as Luke recalls, the Magdalene herself, and Johanna and Mary the mother of James and the rest of the women who were with them told these things to the apostles. Peter, firmer in faith than the rest of them who did not believe this, ran again to the tomb, and when he saw neither angels nor the Lord, returned greatly wondering.

While Peter was very stupified that the appearances of the angels or of the Lord had taken place to the women rather than to him or to the disciples, so that he would not persist in doubt and depression, we believe that the Lord then appeared to him, as Luke reports the apostles saying that "The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!" (Lk 24:34)

When Matthew and Luke say "on the evening of the Sabbath" (Mt 28:1; Lk 24:1), they understand this to be the end of the following night even until the first light of Sunday. This evening star shines on the first day of the week when it appears in the light of the following day. It says "as the first day of the week was dawning," using the feminine gender, signifying that as we said one perceives night as such in the evening, but which "was dawning," as if to say that night touches on the light. Whether the evening of night or the evening of day, it may be called the last hour of either; evening is really the whole time of the succeeding night.

The sixth problem of Heloise

Why is it that the Lord, in giving and commending to the disciples the sacrament of his Body and Blood, did not say of the Body, "This is my Body of the New Covenant" (Mt 26:26), when he

would say of the Blood, "This is my Blood of the New Covenant" (Mt 26:28), as if he were recommending the Blood more than the Body?

Also why is this, "From now on I shall not drink this fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it with you new in the kingdom of my Father"?

The solution of Abelard

The Body of Christ received in the Sacrament is the humanity which he received being born of the Virgin, when, as it is written, "The Word became flesh." (Jn 1:14) His Blood given in the cup is his Passion, which every one of us who are his members ought to share in. Whence it is written: "Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his footsteps." (1 Pet 2:21)

Gregory remarked, "It was useless for one to be born unless one would be redeemed and our redemption be consummated in his Passion. He himself proclaimed this as he was dying, saying: "It is finished." (Jn 19:30) It is not unfitting that the Blood spilt should be preferred to the Body conceived, that is, his Passion preferred to his Birth. The Blood also was more to be called "of the New Covenant" than the Body, that means as a confirmation of the preaching of the Gospel, for, as the Apostle says, "a will takes effect only at death." (Heb 9:17)

What is the Gospel but a covenant of love, as the Law was a covenant of fear? Whence the Apostle said to converted Jews: "Do not fall back into fear" (Rom 8:15) And again he said: "The aim of this instruction is love from a pure heart." (1 Tim 1:5) And the Truth spoke of himself: "I have come to set the earth on fire, and how I

wish it were already blazing." (Lk 12:49) So the Lord's Passion confirms supremely this covenant of love, when as he was dying for us he demonstrated to us that love which nothing could be greater than.

Whence he himself said: "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." (Jn 15:13) In this also he confirmed this covenant, that he persisted in the doctrine of his Gospel preaching even until death, and demonstrated in dying what he could not in being born, just as one who composes a will of any kind for his heirs, when he has persevered in his first intentions as he is dying, he confirms his will, barely deleting, correcting little, he then upholds it in every respect. Whence, as we said, the Blood of the Lord was more to be called "of the New Covenant" than was his Body. As for that which he said "From now on I shall not drink this fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it with you new in the kingdom of my Father" (Mt 26:29), I understand it this way, as if he had said: The Sacrament of Christ is then received as something new, since it renews those coming forward and receiving it full of faith, and it changes the old man whom they had imitated through sin into a new man, while they are prepared to follow him through obedience even unto death.

The disciples of those times were hardly such that their faith was at the maximum; they were chiefly weak in that time frame, nor were they already handed over to the kingdom in such a way that God might reign in them; they adhered to God with a faith not yet solid and were barely subject to his dominion.

They received then the sacrament itself as something old and not something new, and as still remaining outside the kingdom of God, because constancy of faith had not yet confirmed them in God, so that by then made new in their perception of it, they would deserve to be confirmed in the novelty of it after the resurrection.

Then Christ will drink of this fruit of the vine with them, that is, of his Blood, which is their vine like a palm grove, when, as they share worthily in the sacrament of his Passion, he shall refresh their thirst that they have within them. For whoever thirsts or hungers for the salvation of human beings, then is refreshed by it while rejoicing in its fulfillment.

Perhaps for this reason the sacrament of the Lord's Passion seemed like something old before the Resurrection, and afterwards was like something new, because while he still bore a body capable of suffering and corruption and mortality, in this being like the old man, before in rising from this penal existence he would arrive at the newness of the future.

So while he was mortal, and gave himself in the sacrament as he then was, in a certain way the sacrifice was old and not new by comparison with what we receive in a humanity already immortal and incorruptible. Luke rightly says: "This cup is the new covenant in my Blood (Lk 22:20)," that is, the pact or the promise made to you by God of your redemption in my Passion.

For where we have the word "Covenant," in Hebrew it is considered a pact. For whoever accepts the Law of the Lord enters

into a certain pact with him, or rather he with them, since they promise obedience to the law while he promises the remuneration.

The seventh problem of Heloise

Also, what does it mean when we read in Luke of the Lord giving two cups to his disciples, or the same one twice? For it seems to be written that way: "When the hour came, he took his place at table with the apostles. He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, for, I tell you, I shall not eat it again until there is fulfillment in the kingdom of God." Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; for I tell you that from this time on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." Then he took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me." And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you." (Lk 22:14-20)

The solution of Abelard

The passover which he had sent his disciples to prepare according to the Law was the old passover, in the eating of a lamb or of a kid goat along with bitter herbs. This is the passover he said he desired to eat with his disciples before he suffered, because it was before the passion and not afterward that he wanted to celebrate with symbols the old passover which must give way to new developments. The Lord himself openly stated this, when he said

about the new sacrament as such: "Do this in memory of me," as if already terminating the old and establishing the new from then on.

For when he said: "This is my Body, which will be given for you," immediately he added: "Do this in memory of me." Whence the Apostle adds: "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes." (1 Cor 11:24)

Therefore the celebration of the Mass is the commemoration of the Lord's Passion, which each of the faithful should approach with as much compassionate devotion as he should look upon the one crucified for him.

So that, then, this memorial of the Lord's Passion might adhere to our minds and always ignite the love of him, this his sacrifice should be offered daily on his altar. "Do this," he said, "This is my very body, not yet given for you, but being given while you confect it in memory of my great love, so that you might be ignited by the flame of such love, so that you might be able to share in my Passion." He wanted to give the same cup twice, so that in this way he might express that we should take his cup not only in receiving the sacrament but also in imitation of the Passion.

Whence the Psalmist also says, "I will take the cup of salvation," (Ps 115:13), that is of Jesus, imitating him also by virtue of his Passion.

And because the power to withstand death does belong not to our human weakness, but rather to the strength lent to us by God, he himself must be invoked by whom this strength is to be hoped for, in

which we should seek not so much our good as his glory, which is signified by his name.

For just as those things are called ignominious which by name do not seem worthy, so on the other hand things of glorious name are worthy and famous. Therefore we invoke the name of God, while we dedicate what we do to his glory, so that he might be more glorified in us than we in him, since we receive strength from him in these matters, while we are weak in ourselves in regard to them. Hence the Apostle also says, "Whoever boasts, should boast in the Lord." (1 Cor 1:31), which means whoever recognizes in himself any virtue or prize should seek within to honor God and not himself, and should ascribe it not to his own virtue but to divine grace, recognizing it to be not from himself but from God.

About this chalice, which we receive imitating the Passion of Christ, it is what he mentioned to the sons of Zebedee: "Can you drink the cup that I am going to drink?" (Mt 20:22) Which means, are you sure that you can imitate me through the Passion?

Rightly, then, of this first chalice, and not of the second, did he say to his disciples: "Take this and share it among yourselves."

For we share among ourselves, receiving the chalice of Christ from him, when we imitate him in many kinds of sufferings. There is no division in truly receiving the Sacrament, because there is the one offering of the head himself and not of the members, an offering confected equally by bad and good priests by virtue of the divine words. "Take," he says, "this chalice from me to share later among yourselves; for from this time on I shall not drink of the fruit of the

vine, that is, I shall not celebrate this offering of my Passion, until the kingdom of God comes, which means the kingdom of heavenly life, in which the Lord alone reigns and not sin, until it is made manifest to the faithful through my Passion."

It was right that he set forth the chalice of imitation before the chalice of the Sacrament, because only those who are prepared to imitate his Passion and take up his Cross are worthy to share in the table of the Lord. As it is written: "You have been seated at a great table," know that it is because you should prepare such things yourself. (Sirach 31:12)

Since he is passing on the New Covenant, not the Old, he takes bread as well as the chalice, giving thanks, indicating by this that what had been prefigured in the Old was now fulfilled, and that God must be glorified in truth rather than in shadows. Beyond that, however, he said that he desired to celebrate the old Passover as well with his disciples, lest it be from the old Passover that they would thus receive the new sacraments, so that they would not esteem the old rites as the ones handed over to them by God. For even the old rites then used to suit greatly to those who were themselves of the old order, so that the Lord should greatly desire to celebrate that which he saw suited them greatly, just as in this desire of his he would have intended himself to indicate that which he saw suited greatly their blameworthy antiquity. Concerning which, so that he would indicate or warn that they should be changed to a new approach, he immediately added the New Covenant to the Old, so that in a certain way also the old would cross over into

the new: as they were laying aside the old, they would cross over from the kingdom of sin into the Kingdom of God, and they would follow no longer the letter but the spiritual understanding of the old Passover; and thus they would be brought from the oldness of the letter to the newness of the spirit. This is what it means that Christ even now consumes the old Passover with them and changes it into the new. Meanwhile, we examine in the old what is symbolized, which we believe to be fulfilled in the new.

That is why he himself, immediately after the Resurrection, beginning with Moses and interpreting all the Scriptures, converted the old rite into the new, while by understanding he applied the old to the new, and rounded it off like a meter in verse, and changed the water of the Law into the wine of the Gospel. And he even consumes the old Passover with us as if it were already changed into the new, because in the new we receive and enjoy him as we receive it, just in the old we were mystically instructed how to receive, in the eating of lamb and kid goat and bitter herbs, and in the other things established for it.

Christ consumed the old Passover, not the new, with the disciples, for he himself is the new Passover as such, according to this remark of the Apostle Paul: "For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed." (1 Cor 5:7) He himself has become our sacrificial offering, and it is he whom we receive daily in the Sacrament.

Rightly in this, then, did he celebrate the old Passover with the disciples, while he himself was still in the old humanity because of

the mortality of the body, like them because of the similarity of their customs.

So on the other hand like a new person with new persons he now receives the new fruit of the vine, while he himself through immortality and they in a diversity of ways, in putting aside the old humanity, enjoy the novelty of the true Sacrifice, and as himself he drinks with them, as a head does with its members.

The old Passover had no Chalice, "for the law brought nothing to perfection" (Heb 7:19), and so in his perfect sacrifice he could not have any refreshment.

The eight problem of Heloise

There is no question that the Lord, on behalf of the adulteress who was to be set free, responded to the Jews, "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her" (Jn 8:7), and thus rescued her.

Now since he did not permit her to be stoned except by one lacking sin, he would seem to forbid any human being from wielding the rod of punishment, since no one is clean of sin, not even an infant having a single day of life upon the earth (See Job 14:1 according to the Septuagint).

The solution of Abelard

The Lord Jesus, who alone among the Jews was without sin, here stones the adulteress yet saves the woman, since he mercifully spares her, and thus turns her back from the pain of her punishment. Such is what he said: "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her," as if he had plainly said: "Leave the

criminal to the One alone who among you is immune from sin." He himself first directs a stone against the criminal when he inspires penitence; and she in satisfaction soon suffers remorse, and tames the flesh so that it struggle no more against the spirit, so that mortified now to the world, she might from then on live for God, and vices might be slain while nature is preserved.

Furthermore, the Lord also said: "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." (Rom 12:19 et al) Therefore we save the criminal for God, when he operates more in us than we in him. Therefore it is said to humanity, not to God, "Thou shalt not kill." (Ex 20:13)

Therefore God, who is bound by no precept, forbids to us what he himself plainly must do. "It is I who slay," he says, "and I who give life." (Dt 32:39) He slays in us and spares in us, when he uses us as a support, having us by virtue of his precepts slay the wicked or spare the innocent, so that these actions are more to be imputed to him than to ourselves.

For when any powerful person accomplishes something by means of hired help, it is not said so much to be their work but his; that is, that these accomplishments belong not to those who performed the actions but rather to the one who acted through them.

So humanity is forbidden to kill, but not God in humanity. So humanity kills and not God in humanity, when the killing is by virtue of human ill will not by virtue of God's precept, when the killing is done for its own sake and not for the sake of the law, when the killing is out of obedience to one's own malice rather than to divine justice.

So one takes the sword not to establish justice or to avenge iniquity, but to fulfill one's own impiety. Concerning which, Truth himself said: "All who take the sword will perish by the sword." (Mt 26:52)

A person taking the sword on one's own account rather than being given it by the powers-that-be, a person who presumes to use the sword unjustly, shall justly "perish by the sword." However, when one as a soldier uses against a criminal the sword entrusted to him by the King, it is the King who does this in him whose hired hand he is in this matter.

Therefore Augustine says in the first book of *The City of God*: "Thou shalt not kill, with the exception of those whom God orders to be killed, either by received Law or by an order expressed to the person at a given moment. For the one who owes service to a commander is not responsible for the killing, any more than the sword is simply a help to the user."

Likewise Augustine says in *Questions of Exodus*: "The Israelites did not commit robbery in despoiling the Egyptians, but lent service to God's command, any more than the minister of justice kills a person whom the Law orders to be killed." So it is homicide when done willfully, even if the one killed knows that he should be killed by a magistrate.

Again in *Questions of Leviticus* Augustine says: "When this man is slain, the Law kills him, not you." We are taught by these statements not properly to call homicide or theft that which we

commit out of obedience, when we rightly perform that in which we fulfill the command of God.

Whatever seems to belong to the estate of the Lord shall be said to be God's rather than humanity's. Anyone possesses things not as their master but only as their administrator, for as long as the Lord allows, and no one taking them away at the Lord's command steals unjustly.

Things belong to the one by whom they are entrusted to us, for as long as he wills, and should he wish they pass along to other administrators, who are so much less worthy to dispense of them and possess them insofar as they fail to acknowledge the one by whom they are entrusted to them.

Insofar as the Egyptians were infidels, they deserved more to lose those things than to keep them.

The ninth problem of Heloise

As Matthew relates, the Lord cleansed a leper by his touch and sent him for priestly scrutiny, and ordered him to offer that which the Law ordered offered in such cases (Mt 8:2).

And so on this question we are moved to ask by what logic the Lord seems in this case to contradict the Law and at the same time to comply with it. For he touches the leper, which the Law forbids, and sends him to the priest to be cleansed and to offer sacrifice, as the Law commands.

The solution of Abelard

As the Lord himself said: "The law and the prophets lasted until John" (Lk 16:16), that is, until the time of grace the precepts of

both the Law and the Prophets had to be fulfilled to the letter. In no way, then, did the Lord now contradict the Law, since he was not now bound to obey by God's precept, especially since the law itself "was promulgated," as the Apostle says, "at the hand of a mediator" (Gal 3:19) and established by his power, so that he who had instituted it at the time could make it void by his own willpower, when it was fitting that perfect charity could show mercy in the time of grace to anyone whomsoever, and could invite by example those of us who are able to a life of piety, nor should he abhor anything about humanity as unclean except for sin.

Therefore the Lord did everything for the leper mercifully, both when he did not disdain to touch him despite the infirmity of his body, and when he ordered him to do that without which he could not be received again into human society.

For this reason the one scrutinized by the priest had been commended to his judgment and to sacrifice according to the Law.

The tenth problem of Heloise

What does it mean in the Gospel of Luke, when Abraham says to the damned rich man: "Moreover, between us and you a great chasm is established to prevent anyone from crossing who might wish to go from our side to yours or from your side to ours"?

How could anyone be so blind as to wish to travel from the refreshment of such repose into the pains of the damned, and how could anyone foolishly attempt to benefit those seen to be excluded from the mercy of God?

The solution of Abelard

Abraham, in whose bosom Lazarus lay, represents God, who receives his faithful from the miseries of this life into the refreshment of a future life that is still hidden from us. In this case the damned soul speaks as if suppliant, while desiring him to show him mercy. Abraham responds to him according to the way his remark had been phrased, and tries to make him understand how foolishly he had desired what could never happen.

He makes him understand what he adds to his reply: "Moreover, between us and you a great chasm is established," and so forth.

Moreover, he is saying, in both the aforementioned, between the consolation of the just and the punishment of the wicked, a great chasm is established, and divine justice has established this as such an impediment that no one can cross from our side to yours.

Crossing here from the refreshment of the just to the pains of the wicked we understand as meaning also to intervene on behalf of the damned and to bring them some of the well-being of the just; or to bring them from there to here, as the faithful daily do in this life, as by their prayers and their works of mercy they strive to intervene on behalf of those whom they believe to be in the pains of purgatory, while in fact they are damned.

So we understand those who would have this compassion for the damned not as being those who are in the state of heavenly enjoyment, but of those still living, as they are called, the faithful.

For Abraham did not say that some of those here wish to cross over to you; but he simply said those who wish, whether still living or already dead.

We take this statement as referring to the living, who are said to have crossed symbolically from the blessedness of the just to the place of punishment of the damned, or to cross from there to here; and these two sentences would seem to be the same.

For them to cross from the blessedness of the just to the pains of the damned, or to cross from there to here is also like having compassion on those who are damned so as to share this blessedness with them by means of one's own good works, and in a certain way to transport them, or to lead them from there to here, so that this would seem to be the same sentence in different words.

The eleventh problem of Heloise

What does it mean when we read in the same Evangelist that the Lord said: "I tell you, in just the same way there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need of repentance." (Lk 15:7)

For it is much better and more perfect to avoid sin than to make amends for one committed, and to do many things well pleases God more than just one.

What does it mean, then, that God approves more the penitance of a single sinner than the perseverance of many righteous people?

The solution of Abelard

The more one suffers from his sin, the more he rejoices from its healing. The grief of the sinner had stood out more, and his hope of

satisfactory reparation had seemed less to be hoped for. We receive with greater gladness an event more serious in its outcome, and from our greater solicitude concerning the sinner greater joy results from his satisfaction.

We are inflamed with less joy by the just, whom we trust to persevere in the good, and about whom we are less intent because more certain, than by the conversion of the sinner, because it had seemed very difficult. In fact, his conversion is not worth more than their perseverance, but we rejoice more at an event which we had been very solicitous about taking place.

Therefore, that there will be joy in heaven we understand as meaning that there will be exultation in the present Church of the faithful, which Our Lord frequently calls the Kingdom of God.

The twelfth problem of Heloise

There is not a little question about what we read in Matthew about the laborers sent into the vineyard, of whom the first seem to envy the last, and to murmur against the harvestmaster, so that they incur the following response: "Or are you envious because I am generous." (Mt 20:15)

In our future life, that which each of the blessed receives will be sufficient, and no one will have an appetite to have more than what is received, where every one will have so much charity that each one will desire the good of one another as his own, nor will anyone be able to dissent from the will of the Lord, nor be able to look at another with malicious envy, since envy greatly afflicts and torments those in whom it resides, so that the poet can say, "The

Sicilian's envy is no greater torment than the tyrant's." (Horatius, Letters 1:5:58-59) And in another place: "One who is envious of another depreciates his own wealth." (Ibid, 57)

The solution of Abelard

It is known that parables do not so much express the truth of a thing as elucidate its partial similarity to something else, and that they frequently treat historical verisimilitude like historical fact. The parable about Dives and Lazarus is thought to relate the deeds of two persons, or more often of many persons, because this person's soul is saved while that person's soul is damned. However, it can hardly be taken literally when Dives says to Abraham, "Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue." (Lk 16:24)

For souls do not properly have fingers or tongue of their own, but bodies do. So what is said of Dives and Lazarus does not pertain to historical truth according to the letter, but pertains to a similarity brought in from another place.

So in this place, when certain people are said to have murmured and to have been indignant and to have compared others to themselves, this murmuring is not to be taken as belonging to indignation but as belonging to amazement. For those who murmur are amazed that something has come about which they had not expected. So that murmuring now stands for the admiration of the multitude of the faithful that will see themselves comparing their rewards, and their attitude hardly represents that of the envious, who for that reason become stirred up against others, because they

simply admire a fact more or less contrary to logic, which they had not expected.

That is why it is as if he should say, "Or are you envious because I am generous." (Mt 20:15) "When you see the good I do, should you be moved by iniquity to indignation, in a worldly way?" He says, "That would hardly be appropriate."

But the Lord says this to every person, to understand that what he does should not make them indignant, but rather make them praise God.

The thirteenth problem of Heloise

This question about the unforgivable sin against the Holy Spirit is of concern to us as to many. How can anyone sin against the Son of God and not against the Holy Spirit, since one can hardly be offended without the other, an offence against one necessarily redounds against either. Against whom has an offence been committed when it can hardly be forgiven to anyone?

The solution of Abelard

Before we set forth a solution, to the extent that it is possible, we must go ahead and gather from the different Evangelists what they have to say on this subject, and from there let our premises depend on them, so that then the preceding may come to an easier solution. So, as Matthew relates, When the Lord had cured someone of demons and the envious Pharisees were saying that he did it by an unclean spirit and not by the Holy Spirit, the Lord said, "And if I drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your people drive them out? But if it is by the Spirit of God that I drive out demons, then

the kingdom of God has come upon you." (Mt 12:27) And a little later: "Therefore, I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but whoever speaks against the holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come. (Ibid, 31)

Mark on the other hand puts it this way: "Amen, I say to you, all sins and all blasphemies that people utter will be forgiven them. But whoever blasphemes against the holy Spirit will never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an everlasting sin. For they had said, 'He has an unclean spirit.'" (Mk 3:28, 29)

But Luke writes that the Lord says this: "Everyone who acknowledges me before others the Son of Man will acknowledge before the angels of God. But whoever denies me before others will be denied before the angels of God. Everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but the one who blasphemes against the holy Spirit will not be forgiven." (Lk 12:8-10)

With these matters set before us, first one must distinguish what may be the sin of blasphemy against the Son of Man, and what that against the Holy Spirit. As far as I am concerned, a person commits the sin of blasphemy against the Son of Man when he detracts against Christ, denying that he is God, not so much through malice as through an error derived from seeing in Him the nature which he took from our infirmity. For he indicates this when he says, "Son of Man," rather than "Son of God", so that, because of the human

infirmity which He received in being born of His mother, the power of God is not believed as being in Him.

This sin, because resulting from invincible ignorance, seems very greatly excusable, since no human reason can perceive, but only by the inspiration of God, how God could become man. Whence Christ himself also prophesies: "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draw him." (Jn 6:44), for it does not belong to human reason to perceive in Christ that which can only happen by divine inspiration.

However, to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit means knowingly from envy so to detract from the goodness of God, who is to be understood as the Holy Spirit, that the benefits which indubitably come through the Holy Spirit, that is through the grace of divine goodness, by envy are attributed to an evil spirit, as the Pharisees did, when they tried to draw away from Christ the crowd that believed in the miracles they had seen.

If we really consider their sin, it will seem more grave than that by which the Devil fell. For even if the Pharisees did not believe Christ to be God, they could not have failed to acknowledge that he was a man so just in his life and works, nor that the things he did had been done through the Holy Spirit.

When, then, contrary to their own conscience, out of a malignant spirit they spoke against things that they had no doubt had taken place through the Holy Spirit, they knowingly lied in asserting that the Holy Spirit was an evil spirit. So much the more do

they seem to have presumed in their lie, than the Devil had in his pride.

For the Devil, although he desired to be like God and obtain the reign for himself, at least is not to be thought of as going too far in this, that he dared to commit such blasphemy as to sustain the lie that God is evil.

Hence their blasphemy is no less than their pride, but seems even more despicable, so as to deserve being denied all forgiveness.

We hardly mean to say that any penance of theirs, should it exist, would not obtain forgiveness. But from the Lord's own words we believe that such as these so exacerbate the Spirit of God that in their obstinate malice they are inwardly excluded from grace.

Luke above designates by the finger of God that manifest grace of God, which reveals itself in Christ, when the Lord himself says, "But if it is by the finger of God that I drive out demons." (Lk 11:20)

For the right hand or arm of the Son of God may be said to be his; on this hand the finger is the manifestation of some operation of the Holy Spirit. For we use the finger alot in pointing out material things, and the Spirit of God is called his finger, when it clearly exhibits his grace through some benefit accomplished, so that it is not to believed anything but the work of God, even though some should slander it the way the Pharisees did. So this is that sin, to remain unforgiven, of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit through whom comes the remission of sinners.

But take this saying, "Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven" (Mt 12:31), as meaning that, as was said,

nothing detracting from the honor of Christ only out of error and not out of malice is damnable, for this reason, because this invincible ignorance is like that which motivated those for whom the Lord and Stephen prayed during their suffering. It is fitting according to both piety and reason that we should consider those who recognize God as creator and remunerator of all by the natural law and cling to him with such zeal that they strive never to offend him by that consent which properly is called sin, that we should consider them as not to be damned, and to be shown by God what is necessary to learn for salvation, either through inspiration, or through some direction by which he may give instruction concerning these things, as we read happened to Cornelius concerning faith in Christ and the reception of Baptism (Acts, chapter two).

He seems to imply this openly by the sentence, "If our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence in God." (1 Jn 3:21) And when the Lord says, "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (Jn 15:13), he hardly seems to despair of those who, although they did not know Christ, endured death for God out of zeal for the Law, since it would be easy for God to inspire such as these with what should be believed about Christ before the soul would leave the body, lest it pass unbelieving from this life.

The fourteenth problem of Heloise

What does it mean when the Lord, in describing the minds of the faithful and computing the good things by which they can deserve blessedness, calls them blessed in a number of ways, in which they are, just as though each and every one would suffice to

make a person blessed, as is declared to be the case in the rewards attached to them?

And so it is said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Mt 5:3) And similarly in the other individual beatitudes a reward is posited, from which each and every grace would seem to suffice for salvation.

We diligently request that they be distinguished from each other, by which means it may become better apparent whether each will individually suffice, if they do not happen to occur in the same person simultaneously.

The solution of Abelard

There are seven goods distinguishable in the seven beatitudes by which we may merit to attain the joys of eternal life. For the one which is supposed to be the eighth has to be accounted more a testing of the preceding beatitudes than as yet another of them; for it says: "Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Mt 5:10)

Because persecutions constitute a considerable threat to the blessed faithful, they are not for that reason to be considered less blessed. Therefore this is implied in the aforementioned beatitudes, as if it said: "These are not less blessed when they suffer persecutions, but they are hence more proven, when in them they are not deficient.

There are three orders of the faithful—those who are cloistered, those who govern, and those who are married.

In the three preceding beatitudes, I think the cloistered are carefully described; after these three, the next two must refer above all to those who govern. Since the last two refer to those who are married, the order is helpful to the memory. The order of those who are cloistered is ahead of the others in perfection of life. The second order belongs to those who govern, although they may be more dignified in power than those who are continent; for the beautiful yet barren Rachel stood out as more pleasing to the Patriarch than the homely and fertile Leah (Gen 29); and the better part belonged to Mary in the rest of leisure than to Martha in the serving of food (Lk 10:39 ff)

The last order belongs to those who are married, who are far off from those who are cloistered, and do not deserve to be compared with those who govern even though both of them are involved in activity. For, as the Truth says a little later on: "Whoever teaches and obeys the Law (which refers to the Doctors and Prelates of the Church) will be called great in the kingdom of heaven." (Mt 5:19), just as the cloistered will be called the greatest and the married will be called less great.

Beginning then with those who are greatest in virtue and priority before God in religious dignity, he appreciates their sanctity as three-fold, since he describes them as the poor in spirit, the meek and those who mourn.

One is called blessed by virtue of having done well, that is, of having formed good habits. They are called the poor in spirit who do not sustain poverty out of necessity, which means, that they desire

poverty out of a logic taught by God, whom they love, despising riches, and fleeing them as injuries, hearing what the Lord says, "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God." (Mt 19:24)

Therefore in this place he calls this logic "Spirit", just as the Apostle, who follows it, also says, "For the flesh has desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." (Gal 5:17)

For who does not know that concupiscence belongs more to the soul than to the body? But flesh has desires against the Spirit, when in that soul sensuality, which means pleasure coming from the weakness of the flesh, repels reason, so that, according to the Apostle, often overcome we do the things we do not want to do, that is, the things that we do not think should be done.

So while the Spirit, that is, reason, suggests that we do what we should, carnality pulls us back. As a result, many difficulties occur: the Spirit is overcome by a dominant flesh, and subjected to it, so that a person has to be called carnal or animal-like, given up to the desires of the flesh like a beast. "Because theirs is the kingdom of heaven." So does he assess the poor in spirit as blessed, because those who rationally despise earthly things merit heavenly ones. So the poor in spirit are those who prefer God to possessions or the seeking of honor, and desire nothing for pleasure, but content with what is necessary, abstain even from what is permitted lest they be seized by earthly pleasures, and perform their work more for God than for the world.

Such are those who leave tumultuous worldly life for monastic quietude, so that the more purely they create a space for God and self, the more remote will be the cares of the world, and the more easily they will fly to heaven, the more unburdened they will be of worldly baggage.

So too Jerome, concentrating on what is prefigured in that prince of monks, in a certain place says: Elijah, hastening into the kingdom of the heavens, left his cloak upon the ground. When such as these have become the poor in spirit, it is necessary that they become meek and humble. For those who claim nothing in earthly goods can hardly be aroused to anger at losing things or at injuries received.

To those in good possession of themselves, and broken off from the rule of fleshly impulses, are attributed as a reward the land of the living, that is, the stability of the blessed, as he says, "For they will inherit the land." (Mt 5:5) Jeremiah, describing this virtue of patience and humility, says, "It is good for a man to bear the yoke from his youth. Let him sit alone and in silence, when it is laid upon him. Let him put his mouth to the dust; there may yet be hope. Let him offer his cheek to be struck, let him be filled with disgrace." (Lam 3:27-30)

A person bears the yoke of monasticism from his youth, when he does not defer receiving it, so that exhausted in elderly strength he would presume to bear that which he cannot carry, and seeking rest of the body more than peace of soul, would seek in the monastery the pleasures of the world which he besought himself to

flee. And being capable of accomplishing nothing now, become like a drone among the bees, which they gather around and impudently devour. And with bodily strength now consumed, which, insofar as he was able, he had spent in the service of the devil, on the occasion of elderly infirmity, he enjoys a luxurious rest, when it suits him to live so much more ascetically and to struggle against vices, as much as to know himself less vanquished, and arrived sooner at receiving the crown for his deeds, if he will have merited them.

This, such a miserable one, unaccustomed from his adolescence to carry the yoke, is thought to fall under that which he could not bear. The professor of monastic discipline sits alone and is silent, when he lays claim to both the name of monk and perfection of life. For the term monk means someone who is solitary, which blessed Jerome, crying out, says: "What are you doing in the crowd, you who are solitary?"

Blessed Benedict asserts that the monk should strive in silence at all times, demonstrating from Isaiah (32:17) that silence is the cultivation of justice. The Apostle too recommends this outstanding virtue, saying: "If anyone does not offend in speech, he is a perfect man." (James 3:2)

He lifts himself above himself, when controlling himself and restraining himself, he subordinates the flesh to the Spirit, and subjecting his own will to the will of God, he triumphs gloriously over himself, hearing what is written: "A patient man is better than a warrior, and he who rules his temper, than he who takes a city." (Prov 16:32)

So then one is most right in remaining silent, while others divulge his virtue, lest, become his own herald, he should vanish into thin air, and though he might seem greater in virtue, he would produce grave evidence of pride. So he should remain silent, because he has lifted himself above himself, lest he should acknowledge things, if he has done them, and he should pray in fear of falling, because in this life, victory is assured in nothing.

For should he presume to speak about himself, he would announce not his virtue but his weakness. Whence is added also: "Let him put his mouth to the dust; there may yet be hope." (Lam 3:29) Which is to say: Like dust agitated by the temptations of the Devil, and inconstant and dissolute in works should he confess himself, and if along the way praise should titillate, immediately, reproving himself, let him say: "Why are dust and ashes proud?" (Sir 10:9)

Why are you proud, light dust which the wind blows from the face of the earth? Saying these things, and fearing for himself, let him consider with terror whether perchance there be any hope for him, lest he be vanquished by the latest pride, which he will not conquer except with virtue.

And lest he be lifted up by his virtues, he is humiliated by persecutions, so that through patience his proven virtue may be crowned, which makes the poor in spirit truly meek.

So he will give his cheek to those who strike him, and will be sated with opprobria, because whether he be injured in deeds or in words, he will be refreshed in them by the certain sweetness of a delightful flavor.

One gives his cheek to those who strike him, when he rejoices to be injured for God's sake.

On the other hand, one withdraws his cheek, when he flees injuries or suffers unwillingly. But why should the just bear these things freely, and rejoice in sufferings? Why is it written of the Apostles: "So they left the presence of the Sanhedrin, rejoicing that they had been found worthy to suffer dishonor for the sake of the name." (Acts 5:41)

And it is also added, and the Prophet says: "For the Lord's rejection does not last forever." (Lam 3:31) The just man seems repelled from the grace of the Lord and exposed to miseries in this life; whence even of the head of the just himself it was written: "He was spurned and avoided by men, a man of suffering, accustomed to infirmity." (Is 53:3)

Concerning this dejection or repulsion from God, who protects us in adversities, it is written: "O God, you have rejected us." (Ps 50:3?)

But that, as has been said, he repels us that we may be proven, whom he will take up after the victory that we may be crowned, the Hope of the afflicted, by Whom they triumph, Himself explains when he says, "For the Lord's rejection does not last forever." (Lam 3:31) This means that he will bring an end to the pains of those who suffer, but he will not bring an end to the pains of those who cause suffering. And it is to be noted that the Lord, in handing over the New Testament to his Apostles, while right at the start advising poverty, so that we might transmute the fecundity of earthly things

into heavenly happiness, clearly distinguishes the reward of the Gospel from the reward of the Law, when he constitutes as the reward for obedience the promise of so many heavenly things for the Gospel, whereas of so many earthly things for the Law.

For the people of Israel according to the flesh, desiring earthly goods more than heavenly ones, received as their reward that which they more greatly coveted, so that at least by this promise they might be drawn back from perverse works, if their spirit could not yet be washed clean of iniquity.

So that the Apostle can say: "For the law brought nothing to perfection." (Heb 7:19) It had perfections neither in its promises nor in its precepts.

"Blessed are they who mourn." (Mt 5:4) A certain healthy mourning is especially appropriate for monks, whether that may be the mourning of penitence for sin, or that of separation from the Kingdom.

These two kinds of tears are prefigured in Achsah, the daughter of Caleb. She approached her father, who had given her arid land, and asked for irrigated land; and her father "gave her the upper and the lower pools." (Jos 15:19)" In as much as it is fitting for the monk to mourn for the sins of others as well as for his own, the great Jerome professes, saying: "The monk has the office, not of doctor, but of weeper, who mourns for himself and for the world, and fearfully awaits the coming of the Lord." For what is the monastic life, but a certain form of more extensive penitence?

So let monks mourn either in this way, as said, or in that way which will result in their meriting the laughter of consolation, about which it was truly said: "For they shall be consoled." (Ibid), expecting that which the Lord promised to the Apostles: "Amen, amen, I say to you, you will weep and mourn, while the world rejoices; you will grieve, but your grief will become joy." (Jn 16:20) Whence he says, on the other hand, to the reprobate: "Woe to you who laugh now, for you will grieve and weep." (Lk 6:25) For contrasting lives have contrary states and results, as the just weep now and laugh later, while the laughing wicked on the other hand shall weep. The just will receive consolation whether from the perpetration of sin or from separation from the Kingdom, when they arrive at that life which is inwardly immune from suffering.

"Blessed are they who hunger." (Mt 5:6) After the life of the cloistered, which he considered in three beatitudes, he passes to the order of those who govern, which he considers in two beatitudes.

Those who govern within the people of God are not only those among the priests with ecclesiastical power, but also lay persons among the kingly class. And it is to be noted that the binary number, which is appropriate for those who are married, according to the text of Jerome, is unclean, whence the works of the second day of creation did not merit to receive praise, and the unclean animals were ordered sent into the ark two-by-two; while the continent seem to be described more appropriately by the trinary, which is an uneven number, more than by the binary.

For the others, however, in whom the virtue of continence, is not preeminent, the binary number seems more appropriate. The hunger or thirst for due, appropriate justice is a great desire in those who govern, so that they would wish to vindicate wrongs committed, to the extent that they know they should, and yet not to the extent that those who have been delinquent deserve it. Otherwise mercy would have no place in them, if they did not relax any of the punishment which they deserve for their crimes.

For even the heavenly judge, whom earthly judges ought to imitate, so tempers justice with mercy that he does not punish misdeeds as much as they deserve, but as much as is fitting for Him whose mercies are upon all his works.

For this reason it is written of him: "Has God forgotten pity? Does he in anger withhold his compassion?" (Ps 77:10) And again: "And when you are angry, you will remember pity." (Hab 3:2?) So he exalts judgment with mercy, and commends the judge rather than the punishment. So these two things should always be combined in a judge, that he should punish the crime with justice, yet less than it deserves, through that clemency which here he calls mercy. The word mercy comes from the word misery; the miseries of others produce that human compassion by which, more out of weakness of soul than out of virtue, we abhor the pains, both just and unjust, that afflict the sufferer. Such is the natural compassion of soul, whether it be rational or not, mercy properly so called, according to the text of Seneca.

Clemency, however, which in this place has been called mercy, is rational compassion as such, through which we wish to assist those whom we should. Whoever has justice without mercy, so that he wishes to avenge and not to relax the punishment, is cruel. Unless he change, he is remiss.

When the Lord, instructing well in this place the habits of those who govern, advocates that no justice be exercised without mercy; and so in this place he associates them to himself as inseparable companions. There can even be various kinds of remission of punishment for those who are to be executed, if we try to shorten their sufferings, or choose an easier kind of death penalty. Otherwise we incur this sentence: "There will be a merciless judgment for one who does not act mercifully." (Js 2:13)

The obverse is also true, so that if the merciful deserve mercy, the unmerciful deserve to be deprived of it. Then, after the continent and those who govern, he comes to those who are married, saying: "Blessed are the clean of heart." (Mt 5:8) Since he says clean of heart and not of body, he implies the life of spouses indulged in the desire of the flesh and conceded concupiscence of the libido. Although the conjoining of spouses has indulgence, since in this way they seek remedy for their incontinence and do not seek this out of pleasure and enjoyment of the flesh after the manner of beasts, nonetheless the flesh carries with it not a little contagion from the stain of luxury, as well as the uncleanness and stench of contamination.

However, the clean of heart but not of body are those who seek this not for the sake of pleasure, as we have said, but out of necessity, lest they should offend God by fornicating.

And these also are to be saved and shall not lack the vision of God, in which the height of true blessedness consists. Also those persons are called peace-makers, who avoiding the great conflict of the flesh by the indulgence of matrimony, rationally and moderately employing it in such a way as to make peace also with God and not to offend him through intemperance.

Whence they are to be aggregated with the sons of God, who now are compelled to serve one another in the flesh by the bond of matrimony.

To this service Jerome understands the Apostle as referring: "Were you a slave when you were called? Do not be concerned but, even if you can gain your freedom. For the slave called in the Lord is a freed person in the Lord." (1 Cor 7:21-22)

For what greater servitude could be named than that of a man or woman having no power over his or her own body, nor being able to have relief from the use of the flesh except by giving in to it, so that they neglect prayer? Nonetheless these will be called sons of God, since they shall pass from this servitude to the liberty of eternal life, where "they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like the angels in heaven." (Mt 22:30)

Let suffice our brief discussion of the distinction between the aforementioned beatitudes, that is, virtues, or gifts of divine grace by which we become blessed. There remains, however, to be discussed

how people who may have only one of the individual gifts can be said to be blessed, since observing a single commandment of God is hardly sufficient, especially since anyone fulfilling all of them except one incurs damnation by virtue of just the single commandment broken. But, insofar as it appears to me, the one who first said, "Blessed are the poor," and then added, "in spirit," implies the same adjective in all the rest, as if "the meek in spirit" or "the mourning in spirit" were said, so that, through the Spirit of God, which should be understood in these matters being recalled here as his Charity, this beatitude too and any other which follow will make not only the faithful but also others outstanding and abundant in good works.

For just as it is certain that there are four elements, and words are selected by their users, which means that from whatever element is most abundant in them they may most properly be called, so that here too the graces of the faithful may be distinguished according to that which is proven to abound in them.

For the Love of God may be said to bring about the poor in spirit, whom he makes more fervent and more perfect in the contempt of riches.

Similarly the Love of God leads the meek to prefer the virtue of patience to other things, and concerning the other beatitudes we seem to have a similar impression.

The Love of God brings about all who are blessed or who are worthy of beatitude, and with the Love of God no one can perish, even though they may yet be more perfectible in the gifts of God. There are different words which express the reward, when it is said:

"for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 5:3), or: "for they will inherit the land" (Mt 5:5) These expressions hardly seem different in signifying the reward to be received, but avoiding fastidious similarity, the Lord varied the words according to a certain convenience which they possess for the things promised, according to propriety of speech and similarity of subject matter. This is easy to understand in the individual beatitudes. For it is appropriate that the kingdom of heaven is promised to the poor, so that those who despise earthly riches for God's sake may merit heavenly ones. To the meek, who take possession of themselves in doing good, is promised the possession of the land of the living. To those who mourn consolation is appropriate.

To those who hunger and thirst for justice is promised saturation, that is, the in-filling of what they desire to receive before God, in Whose love they have the highest expectations for the punishment of the wicked by the exercise of justice.

So also in the rest of the expressions of reward there can be attributed a certain appropriateness toward the beatitude promised.

Therefore the Lord did not so much prescribe that the beatitudes be considered in themselves as much as he admonishes by means of them those who wish to become more perfect in the various states of life.

For he himself consequently divinely prophesies that he will hand on a New Testament for the purpose of an abundance of perfection, saying: "Unless your righteousness surpasses that of the

scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Mt 5:20)

The fifteenth problem of Heloise

What does it mean that even after the Lord said, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets" (Mt 5:17), nonetheless John can write, "For this reason the Jews tried all the more to kill him, because he not only broke the sabbath but he also called God his own father, making himself equal to God." (Jn 5:18)

The solution of Abelard

When he said, "I have not come to abolish," and afterwards added, "but to fulfill," he meant in regard to the moral precepts rather than the legislative ones, just as the latter hold together by virtue of the fulfillment which he supposed, he indicated what he meant by the abolition of the commandments of the Law, that is, in regard to moral precepts.

The moral precepts belong to the agenda of life itself, just as the legislative need to be promulgated. The moral precepts are those which naturally are to be fulfilled by everyone at all times, and even before the written Law was given, they were necessarily constitutive of human behavior, so that unless that which they prescribe are fulfilled no one could ever merit salvation.

These are precepts such as to love God and neighbor, not to kill, not to commit adultery, not to lie, and the like, without the fulfillment of which no one can be ever be justified.

The legislative, however, are precepts of the Law, which taken according to the letter confer no justice by their operation, but they

were instituted in time to legislate some kind of justice, such as the observance of the Sabbath, circumcision, abstinence from certain kinds of food, and the like.

Therefore it must have been in reference to the moral precepts of the Law that the Lord said he had not come to abolish the Law, but to fulfill it, that is, he had hardly come to void that which the Law contained in regard to its moral precepts, but to supply through the Gospel what was lacking in the Law in regard to them.

For the Law of Moses never prescribed the love of one's enemy but only of one's friend; nor did it teach that the consummation of sin is in the mind, but forbade works more than the intention.

For even though the Law too prohibited concupiscence, nevertheless one should not think that by virtue of the Law concupiscence was constituted as a crime or prohibited, unless, according to the letter, it affected a neighbor, that is, someone who was not an alien to his own people.

For the Law did not call every person one's neighbor, according to the letter, but clearly distinguished the alien from the neighbor, when it said that the Jew should not lend money at interest to a neighbor, but could do so to an alien.

The sixteenth problem of Heloise

How too does the Lord set the abundance of the Gospel ahead of the imperfection of the Law, saying: "Unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Mt 5:20) Or how is it that, as the Apostle says, "A former commandment is annulled because of its weakness

and uselessness, for the law brought nothing to perfection." (Heb 7:18-19)

For when the rich man asked how he should possess eternal life, the Lord responded concerning the two commandments of love which are in the law, "Do this and you will live." (Lk 10:28 And the Apostle can say, "The one who loves another has fulfilled the law, for: 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not kill,' etc. (Rom 13:8) And again: "Love does no evil to the neighbor; hence, love is the fulfillment of the law." (Ibid, 10).

How can anything be lacking to the Law for the perfection of its commandments, when the two precepts of love of God and neighbor would seem entirely to suffice, nor to lack any perfection?

The solution of Abelard

When the Lord says, "Unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you notice that he said "righteousness," and not "righteousness according to the Law."

Whence also in the following he said, "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'" (Mt 5:43), this was hardly to be found in the Law itself, but rather in the traditions of the scribes and Pharisees attached to the Law, concerning which the Lord said, "You have nullified the word of God for the sake of your tradition." (Mt 15:6)

Above all when concerning the love of one's enemy, or even concerning the benefits which are due him, the Law itself makes prescription, saying, "When you come upon your enemy's ox or ass going astray, see to it that it is returned to him. When you notice the

ass of one who hates you lying prostrate under its burden, by no means desert him; help him, rather, to raise it up." (Ex 23:4)

Also in the Psalmist: "If I have repaid my friend with evil, I who spared those who without cause were my foes." (Ps 7:5)

Also Solomon in the Book of Proverbs: "Say not, 'I will repay evil!' Trust in the Lord and he will help you." (Prov 20:22) "Rejoice not when your enemy falls, and when he stumbles, let not your heart exult, lest the Lord see it, be displeased with you, and withdraw his wrath from your enemy." (Prov 24:17)

Do not say, "As he has done to me, so will I do to him; I shall return to each one according to his works." (Cf Prov 24:12) Again: "If your enemy be hungry, give him food to eat, if he be thirsty, give him to drink; for live coals you will heap on his head, and the Lord will vindicate you." (Prov 25:21-22)

Also blessed Job: "Had I rejoiced at the destruction of my enemy or exulted when evil fell upon him, even though I had not suffered my mouth to sin by uttering a curse against his life." (Job 31:29-30)

Therefore it was neither ordered nor permitted in former times, in the Law, that they should hold their enemy in contempt, but rather, as has been said, it was held in their human traditions rather than in their divine precepts. So when the Lord says, "surpassing that of the scribes and Pharisees," (Mt 5:20), he does not say "surpassing that of the law," we should not think from this that the Lord set the abundance of the Gospel ahead of the imperfection of the Law.

Therefore we do not concede that the Law in its precepts was so imperfect that it was necessary for the Gospel to replace it, just as the Apostle, as we cited above, openly professed. But neither could the precept of the love of neighbor have been perfect before the coming of Christ, for He Himself came and became our neighbor and made that precept perfect, as much by his taking of flesh as by his demonstration of love, so that now whoever loves Him as his neighbor, by this love may become perfect.

Hence too to the same rich man, who inquired who was his neighbor, the Lord responded through the parable, indicating that He is that neighbor, expressed by the Samaritan, who had mercy on the injured man; and he professed by the feeling of compassion that the rich man too could truly have been the neighbor.

Or if therefore it is contained in the Law, 'You shall love your friend, that is, your neighbor' (Mt 5:43), so that we may understand Him as the neighbor there, Who is joined to us by acquaintance or by love; no one is more rightly to be called our neighbor than Christ, so that in Him now the love of neighbor may be made perfect, which beforehand had been imperfect, as long as the Law had its status, which held its force up until John.

Therefore it was imperfect beforehand, as long as it was properly called the Law, so that one had to obey it in all things; on account of this, its very imperfection, it was disapproved when the perfection of Gospel teaching arrived, in which whatever is necessary is expressed clearly rather than in parables.

For even though we should diligently insist on the letter of the Law, which was given only to the Jewish people, the term neighbor should hardly be understood as referring only to one of them. Hence through Christ, this precept of love of neighbor would seem to pertain not only to those contained under the Law. For this reason, the Law necessarily had to give way to the Gospel, enjoined upon all in general, so that through it all should be saved.

Therefore, to the aforementioned neighbor, that is Christ, the Apostle refers, with him indicated: "The one who loves another has fulfilled the law." (Rom 13:8) But immediately as proof he added: "For: 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not kill,' etc. (Rom 13:9) For if the Jew loves Him as comprised among his neighbors, as He himself said: "Whoever loves me will keep my word," (Jn 14:23) then he shall not sin in any adultery or in any homicide, and he shall avoid all the similar things which are in the Law, and he shall fulfill its righteousness.

The seventeenth problem of Heloise

Also, what does it mean when Our Lord says the following: "Do not swear by your head, for you cannot make a single hair white or black," (Mt 5:36), so that could one do this, then it would be licit to swear by one's head?

The solution of Abelard

Those things which occur in the context have to be reviewed, so that from these things and by this means we may more easily decide. He says, "But I say to you, do not swear at all; not by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; nor by

Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Do not swear by your head, for you cannot make a single hair white or black." (Mt 5:34-35)

So there are four things, heaven, earth, Jerusalem and our own head, by which we are forbidden to swear, because those things which we esteem as the most venerable place us in the highest kind of oath, so that by virtue of them one might more readily believe in us.

However, those seem worthy of greater veneration which pertain above all to God, so that heaven, which is called the throne of God, that is, the soul of Christ, upon which Divinity especially settles, and dwells within it most fully through grace.

The earth, which is called the footstool of God, is the humanity of Christ, as the earthly and inferior creature in Christ. Jerusalem, the city of God, is the holy Church, whose head is Christ Himself. Hair adheres to the head, and adorns or protects it, and because they are the divine things by which Christ is commended and conserved in us through faith. Some of them are called long, some black, when the understanding of others is clear and manifest; the understanding of others is obscure, just like that of those which are expressed allegorically.

Whether any of them are to be white, as was said, or black, is not for our making, for the eloquence of God does not belong to human invention, nor is it our product but God's. So when he says, "Do not swear by your head, for you cannot make a single hair white or black." (Mt 5:34-35), it is as if he says, "You should not invoke

Christ in an oath, because it should belong to his divine wisdom alone and above all to discover these things, of which, as we said, some are white, others black.

Similarly when he commands that we should not swear by heaven, which is the throne of God, it should be taken as meaning that we should not choose to swear by him who has such dignity that he is eminent above all creatures.

In these phrases the negative word placed before the sentence excludes the cause itself, and is not interposed to permit and establish the cause. The negative particle placed before the entire sentence has one kind of force, to negate the entire sentence all at once, while the particle attached to a single part of the sentence as such is interposed having another kind of force.

It is one thing to say, "Not because you have done this, did you sin;" and quite another thing to say: "You have sinned, because you did not do this." For in the first sentence, "not because of this did he sin," the cause of sin is removed, so that it may be certain that one not have sinned, where the cause should have interceded to that effect; in fact it does not demonstrate that he had not sinned, but only that "not because of this did he sin," so that the cause of sin is removed rather than the sin itself.

So this is why the Lord prescribes or exhorts concerning oath-taking, that, because it is dangerous to swear, lest we entirely perjure ourselves, we should beware of oath-taking as much as we can, lest we should desire to swear upon the dignity that some thing

may have per se, whether it be God, or Christ, or any creature of God having attained some dignity before others.

To swear upon anything at all is for us to concede to the one before whom we swear that we have no use for the thing by which we have sworn unless the matter which we are affirming by the oath be true.

However, while in ecclesiastical matters controversy governs all of this, so that the Apostle says, "Let the oath be the end." (Heb 6:16), in this place the Lord does not prescribe for us not to take an oath, but rather exhorted us.

For some things are prescribed, some prohibited, some encouraged, and some permitted. Things are prescribed or prohibited by which or with which we might despair that we were saved. Therefore all evils are prohibited and all goods required, but only those which seem necessary for salvation, such as believing in God and loving not just oneself but also one's neighbor, not to commit adultery and the like.

Those goods which are not so necessary, whether because they are stricter or laxer of life, and too high or too low to be covered under the precept, possess either the persuasion of good counsel, such as virginity, or the permission of indulgence, such as matrimony. For if there were a precept requiring virginity, matrimony would be condemned, and if there were a precept requiring matrimony, virginity would be condemned.

Therefore good counsel consists in either persuasion to greater goods or permission for lesser ones, that is, those of lesser merit,

when counsel of the better goods is met with any diffidence or lack of disposition.

Therefore those things which may happen or be permitted have no precept, but only admonition, such as never to take an oath, but do have permission, such as when this may take place out of necessity, as for example, when during an inquisition into the truth, taking an oath is part of the witnesses' job.

It is permission, however, when said: "Because of cases of immorality, every man should have his own wife." (1 Cor 7:2) But it is a precept when said: "Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek a separation."

It is advice and persuasion when immediately added: "Are you free of a wife? Then do not look for a wife." (1 Cor 7:27)

The eighteenth problem of Heloise

What does it mean in the same Gospel: "Do not worry and say, 'What are we to eat?'" (Mt 6:31) And again: "Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself. Sufficient for a day is its own evil." (Mt 6:34) Could it be that he prohibits providing for the future? Could this be the same Lord who uses as an example the man who wanted to build a tower and to considered his outlay?

The Apostle also says: "If one is over others, (let it be) with diligence." (Rom 12:8) Just as he himself did, saying of himself: "There is the daily pressure upon me of my anxiety for all the churches." (2 Cor 11:28)

The solution of Abelard

The Lord is properly speaking about exaggerated solicitude concerning the future, as for example when in preparing certain things, we neglect other things that are more necessary, so that if, for the sake of preparing tomorrow's food we would neglect in prayer to seek from God His Kingdom, that is, to make us such that in us He Himself and not sin would reign.

It were as if he said, "Do not afflict yourselves with superfluous concerns about the future, before it arrives, because when it arrives, it will bring with it enough solicitude for those who confide less in the Lord concerning necessary things, not having heard the saying of the Prophet, "Cast your care upon the Lord, and he will support you." (Ps 55:23)

"Sufficient for a day is its own evil." (Mt 6:34) This means that, in each given time of life, the suffering of its own hardship and solicitude should suffice, which would seem to relieve us of superfluous temporal cares, by which we would forget the things of eternity.

The Apostle was saying that solicitude for the good, or for those things which pertain to eternal life is foresight, that is, reasonable care for things in the future or the near future, if, that is, we should be making temporal provisions on behalf of eternal ones, so that those hastening towards eternity may be sustained by some necessary food for the journey.

The nineteenth problem of Heloise

What does the following mean: "Stop judging, that you may not be judged. For as you judge, so will you be judged?" (Mt 7:1-2) Does this mean that if we make an unjust judgment, we will receive an unjust one in return?

The solution of Abelard

Not judging means not presuming to burden anyone with a certain judgment when matters themselves are uncertain. For when a man is obviously angry, the matter makes a judgment on itself, and you do not need to. So the Apostle also says, "Do not make any judgment before the appointed time, until the Lord comes, for he will bring to light what is hidden in our hearts." (1 Cor 4:5)

The Lord comes to reveal what is hidden, when by his disposition things that used to be hidden become apparent, or when according to his law we investigate any debatable matter, or when we legislate a penalty in cases that need adjudication. Then it is he himself who judges or punishes rather than we ourselves.

"For as you judge, so will you be judged." (Mt 7:1-2) This is as if he had said: "Therefore, in judging, you should not presume to desire to burden others, because you shall incur a like judgment with burdens before God.

In the end, he did not say, "Thou shalt not judge," but rather "Do not want to judge," so that we should not desire of our own volition that which we are nonetheless compelled to do in exercising the office of judge when it is entrusted to us.

The twentieth problem of Heloise

We also inquire what it means when he adds the following: "Do to others whatever you would have them do to you. This is the law and the prophets." (Mt 7:12) For if anyone should wish another to consent to him in wrongdoing, would he have to give consent to the other in a similar matter?

The solution of Abelard

There are two precepts of the natural law concerning the love of one's neighbor, the one which is located in this place, and the other which we read in Tobias, when he says to his son, "Do to no one what you yourself dislike." (Tob 4:15) What is true of the bad is true also of the good: just as we do not want bad things to happen to us and so do not perpetrate them upon others, the obverse is also true, that just as we would like others to give us good thing, we should be prepared to bestow them upon others.

So when it is said: "What you would have others do to you," it means: "what you know in your conscience that others should do to you." For nothing in one's conscience approves that we should have consent in wrongdoing, but only in doing those things which it considers good and worthy of being done.

So too the Apostle, when he says: "I do not act as I mean to," (Rom 7:15) understands by the words "I mean to" that which I approve of as being done. But what does it mean when it says, "whatever you would have them do to you?" For many people, on account of the dignity or diversity of personalities, are of the opinion that many things should be done for them, which they hardly

recognize themselves as having to do for others, as we can see in both Prelates and their subjects, while they require others to do many things for them which they should never do for others.

But, indeed, the matter should be taken this way, that whatever we believe should be done for us by other people we should be prepared to do for others also, not necessarily any and every one, but those who are like ourselves, that is, who are worthy to receive these things from us as we are from them.

In the case of Tobit: "Do to no one what you yourself dislike" (4:15), there pertains something of a question, when a person who executes another in the service of justice does not wish to undergo the same thing from that other person.

When someone exercises justice on behalf of God, it is God who does the action rather than that person, as we said above some time ago. Therefore it can be prescribed that one not do to another what he would hate to have done to himself, for when someone punishes another rightly, it is God or the Law rather than the human being who acts.

The twenty-first problem of Heloise

What does it mean, when the Apostle says, "Pray unceasingly?" (1Thes 5:17)

The solution of Abelard

Never neglect a moment when we should pray.

The twenty-second problem of Heloise

What does Matthew mean to say about the faith of the Centurion who had made request on behalf of his servant, "When

Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those following him:

"Amen, I say to you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith." (Mt 8:10)

For is it not true that people show amazement when they see something unexpected happening which they had not known or believed beforehand would take place.

The solution of Abelard

Jesus is said to have been amazed, because he behaved like someone who is amazed, because he made others amazed at the faith of the centurion, whom he so extolled.

The twenty-third problem of Heloise

What does this mean in Luke: "Give to everyone who asks of you, and from the one who takes what is yours do not demand it back." (Lk 6:30)

The solution of Abelard

When he said, "Give," he did not subjoin "the thing that he asks for," but indicated in this that we dismiss no one begging from us without a donation, so that at least excusing ourselves conveniently in our response, we should strive not to exacerbate him but to build up charity in him, so whether the reply be flattering or convenient, it should consist in some gift of favor.

"Do not demand back what is yours," that is, "because it is yours," lest you should locate in yourself rather than in God the end of restoration. For the religious person does not exceed, if they should be offered him, those things which he had possessed on account of God should be requested back on his account, and spends

them for good purposes, and liberates them from the rapine of the violent.

For he also says in a nearby place: "For if you love those who love you, or if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you?" (Lk 6:32-33) When he says, "those who love you," it is similar to when he says, "do not demand back what is yours;" I mean, that they love you to the extent that those things belong to you.

It would be wicked for us not to love those by whom we are loved, since we are commanded to love everyone, and this includes even God, who loves us; just as he himself said, "Those who love me I also love." (Prov 8:17) Rather than loving God just because he is useful to us, we should love him with the height of love just for Himself, because he is the height of goodness. This is the ordained charity, that we should love more, by virtue of this, whoever is better or higher in rank; that is, that we should desire him to be better, as is just.

The twenty-fourth problem of Heloise

How is it that the Lord says: "It is not what enters the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of it." (Mt 15:11) Can it be then that one incurs no stain of sin from consuming stolen goods, or from that which he believes to be illicit even though it may be licit, or from receiving Communion unworthily?

The Apostle speaks about certain Jews who had converted to the faith and yet still, on account of the Law, distinguished certain foods from others as unclean. He says, "But whoever has doubts is

condemned if he eats, because this is not from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin." (Rom 14:23) He also says about those who were eating with idolaters, out of reverence for idols: "There are some who have been so used to idolatry up until now that, when they eat meat sacrificed to idols, their conscience, which is weak, is defiled." (1 Cor 8:7) How then can the Lord now say that what enters through the mouth does not defile a man, but rather that which comes out of the mouth?

The solution of Abelard

In this place above all the Lord carefully identifies how sin is to be understood, and in disputing with the Jews about this, he instructs us as well. For they were looking more towards the works than towards the soul, and judged good things as well as bad things from externals more than from that which was held in the mind. The Lord truly reduces all things to the intention, and in his estimation a person is condemned by what is in the heart rather than the appearance of his works, nor does he judge a soul to be polluted except by those things which are within it and make contact with it, so that souls can have spiritual stains just as bodies have bodily stains.

This is how he explains what he had said, "But what comes out of the mouth is what defiles a person" (Mt 15:11) For he goes on to say, "But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile. For from the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, unchastity, theft, false witness, blasphemy. These are what

defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile." (Mt 15:18-20)

It is as if he had clearly said: "The corporal stains which hands have do not touch the soul, so that they cannot pollute the soul with sin. Polluting thoughts come from the heart, when we consent in the continuation of what we are thinking.

Where however there is no understanding ("sensus"), there can be no consent ("consensus"), such as in young people or in the retarded.

For if they do what they should not, there is no sin imputed to them; neither homicide, nor adultery, nor any other sin can exist, the Lord says, except that which proceeds from the heart, that is, except when we recognize as forbidden the things towards which our consent inclines us. So just as thoughts come from the heart, when they tend to consent to deeds, so the Lord teaches that homicide and adultery and the other sins go out from the heart, nor do sins exist in any other way, unless those things exhibited in deeds had had prior consent in the heart.

For after anyone consents to doing those things which he knows are not permitted to him, the consent itself properly called sin; even homicide or adultery exist before God from this one thing. Wherefore even the Truth Himself says (Mt 5:28): "Everyone who looks at a woman with lust [that is, who in looking at her has come to consent to concupiscence] has already committed adultery with her in his heart [that is, has completed the sin in his soul even if he has not yet consummated it in act]."

When we receive any food wrongly, because we believe the thing to be forbidden to us, it is hardly the food itself which enters our mouth that pollutes the soul, but our conscience before the fact had already done this. Sin means not that we are consuming anything now by mouth, but to the fact that we have already consented to consume it.

The twenty-fifth problem of Heloise

What does it mean in Matthew, when the Lord reproaches certain cities, and says: "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty deeds done in your midst had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would long ago have repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes." (Lk 10:13)

Now the Lord had come to save people, and so he is called by the name Jesus, which means Savior.

Why then does he withhold from the gentile cities of Tyre and Sidon the miracles of his good deeds, through which they would have been saved, and exhibit them to others for whom he knew they would mean harm and not profit? But see how He Himself proclaims, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Mt 15:24)

But, I say, why would he be sent to them, unless it were so that they would be saved? But if it were so that they would be saved, what did it profit them that there took place for them those miracles by which they would be more gravely condemned, not being converted to repentance but persisting in their obstinance. Whence even the Lord Himself subjoins: "But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you." (Lk 10:14)

Finally, John recounts how a multitude of the Samaritans did believe on hearing about him (Jn 4:36) and that he did exhibit not a few beneficent miracles to the gentiles, both men and women, by which they believed and were confirmed in faith, just as in the case of the boy of the Centurion (Mt 3:5; Lk 7:2) and daughter of the Syro-Phoenician woman, who happened to come from the territory of Tyre itself!

The solution of Abelard

The Lord Jesus in his own person was sent to the Jews alone. Therefore what mercy he worked amongst the gentiles was not done by office of his mission, but rather out of grace added to what was due, seeing as He Himself said, "When you have done all you have been commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants; we have done what we were obliged to do.'" (Lk 17:10) It is as if he were saying: "Do not consider it a great thing if you fulfill the due of obedience, unless you add to it something of grace, as do they who strive for virginity or continence, virtues which do not fall under a precept.

Finally he did not come so much as one sent to do prescribed benefits for the gentiles, but only when invited and urged by prayers to do these things. That is why he withheld his preaching from those who he testifies would have been thus converted to repentance; we are not compelled by this to maintain that they would have persevered in this penitence so that they would have been saved. For there are many superficial people who are easily moved to compunction of penitence, and by that same facility, they slip back into the evil deeds which they had wept for, like dogs

returning to their vomit, and while they receive avidly the word of preaching that they have heard, they do not have firm rooting, so that they might persevere in what they have begun.

Although we would submit to preaching those from whom nonetheless He Himself withheld the grace of preaching, it belongs to Him who does nothing without reason why He did not decree that this be done. The Apostle raises the question of Esau, from whom grace was withheld, but leaves the question undiscussed.

The twenty-sixth problem of Heloise

It seems one should also ask by what mystery or for what reason did the Lord seek fruit on the fig tree and not find it, when, as Mark says, "It was not the time for figs." (Mk 11:13) Then he struck the tree with his curse, and made it become dry, so that from that time on it remained withered, as if it had been from the blow of a tree that he turned back this curse upon it.

The solution of Abelard

The tree that was found without fruit is Judea, reprov'd then for its wickedness by the Lord, so that it deserved to be deprived of the fruit of good works, for not having recognized the time of its visitation. But their fault took place because then was not the time for their fruit, when they refused the grace offered them of the Lord's preaching.

The twenty-seventh problem of Heloise

What does it mean: "May his plea be in vain?" (Ps 109:7)

The solution of Abelard

May it be taken this way, in a false sense: so that he might choose to pray more for hurtful things than for profitable ones, and to obtain by prayer those things which tend toward sin rather than lead to salvation.

The twenty- eight problem of Heloise

From the first letter of Paul to the Thessalonians: "May the God of peace himself make you perfectly holy and may you entirely, spirit, soul, and body, be preserved blameless for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thes 5:23) Why does it mention spirit and soul, as if the soul were not spirit, or as if there were two spirits in a single person?

The solution of Abelard

The Apostle in this place uses Spirit to signify reason, that is, discretion of soul, as in the place where he says, "the Spirit against the flesh" (Gal 5:17). So it is as if he had said: "Let your spirit be integral, that is, let your reason be so perfect and incorruptible that error may in no way cause it to be derailed from the truth.

As for the term soul, that refers to one's will, as it is said: "Whoever loves his own soul will lose it." (Mt 10:39) This means that whoever follows his own will, will afterward be deprived of his own will; so that whoever fulfills his own will here will not have what he wills in the future.

Therefore our soul, that is our will, is integral, when it bears no discrepancy from the Divine Will. The body too is kept integral, when the functioning of our bodily senses is not corrupted by unlawful

carnalities nor has our eye despoiled our soul, nor has death come up through our windows." (Jer 9:20)

In these three ways are we sanctified through all things, when we indulge no excess in the discretion of reason nor in the estimation of our own will nor in the enjoyment of the senses, so that the flesh would dominate the spirit.

So then let us preserve ourselves without complaint, that is, without reprehension, until the coming of the Lord, while we persevere in such a state until the last judgement, or at least merit to be found then in such a state.

The twenty-ninth problem of Heloise

What does this mean in the letter to the Ephesians: "That you may have strength to comprehend with all the holy ones what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God." (Eph 3:18-19)

The solution of Abelard

"That you may have strength to comprehend" means to experience in yourselves the breadth of the saints in charity, through which they extend themselves even to their enemies. "The breadth" means the longanimity of perseverance, of charity, or of patience in adversity, through that charity itself which suffers all things, bears all things; "their height and depth" means how great they are in these two dimensions before God through the quantity of their merits, and how small or infirm they are to themselves through humility.

"The depth," after all, refers to what is low or humble. For how great and sublime to God are those who experience their own reward. To the extent that they stand out for their humility here, they deserve to be so much more exalted; and to the extent that they consider themselves the less here, they deserve so much more to receive from God.

The saints are the church, which is the Body of Christ. And so they understand their "breadth" as having been prefigured in His very Cross, to which his body was affixed. For in the "breadth" of the Cross, to the right and to the left, where he was spread out with his hands attached, the "breadth" of charity is denominated, embracing even enemies, who are as if towards our left, that is in adversity, just as friends are on the right.

The hands attached to the right and left portions of the Cross are the works of charity, extended equally in benefits to enemies and friends.

The Lord exhibited to us from the very Cross this "breadth" of charity, as he exercised care for his mother, commending her to the disciple, and prayed for those being crucified.

But just as "breadth" extends rightwards and leftwards, so "length" regards upwards and downwards, in which the Lord Himself from head to foot stood erect upon the Cross. This "length" prefigures that perseverance of his in patience, unto the consummation of his life, which means unto the consummation of our redemption.

Concerning which he himself said: "It is finished." (Jn 19:30) The apostle Paul too says: "He became obedient to death." (Philip 2:8) The

"height" of the Cross is that extension in which the title was written above the Lord's head.

In this title certainly was written his name, which is Jesus, that is most excellent, concerning which the same Apostle exclaimed: "Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every other name." (Philip 2:9) In the elect also that higher part added to the Cross signifies something of the remuneration of the saints, which is apportioned to them above their merits out of grace, as the Apostle says, "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us." (Rom 8:18)

The "depth" is the lower part of the Cross, by which it is attached to the earth. The "depth" is humble, and the punishment of the Cross is an abject one, for that kind of death is ignominious, wherefore the very great humility of Christ is commended, and he himself deserves to be even more exalted, just as we recalled there above, "Because of this God greatly exalted him," (Phil 2:9) etc.

Concerning this kind of death it had been predicted on the part of the person of the impious: "Let us condemn him to a shameful death." (Wis 2:20)

In the elect also that lower part of the Cross, by which it is held fixed to the earth, expresses the virtue of humility, by which, comparing themselves to dust and dirt, to the degree that they humble themselves here and consider themselves the less, to that same degree they deserve to be exalted afterwards.

And this humility of theirs holds them firm and upright in the summit of virtues, just as that part of the Cross affixed to the earth holds it firm and upright. After the charity of the saints, it passes on to the height of Christ's charity, which he exhibits to us, and admonishes us to know it and always to attend to it, so that we may be held ever more humble in comparison with it, and ever more fervent in the love of it. He bespeaks this supereminent charity of Christ to our knowledge, because it is by far greater than we can comprehend by our own intelligence or experience.

But when, considering this charity of Christ, we set side by side his incomparably superior charity with our own, then, as was said, made ever more humble and ever more fervent, we shall be filled with all the perfection of the virtues conferred by God upon us.

The thirtieth problem of Heloise

What does it mean in the first book of the Kings, when it says of Elkanah, "this man used to go up on the appointed days, to worship." (1 Sam 1:3) By whom or by what were these days appointed?

The solution of Abelard

Rabanus Maurus, commenting on the books of the Kings, follows practically to the letter a certain Hebrew sense: "But when it says, on the appointed days, this means on the three festivals, that is, Passover, Pentecost and the solemnity of Tabernacles." Whence the Lord prescribes in Exodus, saying: "Three times a year you shall celebrate a pilgrim feast to me." (Ex 23:14) And again he says, "Three times a year every male among you shall appear before the Lord,

your God, in the place which he chooses." (Dt 16:16) So during that time when the Ark of the Lord was at Shiloh, there Elkanah, since he was himself a Levite, after offering sacrifices, feasted equally with his wives and sons and daughters.

The thirty-first problem of Heloise

What does it mean that Hannah replied to Eli the priest: "It isn't that, my Lord; I am an unhappy woman. I have had neither wine nor liquor; I was only pouring out my troubles to the Lord. Do not think your handmaid a daughter of Belial." (1 Sam 1:15-16)

The solution of Abelard

She says that she is unhappy, as if she were rebuked, because she is cursed with barrenness, and has left no seed in Israel. For the same reason Elizabeth also says, "So has the Lord done for me at a time when he has seen fit to take away my disgrace before others." (Lk 1:25) For the same reason Deuteronomy says that the Lord amongst other things promises to the people, as a reward for their observance of the commandments: "No man or woman among you shall be childless nor shall your livestock be barren." (Dt 7:14)

When she says: "I have had neither wine nor liquor," she expresses the great perfection of such a lay woman or wife. If she has clearly achieved this abstinence, then, so that the Lord might more easily hear her prayer concerning the birth which she was asking for, how much more is this abstinence fitting to the virgins of Christ, who strive for a spiritual and far better fruit. She specifically calls "daughters of Belial" those whom the Devil begets for himself as his own proper offspring.

For drunkenness diverts our state of mind, and extinguishes anything we have of the image of God through rationality, so that we are made comparable to beasts such as the horse or the mule, which have no intellect.

The ancient enemy is called both the Devil, which means flowing downwards, and Zabulus or Satan, which in Latin means adversary or transgressor, and Belial, which means without yoke. The latter name is rightly placed in this location on account of the inebriated, because the inebriated, like insane persons, submit to no yoke of discipline or of God.

So the daughters of Belial are like the descriptions of the hysterical priestesses of Dionysios.

The thirty- second problem of Heloise

Also, what does it mean when said of Hannah: "And she no longer appeared downcast." (1 Sam 1:18)

The solution of Abelard

She showed from then on a happy face, and not a sad face or a teary one.

The thirty-third problem of Heloise

And what does this mean: "Hannah prayed, and said: 'My heart exults in the Lord,'" etc. (1 Sam 2:1) For this canticle has the words of thanksgiving or prophecy more than of prayer.

The solution of Abelard

Insofar as I can determine, before the canticle, she had prefaced a prayer, by which her canticle, or the action of thanksgiving might become more acceptable to God. First, concerning

the prayer it says, "She prayed," and then concerning the canticle it is added, "and she said, 'My heart rejoices, etc.'"

For it is the custom of the Church to place a prayer before each of the individual Hours which are to be sung to the praises of God. We read of many canticles belonging to holy women, both to barren women who are to become mothers of prophets, such as Deborah (Jdg 5:1ff), Judith (Judith 16:2ff), and Hannah, the mother of Samuel, as likewise to the virgin who would become the mother of the Savior, Mary, the mother of the Lord, singing about the birth assigned to her by the Lord (Lk 1:16ff),

The Church is accustomed frequently to have recourse to the Canticle of Hannah, just as to that of the great Virgin, not only because of the sanctity of the mother, or of the dignity of the birth conceded to her in Samuel, by whom the school of prophets was said to have begun, and who was first offered by his mother to the Lord; but even more, because nothing else in their canticles sung before the time of the prophets seems to have so clearly foretold Christ and his kingdom as Hannah does now.

For thus does she speak of the Father of Christ, and of Christ Himself: "The Lord judges the ends of the earth. Now may he give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed." (1 Sam 2:10) For there was not yet a king established in Israel, to whom this gratification of the prophetess would pertain. She merited to be the first to openly express the true Christ, that is, the Messiah; she manifestly preannounced the future which Mary sings as fulfilled, as

if the prophetic words as well as the birthgiving act of the barren woman had been instructive of the Virgin's faith.

The thirty-fourth problem of Heloise

One is also moved to inquire about this saying: "The barren wife bears many sons" (1 Sam 2:5) For even though Scripture afterwards refers to the fact that after Samuel Hannah had still given birth to three sons and two daughters, nonetheless however, while she was singing this canticle she cannot be said to have had even Samuel.

Also, how can it say about her children that they were very many, and about the children of her friend Phenenna that they were only many, as if she had more children than she. For although Scripture does not define how many children Phenenna had, nonetheless many commentators construe her as having had more than Hannah, which would mean seven.

The solution of Abelard

It is not necessary that we take the term "very many" in this place as the comparative adjective, in respect to fewer; but rather in the absolute sense, as simply "many," since various words can be taken in the same sense. It is not impossible that Hannah could have had many children, when this canticle was sung to the Lord, even though Scripture has not yet referred to her as having any but Samuel. For the sequence of Scripture frequently does not hold the historical order, but rather it narrates quite a few things out of position.

Also, Hannah could have said this through the spirit of prophecy, while she still had only Samuel. Finally, it would not have been inappropriate for her to say this about Samuel alone, since he would be worth more in price than the children of Phenenna, though he might be only one in number. In this way it may often be that we could say one thing was "more" than another, which though being lesser in number nonetheless possessed a greater price.

The thirty-fifth problem of Heloise

We also ask what this could mean: "Meanwhile the boy Samuel, girt with a linen apron, was serving in the presence of the Lord. His mother used to make a little garment for him, which she would bring him on the appointed days, when she went up with her husband to offer the customary sacrifice." (1 Sam:18-19)

For if Samuel were a Levite, as is very probable, or a priest, his boyhood age would hardly enable him to comply with the Law in his ministry, so that he could minister girt with the ephod as a Levite or a priest at his tender age.

We inquire also what garment the mother brought to the boy, and on what appointed days.

The solution of Abelard

A boy could minister in certain lesser offices, even girt with the linen ephod. Whence Rabanus can make this remark, citing Augustine: "Samuel was girt with the ephod bad, which means with linen upon the shoulders, which differs from that ephod which the high priest wore; because this was just of linen, and was concede to the lesser orders for their use. For that which clothed the high priest

was of four colors, which were hyacinth, gray, scarlet, purple, and had a braid of gold. The appointed days were clearly those above-mentioned three festivities according to the Law, so that in each of these high solemnities of the year, the mother diligently brought to her son a new tunic, in which he could minister to the Lord with more cleanliness and honesty, having the humeral linen above it, by which he was girt, and could free of burden more expeditiously perform his ministry.

If I am not mistaken, we monks now imitate that habit, since our manual labors are usually done in tunic with a scapular wrapped about the shoulders. For what is the scapular but a humeral veil?

Finally, who would disapprove of Samuel, though he be a boy, ministering in the office of Levite out of necessity, which means also with Eli helping, since no one else then in the home of Eli would have been found worthy of that office? For there is a well-known proverb: Necessity has no law.

The thirty-sixth problem of Heloise

We ask and inquire who could have been that Man of God sent by the Lord to Eli, to correct him, and to predict the evils that would be coming upon his house?

Also, what does it mean that amongst other things it was said that there would be a better priest to succeed Eli: "I will choose a faithful priest who shall do what I have in heart and mind. I will establish a lasting house for him which shall function in the presence of my anointed forever. Then whoever is left of your family will come to grovel before him for a piece of silver or a loaf of bread, and

will say: 'Appoint me, I beg you, to a priestly function, that I may have a morsel of bread to eat.'" (1 Sam 2:35-36)

For we know that Samuel, who outlived Eli, was outstanding as most faithful to the Lord. But it is the common opinion that he stood out more as a Levite than as a priest, and that his house did not stand out as faithful, for his children were reprobates. For it is also said, "He shall walk in the presence of my anointed." We inquire whether this is to be taken as referring to the priest himself or of his house, and who this anointed one might be.

Finally we ask you to explain what is to be supposed of the offering of silver coin and piece of bread, as if in a new offering, which the Law did not contain, and the rest of the things which are added.

The solution of Abelard

It is thought that that Man of God was an angel appearing in human form. The priest who would succeed Eli was not Samuel, who was a Levite, nor would he have a faithful or a reprobate house, nor does he seem to be understood as any other holy man who would succeed Eli in the priestly order, as Abinadab was, into whose home at Kiriath-jearim the Ark of the Lord was brought back from the Philistines (1 Kgs 7:1), or Eleazar, his son, sanctified then for taking care of the Ark (Ibid.), or finally Ahimelech, whom Saul slew with the rest of the priests in Nob, the city of the priests (1 Kgs 22:9ff).

So when it is said, "He shall walk in the presence of my anointed," take it as not of a priest, but of his house, which is under his ministry.

Finally that which is added, is about the future, and so forth, so that I have heard a certain Jew explain that the coin of silver is a silver shekel, by which anyone might redeem himself by a priest. The piece of bread, Quicar, means the fourth of a loaf, which was the offering of the poor. The portion of the priesthood was the right arm and the breastbone, that is, the upper part of the breast, the jawbone, the belly and the tail (which, however, was not always the same), because according to the different rites of sacrifice, as one reads in Leviticus, a portion used to be given to the priesthood. So it was announced to Eli that his house would come to such poverty that those who in any way were the recipients of redemptions and offerings, to whom also because of Eli himself the portion of the priesthood used to be given, would themselves be redeemed by other priests, begging food, and imploring that some small particle of the priestly portion be given to them, along with a little mouthful of bread, which above was called a loaf.

The thirty-seventh problem of Heloise

What does this mean, at the beginning of the Evangelist Mark, which says: "As it is written in Isaiah the prophet: Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way. A voice of one crying out in the desert," etc. (Mk 1:2) Why does he cite Isaiah, when the first quotation which follows immediately is from Malachi, and the second from Isaiah?

But if however he had done the contrary, the truth would still have been able to stand, that is, in such a way that that which he had

prefaced, according to which the text comes from Isaiah, would then pertain to the first quotation.

The solution of Abelard

But because the same sentence is contained in the words of both Prophets, the Evangelist, expressing himself concisely, ascribes that which Malachy said to Isaiah, who is the greater authority, and from whom perhaps he had learned this. The sending of the angel to prepare the way of the Lord, or preparation for Him itself, and the voice crying out in the desert—all this is the preaching of John. Isaiah describes John more carefully, since he does not call him an angel, but foretells him as one crying out in the desert; whence the Evangelist too does well, after the quotation from Isaiah, which he placed beforehand, immediately adding: "John appeared in the desert baptizing and proclaiming." (Mk 1:4) The reason indeed that he says, "in the desert," and "proclaiming," is the more openly to agree with the words spoken by Isaiah, that is, "a voice crying out in the desert."

Mark also providently, after beginning "It was written in Isaiah," adds, "the Prophet," as if in the quotation from Isaiah as well as that of Malachi (Mal 3:1), he could be more a prophet than he who, as I surmise, had taken this quotation from the prophecy of Isaiah which he had read, not only in the inspiration of the Spirit.

I think that in this way also can be solved the quotation which Matthew introduces gathered from two prophets, Zachariah and Jeremiah, while he attributes the whole thing to Jeremiah, saying: "Then was fulfilled what had been said through Jeremiah the prophet, 'And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of a man

with a price on his head, a price set by some of the Israelites, and they paid it out for the potter's field just as the Lord had commanded me." (Mt 27:9; Zach 2:12)

So while the quotation from Zachariah as well as that from Jeremiah may be conjoined in the same remark of the Lord's, Matthew nonetheless attributes the whole thing to Jeremiah, who was the greater in authority, and from whom Zachariah could have taken that which he said.

The thirty-eight problem of Heloise

Also producing not a few questions is that quotation from the Prophet Zachariah, which the Lord brings forth from within himself in Matthew, saying, "For it is written, "I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be dispersed." (Mt 26:31). For Zachariah seems to say this about a false prophet rather than about the Lord. For thus is it written in the book of Zachariah: "If a man still prophesies, his parents, father and mother, shall say to him, 'You shall not live, because you have spoken a lie in the name of the Lord.' When he prophesies, his parents, father and mother, shall thrust him through. On that day, every prophet shall be ashamed to prophesy his vision, neither shall he assume the hairy mantle to mislead, but he shall say, 'I am no prophet, I am a tiller of the soil, for I have owned land since my youth.' And if anyone asks him, 'What are these wounds on your chest?' he shall answer, 'With this I was wounded in the house of my dear ones.' Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who is my associate, says the Lord of

hosts. Strike the shepherd that the sheep may be dispersed, and I will turn my hand against the little ones." (Zach 13:3-7)

The solution of Abelard

Even though Zachariah may have said this about a false prophet, the Lord truly adduces it concerning himself, for though the Lord's quotation is taken from Zachariah, it is of such a kind that it would apply to a good shepherd just as much as to a bad one. For a shepherd, whether good or bad, when struck by some adversity, may be impeded from the pastoral care which he had accepted, and then the flock which he had held together is dispersed from his control, and wanders scattered into groups, become without shepherd or leader. So because persecution by adversaries brings about the dispersion of a good shepherd's flock just as much as a bad one's, so it is not inappropriate for the Lord to apply to his own Passion what has been said in general about shepherds, just as if he were to have said that what is generally true of shepherds has been fulfilled also in himself, and thus also in him shall come about that which was predicted of the false shepherd, so that even in this matter he should be reputed among the wicked, because he has become likened unto them even in this matter.

The thirty-ninth problem of Heloise

We also ask how the Evangelists could have written so differently about the Lord's prediction to Peter concerning the cock's crowing. For Matthew wrote thus, "Jesus said to him, 'Amen, I say to you, this very night before the cock crows, you will deny me three times.'" (Mt 26:34)

But Mark, whose Gospel is said to have been written at the dictation of Peter himself, says this: "Then Jesus said to him, 'Amen, I say to you, this very night before the cock crows twice you will deny me three times.'" (Mk 14:30 But Luke has: "I tell you, Peter, before the cock crows this day, you will deny three times that you know me." (Lk 22:34 But John has: "Amen, amen, I say to you, the cock will not crow before you deny me three times." (Jn 13:38)

What did the Lord want with all this diversity of expression, if he wished to say one thing to Peter by these means?

Also what does it mean that Mark says, "This very night," while the night was hardly in daytime, and to the crowing of the cock he adds "twice," which the others are silent about.

The solution of Abelard

It is the usage of Scripture to understand day and night equally in the noun "day", as for example when we say that someone lived or reigned so many years and so many days, or that he was there for so many days. So also when Mark said "today," he understood the night with its own day. When he added "this night," he was speaking not of night as a unit of time but of the adversity of the coming night. So that we can reconcile the two remarks about the cock's crowing, let us posit the Lord having first of all said temperately to Peter, as Mark relates, that before the cock would give its call twice, and afterwards, just as Peter would promise his constancy, he added that he would do even that, before the cock would crow. For Mark also portrays Peter very frequently to be overly confident and impudently to contradict the Lord's words, relating, "Peter said to

him, 'Even though all should have their faith shaken, mine will not be.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Amen, I say to you, this very night before the cock crows twice you will deny me three times.' But he vehemently replied, 'Even though I should have to die with you, I will not deny you.'" (Mk 14:29-31 Peter, who beforehand had said that he would not be scandalized, now adds something more, saying that he was also prepared to die with him before he would deny him. As for this greater presumption of Peter's constancy, the Lord himself too not incongruously is thought to have added something more, that is, in saying, that even before the cock would crow, Peter would deny him three times, as we said.

But this generates a further question, why Mark arranges the denials of Peter and the song of the cock in such a way that after the first denial the cock sings for the first time, and after two more denials, for the second time; from which it seems hardly possible that, according to what the other evangelists say, Peter would deny him three times before the cock would crow, unless perhaps in their words also should be understood "twice" which Mark in placing it there indicates that it is to be understood, and what the Lord in such a way will have said.

For when anything is spoken of more definitely in one place than in another, it is fitting frequently to understand the determination also in the place where it was not made, but it is to be carefully noted that it is left out elsewhere, lest falsehood confuse understanding. This is not unknown even to the pagans. Whence we not infrequently oppose the Jews concerning the verse: "Thou shalt

not lend at interest," (Ez 18:8) just as they should not lend even to us, they say that it is to be understood "to thy neighbor," which elsewhere is seen specified. But also when the Truth of the Gospel has it, "No one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit" (Jn 3:3), it is to be understood, "or sanctified by one's suffering for the faith," since elsewhere we have also the general remark concerning martyrs, the Lord saying: "Whoever loses his life for my sake will find it." (Mt 10:39)

Augustine in Book Three of "On the Harmony of the Gospels," solves this diversity concerning the denial of Peter in this way, that what Mark said refers to the utterance of the denial, while what the rest say refers to the disposition of a soul already so struck with fearfulness and disturbed that it would be prepared to deny a third time before the cock had entirely crowed.

If perchance anyone would inquire why the Lord said "three times" and not "four times" or more, which Peter would similarly have been prepared to do out of the magnitude of his fear, it seems to me that there is no small reason for having a three-fold denial, by the comprehensiveness of which one may understand a complete denial.

For everyone who denies Christ, does it either out of error or some fear, or presumes to it compelled by cupidity.

Peter, therefore, who would betray three times when it is predicted by the Lord, is insinuated as capable of complete denial. For neither is it to be doubted from this that he had already seen his deeds in the Lord, before he would deny the first time, how he would

be driven with the rest into the scandal of desperation; afterward liberated from this, when the Lord looked upon him, he wept with the bitter tears of penitence for what he had committed. Nor perchance could it be absurdly said that the first crowing of the cock, after the first denial of Peter, was not natural, but rather because of some disturbance, whether of Peter going out of the courtyard, or of some other person walking around, some rooster nearby listening, excited before the proper hour, was the first to crow, so that the first crowing was not normally done, but extorted by a certain compulsion. Not however without reason did the Lord ordain that at the first denial of Peter, immediately the cock would crow, as if disputing with Peter, nor in this way did Peter desist from his denial, so that the truth itself would become apparent.

So when the Lord predicted that Peter would deny him three times, before the cock crowed it seems that the hour of the normal cock's crow should be understood. Mark, who alone inserts "twice" takes indifferently the crowing of the cock as natural or accidental.

The fortieth problem of Heloise

Why is it that only the beasts and the birds are recalled as having been led to Adam in Paradise, to see what he would call them, and not also the reptiles of the land, such as serpents, or the reptiles of the water, such as fish? (Gen 2:20)

The solution of Abelard

We think this was well done, as far as mystery is concerned. For indeed, in the present Church, those who are continent, who lift themselves greatly upwards to heavenly things through desire, and

fly on high like winged creatures, are compared to the birds; good spouses are compared to the beasts, which touch the earth with one part of themselves, their feet, and are separated from it with another part, since with their body they do not wallow in it. For one who is conjoined in matrimony is divided, partially serving God, partially intent on the world, because of the pressing needs of the conjugal state. So it is as if with their feet, that is, with the lower part of themselves, they touch the earth, because they abandon themselves to earthly concerns because of the business of matrimony, which pertains to our fallen life. Reptiles, however, which lie in the deep with their whole bodies, nor are able at all to raise themselves up, are the reprobates inwardly occupied with earthly desires, and dwelling in the depths of vice.

Concerning which it is written: "The wicked, come into the depth of sin, has contempt." (Prov 18:3) Because of this, no fish are allowed to be offered in sacrifice to God.

Rightly therefore is it said that Adam gave names only to the flying creatures and to the walking animals led to him in Paradise, and not also to the reptiles, because of all the present population of the Church, in which the wheat is still mixed with the chaff, only those who are continent, and good spouses shall come to arrive at the true paradise of the heavenly fatherland, and are worthy of God's call; their names are already written in the book of life.

Indeed, concerning God's call, the Apostle has this to say: "And those he predestined he also called; and those he called he also justified; and those he justified he also glorified." (Rom 8:30)

The forty-first problem of Heloise

We ask who added at the end of the book of Deuteronomy (Dt 33-34), which are the last of the five books of Moses, that which speaks of the death of Moses and thereafter? Whether, that is, Moses himself said this also in a prophetic spirit, so that this too could be added to his books, or whether this was added on later by another.

The solution of Abelard

As Bede recalls in his commentary on Ezra, Ezra himself recopied not just the Law but, as is the majority opinion, the whole canon of Sacred Scripture, which was consumed as if by fire, just as it seemed to him was enough for the readers, so he added this just as many other things to the writings of the Old Testament. In this way we also see no small number of additions even to the Gospel writings made by the translators, like this one in Matthew: "'Eli, eli, lema sabachthani?', which means, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'" (Mt 27:46) So in the other evangelists, those things which were written not in Hebrew but in Greek, at once the explanation of the Hebrew words is found added.

Even in the book of Jerome on illustrious lives, where he puts himself down at the end of the work, an amount of his life and its ending are found added by someone.

The forty-second problem of Heloise

We inquire whether anyone can sin in doing what the Lord has permitted or even commanded.

The solution of Abelard

As is fitting, let it be conceded as true, we are moved by a grave question, how it is that spouses, whether in the old people or the new, exercising carnal concupiscence, may be said to sin in this way, by which they transmit original sin to their posterity. For the Lord constrained the prior people to the procreation of children by precept and by the curse of the Law upon those who left no seed in Israel.

This is why not only did he say to our first parents before their sin, "Be fertile and multiply, and fill the earth." (Gen 1:28), but this is the very same thing that he enjoined also on Noah and his sons after the flood. (Gen 19:1)

Concerning, however, the above mentioned curse of the Law, by which people were coerced into propagating children, this is what is said in Jerome's book against Elvidium "On the perpetual virginity of holy Mary:" as long as that Law remained, "grow, and multiply, and fill the earth," and "cursed is the barren woman, who does not bear seed in Israel (cf. Ex 23:26).

Wherefore this too is what Blessed Augustine has in his book "On the Good of Marriage:" Abraham possessed continence in habit only, but John possessed it in practice as well. So at that time, when even the Law following the days of the patriarchs said that anyone was accursed who did not rear children in Israel, even one who was able to exercise continence did not demonstrate it, but nonetheless he did possess it."

Likewise in his book to Julianum "On Preserving Widowhood:" Neither because I said that Ruth was blessed but Hannah more

blessed, since the one married twice, while the other, quickly widowed from one man, lived a long time, you should not consequently think yourself also to be better than Ruth. For there was in prophetic times a different dispensation for the holy women, whom obedience and not concupiscence compelled to wed, so that the people of God might be propagated, from whom would be born also the flesh of Christ.

So, then, that people might be propagated, cursed is considered the person who, according to the phrase in the Law, did not raise up seed in Israel.

Whence even the holy women were on fire, not with cupidity for concubinage, but with zeal for giving birth, so that they may most correctly be thought not to have sought intercourse if children could have come about in another way. Also to men, the custom was conceded of having more than one living wife.

Therefore holy Ruth, since she could not have in a dead husband the seed which at that time was necessary in Israel, sought another man by whom she could obtain it. For this purpose, at least, by the curse of the Law, which the aforementioned doctor recalls, and by the high opprobrium of the faithful, even the Law itself provided for that people that younger brothers, even if they have their own seed by their own wives, must raise up seed also for their older brothers; the Law compelled them to lay with their brothers' wives and to beget sons for those who were already dead rather than for themselves, so that in this way those brothers who were not deprived of offspring could absolve their brothers of the curse of the

Law. Even the Lord himself establishes this also as a reward for observers of the Law, that there would remain no barren ones among them, neither among humans nor among animals. For thus is it written in Deuteronomy: "As your reward for heeding these decrees and observing them carefully, the Lord ... will love and bless and multiply you; he will bless the fruit of your womb and the produce of your soil, ... the young of your flocks. ... -You will be blessed above all peoples; no man or woman among you shall be childless nor shall your livestock be barren." (Dt 7:12-14)

Wherefore also we read of not one of the holy Fathers being deprived of seed, even though they might have had barren wives, whom they married not for the pleasure of carnal concupiscence, but to propagate the people of God, so that they might beget children not so much for themselves as for God.

Such as this is Tobit's prayer: "Now, Lord, you know that I take this wife of mine not because of lust, but for the sake of posterity," in which, "Praised be your name forever and ever." (Tob 8:7, 5) It was with this intention that Abraham joined in matrimony and deserve to raise up progeny from a barren wife. In this way also Isaac (Gen 25), Manoah, the father of Samson (Jdg 13), Elkanah, the husband of Hannah (1 Kgs 1:19), Zachary, the husband of Elisabeth (Lk 1:5 ff), all obtained the desired progeny, lest they should incur the curse of the Law or the opprobrium of matrimony. That is why it is called "matrimony," that which has a beginning belonging to the mother of the family to make. The daughter of Jephthah, contemplating this malediction of the Law, mourned her virginity, because she was to

die a virgin leaving no seed in Israel. (Cf Jdg 11:38) Elizabeth exulted at being liberated from this opprobrium, saying: "So has the Lord done for me at a time when he has seen fit to take away my disgrace before others." (Lk 1:25)

Having recalled all of the above, the doctor diligently attending, commends the copulation of spouses which is on account of children, not so much to be begotten in the first place as to be regenerated in Christ, so that he calls such copulation more immune from sin than that which is for the purpose of averting fornication. The Apostle, on the other hand, establishes fornication as the sole cause, exhorting us greatly to continence: "Now in regard to the matters about which you wrote: It is a good thing for a man not to touch a woman, but because of cases of immorality every man should have his own wife, and every woman her own husband." (1 Cor 7:2)

So it is as if it might become better that conjugal copulation be expended for God rather than for ourselves, so that we should intend to beget children for God rather than to provide for our own utility. To this effect the aforementioned doctor ranks the one intention over the other, so that he does not refer to as an indulgence that copulation which he separates inwardly from sin, so that not only should it not be avoided as something culpable, but it should be sought as something praiseworthy. He also commends the good of spouses, so that if they should enter upon a cause which is appropriate, namely the procreation of children, they may excuse even those copulations which come about not by this cause which is

appropriate, and he demonstrates that these spouses are good in themselves rather than in the operation of avoiding fornication.

Whence also in the book cited previously, that is, "On the Good of Matrimony," thus does he say: "Therefore, one deservingly inquires why there may be the good of matrimony, which even the Lord confirmed in the Gospel (cf Mt 19:9), not only because He prohibited the dismissal of a wife except because of fornication, but also because, when invited, He came to a wedding (cf Jn 2), there is merit in inquiring why it is a good. It does not seem a good to me because of the procreation of children alone, but also because of the natural companionship between the different sexes."

Again, "That social bonding of spouses is so strong that, while it is tied for the purpose of procreation, it may not be loosed for the purpose of procreation. A man would be able to dismiss a barren wife and marry another, by whom he might have children, and nonetheless it is not allowed to have them."

Again, "It is clearly to be seen that God gives us some good things which should be sought for themselves, such as wisdom, health, friendship; and he gives us others which are necessary on account of something else, such as teaching, food and drink, sleep, marriage, intercourse.

Of these, some are necessary for wisdom, such as teaching; others for health, such as food and drink and sleep; others for friendship, such as marriage or intercourse. For from this comes the propagation of the human race, in which the great good of amicable society exists."

So anyone who uses these good things which are necessary on account of something else, not for the purpose on account of which they were instituted, commits sin, sometimes venially, sometimes mortally. Whoever uses these things for that on account of which they were given, does well.

Again he writes, "It seems to me that at this time only those who are not continent should marry, according to this statement of the same Apostle: "But if they cannot contain themselves they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn." (1 Cor 7:9)

Nonetheless, in these matters it is not that there is no sin for the nuptials which are chosen for the undoing of fornication. There may be less sin than fornication, but nonetheless there may be sin.

Now, however, what shall we respond to the very clear voice of the Apostle, saying: "Let him do as he wishes. He is committing no sin; let them get married." (1 Cor 7:36); and, "If you marry, however, you do not sin, nor does an unmarried woman sin if she marries." (1 Cor 7:28)

Here certainly it is no longer right to doubt whether nuptials are not a sin. Nor, therefore, does the Apostle concede nuptials as an indulgence.

For whoever would equivocate that it is most absurd to say that they have not sinned to whom an indulgence has been given. But rather, what he concedes as an indulgence is the copulation which takes place through incontinence, not for the sole cause of procreation, and to some degree with no purpose of procreation. Nuptials do not require this copulation to happen, but they do beg

that it be overlooked, if nonetheless they are not so excessive that they should impede the times which should be set apart for praying, nor should they devolve into that usage which is against nature.

Concerning which, the Apostle was not able to be silent, since he was speaking about the extreme corruptions of unclean and impious people.

For copulation which is necessarily the cause of procreation is inculpable and that alone is matrimonial. That, however, which goes beyond that which is necessary, no longer serves reason but the libido. And yet not to exact this, but to grant it to a spouse, lest he should sin mortally in fornication, belongs to the married person. If, however, both are subject to such concupiscence, they are doing a thing which is clearly not belonging to matrimony.

However, if in their conjoining they esteem more that which is honest than that which is dishonest, which means more that which belongs to matrimony than that which does not belong to matrimony, this is conceded to them as an indulgence, by the authority of the Apostle. Again Augustine writes, "That natural use, when falling outside the scope of matrimony, that is, beyond the need for propagation, is venial in a wife, but damnable in a prostitute. That which is contrary to nature is execrable in a prostitute but more execrable in a wife. For the disposition of the Creator and the position of the creature have such worth that in matters which have been conceded for use, even when the way is exceeded it is more tolerable than in those things which have not been concede, whether the excess be singular or infrequent. And so in a matter that has been

conceded, immoderation is tolerable in a spouse, lest the libido should break out in a matter that has not been conceded.

Whence it is also that one sins far less if however demanding of his wife than one most infrequent in fornication. When a man wishes to use a wife's member which is not conceded to him, the wife is more shameful if she permits this to take place in herself rather than in another woman.

So the conjugal right is chastity in procreation, and fidelity in returning the carnal due, that is, the work of matrimony, which the Apostle defends from all incrimination: "If you marry, however, you do not sin, nor does an unmarried woman sin if she marries." (1 Cor 7:28) and: "Let him do as he wishes. He is committing no sin; let them get married." (1 Cor 7:36)

On account of those things which we mentioned above, however, a more immodest approach to exacting one's due on the part of either sex is conceded to spouses as an indulgence.

Therefore that which the Apostle says, "An unmarried woman is anxious about the things of the Lord, so that she may be holy in both body and spirit" (1 Cor 7:34), must not be taken in such a way that we should think a chaste Christian wife not to be holy in body. Indeed, to all the faithful was it said: "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God?" (1 Cor 6:19) Holy also are the bodies of spouses who keep faith with each other and the Lord.

The same Apostle testifies that an unbelieving spouse is no obstacle to the sanctity of either of them, but rather that the sanctity

of the wife profits the unbelieving man, or the sanctity of the man profits the unbelieving wife, saying: "For the unbelieving husband is made holy through his believing wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy through the believing husband." (1 Cor 7:14) Consequently was that said concerning the greater sanctity of unmarried women than of married women.

Again Augustine writes: "The bond of matrimony remains, even if progeny, because of which the initiative was undertaken, are not forthcoming because of manifest sterility, so that it is not permitted for spouses who already know that they will not have children to separate from each other, or for the cause of children to copulate also with others.

Should they do this, they commit adultery with those with whom they copulate themselves; but they themselves remain married. Clearly among our ancient forefathers it was permitted in Law and in practice, with the permission of the wife, to take another woman, whereby common children should be born by the intercourse of the one and the seed of the other. Whether this is permitted now also, I should say perchance not. For there is not the need for propagating that there was then, when it was permitted even to spouses who could have children to take additionally another wife for the sake of a more abundant posterity, which is certainly not permitted now.

Again Augustus writes: "What food is to the health of the human being, copulation is the health of the race, and neither is without carnal delectation. Which, however, modified and held back

through a restraining temperance to its natural usage, cannot be mere libido.

But what illicit food is in sustaining life, fornicating or adulterous copulation is in seeking offspring. And what illicit food is in the pampering of stomach and throat, illicit copulation is in a libido seeking no offspring.

And what a not infrequent immoderate appetite is in licit food, the venial copulation is between spouses. So just as it is better to die of hunger than to eat food consecrated to idols, so it is better to be defunct without children than to seek offspring by means of illicit coitus. By whatever means, however, people should be born, if they follow not the vices of their parents and rightly worship God, they will be honest and saved. For the seed of a man, from whatever kind of man, is God's creature, and it will fare badly for those using it badly, while the seed itself will not be evil at all.

But just as the good children of adulterers are no justification for adultery, so the bad children of spouses are no incrimination for matrimony.

Again, Augustus says above: "There are men who are so incontinent as not to spare their wives when pregnant." So whatever between themselves spouses do that is immodest, shameful or sordid, is a vice of the persons, not the fault of matrimony. Now also in that more immodest exaction of the carnal due which the Apostle does not prescribe for them as a command but concedes to them as an indulgence, so that even besides the purpose of procreation they might join with each other, even if depraved habits impel them to

this kind of copulation, nonetheless matrimony defends them from adultery or fornication. For this is not allowed because of matrimony, but it is overlooked because of matrimony.

So spouses owe one another not only faithfulness in the sharing of their own sexuality itself, for the purpose of begetting children, which is the primary companionship of the human race in this mortal state, but also owe one another to a certain degree the mutual service of curtailing one another's weakness for the purpose of avoiding illicit copulation, so that even if perpetual continence should be attractive to one of them, it is not possible except by the consent of the other. And for this reason, then, "The wife does not have power over her own body, but the man; likewise also the man does not have power over his body, but his wife," so they should not deny to one another what the man seeks from matrimony nor the wife from the husband, not on account of the procreation of children but on account of weakness and incontinence, lest in this way they should fall into damnable corruptions, when Satan tempts them with incontinence, whether both of them or either of them. For matrimonial union for the purpose of procreation has no fault."

Again Augustine says, "To fulfill one's matrimonial debt is no fault; to exact it, however, beyond the need for begetting, is venial fault.

Augustine says the same thing to his comrade Valerian in the first book of "On Matrimony and Concupiscence: "But who would dare to say that the gift of God is a sin?" The soul and the body, and whatever goods of soul and of body, naturally given even to sinners,

are gifts of God, because God, not they themselves, made these things. Concerning those things which they do, it is said: "Whatever is not from faith is sin." (Rom 14:23)

So let not anyone be called truly modest, who should not, for the sake of the true God, preserve matrimonial fidelity for his wife. Therefore the copulation of husband and wife, for the purpose of begetting, is a natural good of matrimony. But one uses this good wrongly if he have a disposition towards the enjoyment of passion rather than towards the will to propagate.

In this intention of the heart, he who possesses his vessel, that is, his wife, without a doubt does not possess her in the distress of desire, like people who are ignorant of God, but in sanctification and honor, like the faithful who hope in God. Indeed, a man makes use of this evil of concupiscence and is not vanquished, whenever he confounds it or restrains and confines its agitation of indiscrete movements; nor unless considering progeny does he relax and summon it, so that he might beget carnally those who are to be regenerated spiritually, not so that he might subject the spirit to the sordid servitude of the flesh.

Similarly, Augustine writes "On the Marriage of Joseph and Mary: "Every matrimonial good is fulfilled in these parents of Christ, progeny, fidelity, sacrament—we recognize the progeny in the Lord Jesus Himself, the fidelity because there was no adultery, the sacrament because there was no divorce.

In it only matrimonial copulation did not exist, because in sinful flesh it could not have taken place without that concupiscence

of the flesh, which came about through sin. He who would be without sin willed to be conceived without this, not in sinful flesh but only in the likeness of sinful flesh, so that even in this he might teach everyone that which is born of copulation is sinful flesh, since only that flesh which was not been born of it was not sinful.

Nevertheless, matrimonial copulation, which takes place with the intention of procreating, is not itself a sin, because the good will of soul produces the consequences, nor does the body follow the lead of pleasure, nor is the human will submitted to the subjugation of sin, since the wound of sinfulness is justly reduced to the usage of procreation.

The Apostle says: "This I say by way of concession, however, not as a command." (1 Cor 7:6) Concerning this, Augustine continues in the same book "On the Marriage of Joseph and Mary:" So wherever an indulgence is to be given, it is undeniable that there is some sinfulness.

So since copulation which properly is imputed to matrimony is not culpable when it is with the intention of procreation, what does the Apostle concede as an indulgence, but that the spouses, when they are not continent, seek the due of the flesh from one another, not with the will of propagating, but with the desire of the libido.

For the sake of matrimony, however, this pleasure does not fall into sin, but for the sake of matrimony it receives an indulgence. On this account, even here marriage is praiseworthy, because even that which does not belong to it is made to be overlooked for the sake of it.

Therefore neither should this copulation, by which one is enslaved to concupiscence, be performed so as to impede the fetus which marriage postulates; but nonetheless it is a blameless thing not to copulate except with the will to procreate, but there is a venial fault in copulating to feed the desire of the flesh but not on account of one's spouse.

Again in the second book, Augustine writes: We do not condemn bread and wine on account of gluttons and drunkards, just as neither gold on account of the greedy and avaricious. On this account, we also do not condemn the union of honest spouses because of the shameful passion of their bodies. For when there was no preceding commission of sin, it might have been possible for the first couple not to be embarrassed. But when this passion was aroused after the first sin, then they were confounded and forced to cover it. Whence it remained to the couples who came afterwards, even if they were using this bad thing well and licitly, in the deed itself to avoid human sight, and so to confess that it was shameful, since it no one ought to cast shame on that which is good.

Thus two things are indicated: both the good of laudable conjoining, by which children are begotten; and the evil of shameful passion, by which those who are begotten need to be regenerated lest they be damned. Accordingly those who licitly lie together use a bad thing well; while those who do so illicitly use a bad thing badly.

More rightly, then, does it receive the name of an evil thing than of a good one, because it makes blush both those who are good and those who are bad. Better also do we believe him who says: "I

know that no good dwells in me" (Rom 7:18), that is, in my flesh. The person who calls the flesh good confesses that it is bad when he is embarrassed by it; if however he is not embarrassed, he adds immodesty, a greater evil.

Rightly then do we speak to the effect that the good of matrimony cannot be accused of the original evil, which is carried with it, just as the evil of adultery cannot be excused by the natural good which is born of it. For human nature, which is born either of matrimony or of adultery, is the work of God. If it were evil of itself, it would not have been begotten; but if it did not possess evil, it would not have needed regeneration.

FINIS.

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