Archaism in Ronsard’s Theory of a Poetic Vocabulary

when one considers Ronsard’s theory of a poetic vocabulary in relation to the general theory of poery that guided him and his colleagues, one is impressed by the high degree of consistency that unites the part to the whole, even though this consistency was not always realized in practice. The immense regeneration of French letters to which these poets dedicated their labors and which Ronsard, in so far as his own work was concerned, described as requiring a “stile apart, sens apart, euvre apart” (I, 45) 1 inexorably involved as well a renewal of the vocabulary of poetry. A significant renovation both of style and sense would have been impossible on the basis of the aesthetic and intellectual orientation of the Rhétoriqueurs, of Jean Lemaire de Belges, Maurice Scève, Clément Marot, or Mellin de Saint-Gelais. Some of these writers no doubt took the initial forward steps, but the common ideal shared by the members of the Pléiade, of opening definitively the highroad of European tradition that originates in the literatures of classical antiquity and especially in that of Greece, could be made a living reality, they felt, only when their theoretical postulates took form in a new poetry distinguished from the old in every important respect, including the lexical. This accounts for the great concern with the problem of language
which emerges in the title of their manifesto, Joachim du Bellay's *Deffence et Illustration de la Langue Francoyse*.

Like most manifestos, the *Deffence* did not limit itself to a discussion and evocation of the positive values that it sought to bring into being. Parallel with this discussion, and in a sense justifying and motivating it, was the reiterated expression of dissatisfaction with the work of preceding generations of French writers:

> Et si nostre langue n'est si copieuse et riche que la greque ou latine, cela ne doit estre imputé au default d'icelle, comme si d'elle mesme elle ne pouvoot jamais estre si non pauvre et sterile: mais bien on le doit attribuer à l'ignorance de notz majeurs, qui ayans . . . en plus grande recommendation le bien faire que le bien dire . . . nous ont laïssé nostre langue si pauvre et nue, qu'elle a besoing des ornements et . . . des plumes d'autruy.²

This thought was, of course, not original with Du Bellay. Long before he could have had the intention of writing the *Deffence* the idea that the poverty of the French language resulted from the neglect and disdain with which it was treated by men of education in France had already been clearly expressed by Jacques Peletier. In 1541, far in advance of his meetings with either Du Bellay or Ronsard, Peletier had stated what was to be one of the cardinal positions of the Pleiade:

> Si de bien pres on veult considerer le stile des escrivains du temps present . . . on voira clairement qu'ilz n'approchent pas de celle copieuse vehemence, & gracieuse proprieté qu'on voit luire es auteurs anciens. Et toutesfoix on ne scauroit raisonnablement dire que ce fust faulde de grant esprit. . . .
Mais la principale raison, & plus apparente . . . qui nous osté
le merité de vray honneur, est le mesprix & contentement de
nostre langue native. . . .

It is scarcely open to doubt that in the literary discussions that
must have taken place between Peletier and Ronsard on
March 6, 1543, and between Peletier and Du Bellay some time
in 1546, the question of the defense of the French language
was either explicitly mentioned or constituted one of the
implied premises fundamental to their exchange of views.

If we have mentioned Peletier it is because he was perhaps
in the fullest sense the precursor of the Pléiade. He propagated
the impulse toward the enrichment of the French language
not only in his theoretical writings and conversations with
fellow-poets but also in his poetry:

    Or pource qu’ez Latins et Grecz
    Les ars sont reduiz et compris,
    Avec les Naturelz segretz,
    C’est bien raison qu’ilz soient appris:
    Mais comme d’un riche pourpris,
    Tout le meilleur il en faut prendre,
    Pour en nostre langue le rendre:
    La ou tout peut estre traitté,
    Pourveu que bien tu te disposes:
    S’il y a de la pauvreté,
    Qui garde que tu ne composes
    Nouveaux motz aux nouvelles choses?  8
    Si mesme a l’exemple te mires
    De ceulx la que tant tu admires?  6

Peletier, however, was not the father of this current of thought
any more than the two young men who were destined to
contribute more than he to its establishment in France. A discussion of its origins and evolution in that country would be superfluous since it has been treated in masterly fashion by Ferdinand Brunot. Pierre Villey has shown, however, that Du Bellay's *Deffence* was very heavily indebted to Sperone Speroni's *Dialogo delle lingue*, first published in 1542. The ideas that Peletier had advanced in 1541, and that later were so ardently defended by Du Bellay from 1549 onward, were thus part of the intellectual baggage of every progressive mind as the sixteenth century approached its midpoint.

Ronsard's defense of these ideas had begun some years earlier, and we may presume that even if the writings in which they appeared were not published until 1550, they were known in the poet's immediate circle soon after their composition. The ode *A sa Muse*, probably written in 1545, clearly foreshadows the language and the thought of both Du Bellay's *Deffence* and of his own preface to the *Odes* of 1550. He calls upon his Muse to abandon the sense, the rhyme, and the technique of the ignorant moderns, evidently identified with those who still clung to the traditions of an earlier generation. He summons the divinity to reveal a new and brilliant poetic form, having its substantive sources in humanistic learning, whose luminous flashes of lightning would annihilate the "old ignorance of our incurious ancestors." It is in the same spirit and at approximately the same time that he wrote *La Victoire de François de Bourbon*, in which he grudgingly concedes that the hymn composed by Clément Marot to celebrate this victory at the battle of Cérisoles (1544) was an acceptable effort as a preliminary sketch awaiting the perfect hand of an ingenious craftsman to carry the theme to its highest possible expression (I, 83).
end of the poet's life to spin the double thread of pride in the innovation of a fresh and vigorous poetry and a sense of the great improvement wrought by the enlightened marriage of verse with humanist studies. In a final variant that appeared in the first posthumous edition, Ronsard refers to himself as

\[
\ldots \text{nay d'un meilleur âge,} \\
\text{Aux lettres industrieux.} \ldots
\]

(1587, t. II, 33)

Between the earliest and latest assertions of these ideas, the poet was not entirely silent. At a moment when he thought he had received definite encouragement from Henri II to undertake the long-delayed *Franciade*, he feigned a certain regret in the *Élégie à Cassandre* (1554) at temporarily abandoning the lesser forms, such as the ode and the pastoral,

\[
\text{Car, à vrai dire, encore mon esprit} \\
\text{N'est satisfait de ceux qui ont écrit} \\
\text{En nôtre langue, & leur amour mérite} \\
\text{Où du tout rien, ou faveur bien petite.}
\]

(VI, 58)

In the preface to the *Franciade*, probably composed in 1585, and in the verses that form a sort of epilogue to this last work in prose, the essentials of Ronsard's position regarding the poverty of the language that he and his fellow-poets had inherited are intact. The four decades of poetic activity on his part and that of his immediate and more distant colleagues have not sufficiently remedied the situation that obtained at
their first entry upon the literary scene. Ronsard tells us that it is (and presumably will remain) exceedingly difficult to write in French if the language is not greatly enriched over its present condition by the addition of new words and forms of expression. In support of this point of view, he appeals to the experience of those who have daily occasion to write French and who, therefore, have intimate knowledge of the “extreme geine de se servir tousjours d’un mot” (XVI, 348). The Muses had granted to the foremost poets of Greece and Rome the use of linguistic instruments capable of perfect utterance; but, says Ronsard, in exculpation of the shortcomings of his own epic, the daughters of Mnemosyne had been less generous with him.

... dont la langue peu riche,
Couverte de halliers tous les jours se desfriche,
Sans mots, sans ornemens, sans honneur & sans pris,
Comme un champ qui fait peur aux plus gentils esprits
Des laboureurs, actifs à nourrir leurs mesnages,
Qui tournent les guerets pleins de ronces sauvages
Et d’herbes aux longs pieds, retardement des boeufs,
A faute d’artisans qui n’ont point davant eux
Defriché ny viré la campagne feruè,
Qui maintenant revesche arreste leur charruè,
Luttant contre le soc d’herbes environné.

(XVI, 354)

The plough, however, was never long arrested. The period that began with the publication of the Deffence and Ronsard’s Odes witnessed a most intensive cultivation of the limitless potentialities of the French language, in which lexical enrich-
ment was the inevitable accompaniment of a profound aesthetic and intellectual exploitation. Du Bellay faces the future with the utmost confidence. The language of his day, he finds, is but a slender stem that has hardly begun to put forth blossoms. How then shall it give proof of its power to produce fruit? Surely the day will come, he believes, when its roots will have plunged deeply into the nourishing soil, and the French language will attain a strength and loftiness equal to Greek and Latin. The fourth chapter of Book I of the Deffence, entitled "Que la langue francoyse n'est si pauvre que beaucoup l'estiment," opens with an energetic statement of this theme:

Je n'estime pourtant nostre vulgaire, tel qu'il est maintenant, estre si vil et abject... Et qui voudra de bien pres y regarder, trouvera que nostre langue francoyse n'est si pauvre, qu'elle ne puyssse rendre fidelement ce qu'elle emprunte des autres, si inferte, qu'elle ne puyssse produyr de soy quelque fruct de bonne invention, au moyen de l'industrie et diligence des cultivateurs d'icelle, si quelques uns se treuvent tant amys de leur paiz et d'eux mesmes, qu'ilz s'y veillent employer. (Def., pp. 75 f.; cf. p. 81)

No doubt Ronsard's confidence in the early days of the literary movement of which he was the leader was at least as great as that of Du Bellay; but in some respects, both in theory and in practice, some abatement of his enthusiasm seems to have occurred with the passage of time. Discussing the creation of compound words (e.g. enreter, douxamer, tireloin) in imitation of Greek and Latin procedures, Ronsard informs us in his Abbregé de l'Art poétique françois (1565) that the lexical evolution of the language had suffered somewhat during the reigns of François I and Henri II through the
unwillingness of the older poets to grant "aux nouveaux une telle liberté" (XIV, 32). In a note that Remy Belleau, the commentator of the Second livre des Amours, wrote in 1560 to explain the newly coined verbs en-rocher, en-glacer, en-eauër, en-feuër, we learn that Ronsard's freedom in this respect had been affected in the same manner as that of his contemporaries: "Tourner en roche, en eau, en glace, en feu," says Belleau in explanation of the above neologisms, "mots nouveaux et nécessaires pour enrichir la pauvreté de nostre langue, laquelle ne manqueroit aujourd'hui d'une infinité de beaux mots bien inventez & bien recherchez, si du commencement les envieux de la vertu de l'auteur ne l'eussent détourné d'une si louable entreprise." One may fairly assume that Belleau here reproduces a thought that the author of the Amours had communicated to him, and one that was to find renewed expression in the Caprice au Seigneur Simon Nicolas, one of Ronsard's last affirmations (1584) on the state of poetry in France:

. . . ce vulgaire,
A qui jamais je n'ay peu satisfaire
Ny n'ay voulu, me fascha tellement
De son japper en mon advenement,
Quand je hantay les eaux de Castalie,
Que nostre langue en est moins embellie:
Car elle est manque & faut de l'action
Pour la conduire à sa perfection.  

Since Belleau had died in 1577, the extension of his note which is inserted under his name in the collective edition of 1584 (page 165), may be attributed with some probability to Ronsard himself:
En-fouë, en-eauë, en-glace) Ce sont mots inventez par l'Auteur pour la richesse de nostre langue, & fort heureusement composez. Car de feu, tournant le e en o, vient fouver, & foijace, qui est une certaine galette ou tourteau cuit au feu. Puis fouë, qui signifie une grande flame de feu, telle que nous faisons en nos villages la vigile de la S. Jean. En-eauë) Il est certain que nos peres disoyent eauë, pour eau: tesmoins en sont les vieux Romans. Or d'eauë le Poëte a fait le verbe En-cauër, comme de glace, en-glace. Les François le devroyent suivre en telles compositions, pourveu qu'elles fussent bien reiglées, & proprement faites.

It would be vain, Ronsard says a year or two later, to regard the classical languages as still naturally capable of giving rise to such neologisms:

Ausquelles langues mortes il n'est licite de rien innover, disgraciees du temps, sans appuy d'Empereurs, ny de Roys, de Magistrats ny de villes, comme chose morte, laquelle s'est perdue par le fil des ans, ainsi que font toutes choses humaines, qui perissent vieilles, pour faire place aux autres suivantes & nouvelles. . . .

That constitutes no reason, in Ronsard's view, for supposing that the natural forces that once made the classical tongues so responsive to the need for linguistic innovation are unable to operate with equal power in the modern languages (XVI, 349 f.). For ancient Cybele, the Great Mother, whose domination extends throughout Nature's realm, will not deny the centuries that are to be the sustenance upon which the great literary ages of the past have been nourished (ibid., 355).

_Multa Renascentur Quae Jam Cecidere . . . Vocabula_ 17

But the power of innovation, encouraged though it be by the benevolent collusion of quickening Nature, does not
exhaust the instrumentalities that she places in the hands of poets. The innovations of yesterday may, with the passage of time and the gradual deposit of ineffably subtle associations, have become the precious archaisms of today. This appears to have been Du Bellay's thought when he wrote:

Quand au reste, use de motz purement francoys, non toutes-fois trop communs, non point aussi trop inusitez, si tu ne voulois quelquefois usurper, et quasi comme enchasser ainsi qu'une pierre precieuse et rare, quelques motz antiques en ton poème. . . . Pour ce faire, te faudroit voir tous ces vieux romans et poètes francoys, ou tu trouverras un . . . anuyter pour faire nuyt, assener pour frapper ou on visoit . . . et mil’ autres bons motz, que nous avons perdu par notre negligence. Ne doute point que le moderé usaige de telz vocables ne donne grande majesté tant au vers comme à la prose. . . .

The same ideas appear with some nuances several years later in Peletier's Art poétique (1555), but he must have been turning them over in his mind since 1541 at least, when he made his translation of Horace's theory of poetry. Peletier advocates moderation and aesthetic discrimination in the use of archaic words:

Il ne sera defendu de ramener quelquefois les motz anciens. Comme aderdre, pour aderer, dont use souvent Jean de Meung: heberger, pour loger: ost, pour une armée: pourvu que nous y soyons rares. . . . Et principalement seront bien apliquez, quand nous ferons parler quelque personnage du vieus tant Francois. Et pensons qu’il n’est mot si rude, qui ne trouve sa place, si nous prenons l’avis de le bien coloquer.

That Ronsard shared the opinions of Du Bellay and Peletier on the value of introducing old French words into poetry will
be abundantly clear in the sequel from observations that he made in 1559 and in succeeding years. But as early as 1550, his first commentator, Jean Martin, author of the Breve exposition de quelques passages du premier livre des Odes de Pierre de Ronsard, glossing verse 107 in the ode A Jouachim du Bellai Angevin, wrote as follows:

*Beante en eus s'émerveilla* Beante signifie autant que inhians en latin . . . & bien que ce soit un vocable antique, & peu familier aus oreilles Francoises . . . il n’est pas pourtant à refuser, mais à louer, d’autant que nous n’avons un seul vocable (hors lui) propre pour desseiner telle affection. Avienne, ô bons Dieus, que quelque hardi poëte remette en usage les vieus mots François, lesquels furent nostres, & que nous avons cruellement chassés, pour donner place à ne sçai quels étrangers Italiens, & Latins. (II, 208 f.)

In these words, which may have been inspired by conversation with Ronsard or by reading of the *Deffence*, Jean Martin expressed one of the constant theoretical positions of the group of poets who were to become known as the Pléiade.

This point of view was not imposed without a struggle, a struggle that was part of the general literary conflict from which French poetry emerged with a definitively classical substance and orientation. Ronsard writes in 1559 of the “grand travail” that this effort had cost him in the early days, and of the moral courage required to stand in opposition to the “tourbe ignorante” (X, 20 f.). In spite of their defamatory zeal in rending his good name, he says,

*Je fis des mots nouveaux, je restauray les vieux,*
*Bien peu me souciant du vulgaire envyeux,*
Medisant, ignorant, qui depuis a fait conte
De mes vers, qu'au premier il me tournoit à honte.

(X, 21 f.)

By 1563, the slanders were coming from a different direction. The opposition now was not so much literary as politico-religious. In reply to the "injures et calomnies, de je ne sçay quels Predicans, & Ministres de Geneve," Ronsard wrote a new apology of his laborious poetic life in which some of the terms remained almost identical with those of the old:

Je vy que des François le langage trop bas
Se trainoit sans vertu, sans ordre, ny compas:
Adonques pour hausser ma langue maternelle,
Indonté du labeur, je travaillé pour elle,
Je fis des mots nouveaux, je rappellay les vieux:
Si bien que son renon je poussay jusqu'aux cieux.

(XI, 167)

In his Art poétique of 1565, Ronsard reduced to theory the practice which he here describes in general language. Foremost among the sources upon which the poet must draw for his archaic words are the old romances of the Middle Ages: "Tu ne rejetteras point les vieux motz de noz Romans, ains les choisiras avecques meure & prudente election" (XIV, 9 f.). Twenty years later, in his last remarks "touchant le Poëme Heroïque," he gave what he believed to be very practical advice in the hope that it would augment the lexical resources of novices in epic poetry: "Encore vaudroit il mieux, comme un bon Bourgeois ou Citoyen, rechercher & faire un Lexicon
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des vieils mots d'Artus, Lancelot, & Gauvain, ou commenter le Romant de la Rose, que s'amuser à je ne sçay quelle Grammaire Latine qui a passé son temps" (XVI, 352).

In extolling the aesthetic advantages of the archaism, Ronsard had, of course, no exclusive preference for the vocabulary of the old romances. These are not mentioned in a number of passages in which the claims for antiquated words are advanced. Thus, in another section of the Art poétique, he wrote: "Tu ne dédaigneras les vieux motz François, d'autant que je les estime toujours en vigueur, quoy qu'on die, jusques à ce qu'ilz aient faict renaistre en leur place, comme une vieille souche, un rejetton . . ." (XIV, 33). The Caprice à Nicolas, which echoes similar verses of 1559 and 1563, merely says:

Promeine-toy dans les plaines Attiques,
Fay nouveaux mots, r'appelle les antiques. . . .

(LL., VI, 64)

And in a curious note to the first posthumous edition, whose thought and phraseology leave little doubt as to its authenticity, Ronsard commented as follows upon an old French word introduced for the first time in 1587 into the third book of the Franciade, at v. 251: "Mehaigne, perclus . . . Nos critiques se moqueront de ce vieil mot françois: mais il les faut laisser caqueter. Au contraire, je suis d'opinion que nous devons retenir les vieux vocables significatifs, jusques à tant que l'usage en aura forgé d'autres nouveaux en leur place" (XVI, 184). Finally, not long before or after the composition of this note, the poet wrote to the "lecteur apprentif" of the third preface of his epic: " . . . Je t'advertis de ne faire conscience
de remettre en usage les antiques vocables . . . ” (XVI, 348), a passage who primary intention, as the sequel reveals, was the preservation of ancient dialectal terms in danger of extinction.

Ferdinand Brunot, reflecting on the influence of the reforms to which Ronsard had so greatly contributed, did not overstate the case when he said: “L’effet de paroles tombées de si haut fut immense.” To the extent that Ronsard’s archaizing tendency was concerned, his voice, if not his authority, was faithfully transmitted to the following century by one of the few poets who approach him in stature. In the preface “Aux lecteurs” to Les Tragiques, D’Aubigné, who regarded Ronsard as “par dessus son siecle en sa profession,” recalls, in 1616, the substance of a number of conversations with the great poet in which he and others participated. Ronsard told his interlocutors,

Mes enfans, deffendez vostre mere de ceux qui veulent faire servante une Damoselle de bonne maison. Il y a des vocables qui sont françois naturels, qui sentent le vieux, mais le libre françois, comme dougé, tenué, empour, dorne, hauer, bouger, et autres de telle sorte. Je vous recommande par testament que vous ne laissiez point perdre ces vieux termes, que vous les employiez et defendiez hardiment contre des maraux qui ne tiennent pas elegant ce qui n’est point escorchedu latin et de l’italien, et qui aiment mieux dire collauder, contemuer [sic], blasonner que louër, mespriser, blasmer: tout cela est pour l’escolier de Limosin.

And D’Aubigné adds, “Voila les propres termes de Ron­sard.” Few will be inclined to doubt the word of this man of integrity, who did not allow his religious opinions to becloud
his poetic judgment as so many of his Protestant and Catholic contemporaries did. But the exactness of D'Aubigné's report of the discussions at Boncourt is to some extent attested by the "propres termes" of Ronsard both in the *Art poétique* and in the last preface to the *Franciade*. That the poet in both of these writings argued the advantage of saving from destruction some of the archaic vocabulary of France we have amply seen in the preceding pages. There are, in addition, passages in these two prose works which anticipate the terms and tonality of the language of exhortation that D'Aubigné attributes to Ronsard. In the *Art poétique*, for example, one reads,

> Quiconques furent les premiers qui oserent abandonner la langue des anciens pour honorer celle de leur pays, ilz furent veritablement bons enfans & non ingratz citoyens, & dignes d'estre couronnez sur une statue publique, & que d'aage en aage on face une perpetuelle memoire d'eux & de leurs vertus. (XIV, 14)

The resemblance to D'Aubigné's account is even more remarkable in the posthumous preface to the *Franciade*. The Protestant poet's observations have, as he says, a testamentary character which is in striking harmony with the following words that may well have been written in the very garden of the Collège de Boncourt where D'Aubigné heard Ronsard express identical thoughts:

> Je supplie tres-humblement ceux, ausquels les Muses ont inspire leur faveur de n'estre plus Latineurs ny Grecaniseurs comme ils sont, plus par ostentation que par devoir: & prendre pitié, comme bons enfans de leur pauvre mere naturelle: ils en rapporteront plus d'honneur & de reputation à l'advenir. . . . (XVI, 352)
The ultimate fortune of Ronsard's archaizing effort probably did not correspond with his intentions and hopes, any more than it did in English literature with the intentions and hopes of Edmund Spenser, who in this respect, as in some others, may have been greatly in the debt of the Pléiade. The life of language being what it is, there must be a very large element of truth in the assertion of Brunot: "En fait, la tentative des archaïsants a complètement avorté. Des mots dont on a voulu prolonger la vie, presque aucun n'a vécu." It could scarcely have been otherwise. The whole tendency of Ronsard's stylistic evolution, as the variants testify countless times, was towards the classicism of the following century. In affirming, from the beginning to the end of his poetic career, his constant adherence to an archaizing principle, Ronsard's theory was in direct opposition to his underlying practice. The retention of quaint and obsolescent terms, or their introduction into this or that composition quite at the end of his life, was a tribute that his sentiment paid to the language and vocabulary into which he had been born, a vocabulary that was doomed by the inexorable movement of time and social change, but whose death he could not bear to witness.

1. References unaccompanied by any letters (e.g., XVI, 354) are to Pierre de Ronsard, Oeuvres complètes, critical edition by Paul Laumonier (Paris: Société des Textes Français Modernes, 1914—-); those preceded by LL. are to the Laumonier (Lemerre) edition (Paris, 1914-19) of the text of 1584.


3. From the preface, addressed to Christofle Perot, to the first edition, dated July 27, 1541, of Peletier's translation of the Ars Poetica of Horace. See Bernard Weinberg, "La première édition de la traduction d'Horace par


9. Many of the parallel passages are reproduced also in Chamard’s edition of the *Deffence* for the Société des Textes Français Modernes (Paris, 1948), *passim*.


11. Ibid., I, 237.


14. See L. Terreaux, "A propos du vocabulaire de Ronsard," *Le Français moderne*, XXIX (1961), 112-20, for many examples of the poet’s abandonment of archaic and erudite expressions, as well as of certain neologisms.
15. VII, 172, n. 4.
16. LL., VI, 64; and cf. p. 62, "Bien que l’envie. . . ."
17. Horace, Ars poetica, 70 f.
18. In the preceding passage, Du Bellay has discussed the invention and adoption of words and the creation of compound words in imitation of Greek.
21. Peletier, op. cit., pp. 121 ff. Peletier’s orthography has been slightly modified to make it more consistent with normal sixteenth-century practice.
24. In 1579, Henri Estienne will adopt a position analogous to that of Ronsard, but will reveal that the resistance to the introduction of archaisms is far from dead: "... Je puis accomparer tant de Rommans anciens qu’ha nostre langage, à un . . . chasteau: et les beaux vocables et beaux traits que nous y trouvons, aux beaux membres qu’on trouve en cest edifice, encore qu’il soit à la façon antique. Et . . . je scai bien que les louanges que je donneray à ce vieil langage, seront subjectes à preuve, à cause que plusieurs le mes-prisent. . . ."—La Précellence du langage François, ed. Edmond Huguet (Paris, 1896), p. 184.
26. Pierre de Nolhac, Ronsard et l’humanisme (Paris, 1921), p. 238, conjectures plausibly that these conversations with the aging Ronsard took place in the garden of the Collège de Boncourt: "Tous l’entouraient, quand il faisait sa promenade quotidienne dans le jardin du collège, devenu, dit l’un d’eux, un véritable jardin d’Académus. On a trop peu recueilli de cette parole vive et savoureuse, qui instruisait et charmait ce dernier auditoire. Le poète enseignait l’ameur de la langue française, à l’aide de ces brillantes images qui ont tant frappé Agrippa d’Aubigné; il traitait volontiers de la théorie de son art et de la technique du vers. . . ."
27. Read contemner.
30. In a discussion of the neologisms, compound words, and archaisms of the Berlin and Paris manuscripts of Books I and II of the Franciade, Raymond Lebègue has said: "Tant que nous ne posséderons pas une étude chronologique et méthodique du vocabulaire de Ronsard, la langue poétique du XVI° siècle sera pour nous un domaine clos. Cette étude, l’achèvement de la grande édition Laumonier va permettre de l’entreprendre. D’ores et déjà, la publication de la Franciade, avec ses innombrables corrections de forme,
Ronsard s'est efforcé d'introduire dans notre littérature le vocabulaire et le style épiques de ses modèles antiques; mais les variantes témoignent de ses hésitations et de ses re­pentirs.”—"Ronsard au travail,” Lettres d’Humanité, XI (1952), 85. The base for the systematic study of Ronsard’s vocabulary is being created by Professor A. Emerson Creore of the University of Washington, who, in September, 1962, produced through the facilities of the Research Computer Laboratory of that institution a word index to Volumes I and II of Paul Laumonier’s critical edition of Ronsard as a first step in the ultimate creation of a comprehensive lexicon of the poet.