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HENRY NICHOLAS AND THE FAMILISTS. A STUDY OF THE INFLUENCE OF CONTINENTAL MYSTICISM ON ENGLAND TO 1660

A DISSERTATION

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PREFACE

By way of preface several issues will be dealt with briefly. First, the study of Familism since 1862; second, the problems encountered in the study of Familism; and finally, the significance of the word "mysticism" as used in this study. Following this is an acknowledgement of assistance received by the author.

Almost one hundred years ago Dr. Franz Nippold of Germany stirred up interest in Henry Nicholas and the Family of Love by a monograph which he wrote for the Zeitschrift für die historische Theologie (1862).[1] Nippold felt that while many facets of free thinking mysticism had been examined by Trechsel and Erbkam,

> "the no less remarkable Henrick Niclaes, whose Familia Caritatis (Family of Love) is mentioned everywhere among the sects of the Reformation, have never been the object of special inquiries. And yet a glance at the writings of H.N. and those of his antagonists will show us that it is of the highest importance to consider the ideas of the enthusiast and the tenets of his followers somewhat closer."

Nippold's article set the tone for following studies, which is to be regretted, for he wrote as a despiser of the sects rather than a describer. Nevertheless his work has been of great value since it

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1. "Heinrich Niclaes und das Haus der Liebe," pp. 323-402 and pp. 473-563.

uncovered much of the material hidden in the rare manuscripts at Leiden and brought together the first comprehensive bibliography of Familist writings. Mr. P. A. Tiele, at the time conservator of the Leiden University Library, became interested in Henry Nicholas and his society after reading Nippold's article and his interest was heightened by his discovery of a printed edition of the Cronica in the library of Messrs. Enschedé. The results of his study appear in Le Bibliophile Belge.[1] Mr. Tiele became aware through the mentions of English editions of Henry Nicholas' works, that England would provide a profitable area for bibliographical study. To this end he contacted Mr. J. H. Hessels, author of Londino-Batavae Epistulae et Tractus, and asked him to assist in locating the works in English libraries.[2] When Mr. Hessels began this project he found that the Rev. Dr. Corrie,[3] the Master of Jesus College, Cambridge, had already gathered "a remarkably rich collection" of

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1. Le Bibliophile Belge 1868, pp. 121 ff. "Christophe Plantin et le Sectarie Mystique, Henry Niclaes," Mr. Charles Ruelens, conservator at the Brussels Library added notes and other curious documents.
2. Hessels, J. H., "Henrick Niclaes: The Family of Love." Notes and Queries, 4th series. Oct. 30, 1869, p. 356. Hessels was Librarian at Trinity College, Dublin, which accounts for the collection of H.N.'s works at that college.
3. Corrie, Rev. Dr., List of Books Relating to the Family of Love.

the works of Henry Nicholas. Mr. Hessels remarked in 1869 that he would attempt in conjunction with Mr. Tiele "to collect all the materials we can find for an eventual complete biographical account of the celebrated mystic." The bibliography in Notes and Queries is Dr. Corrie's collection plus three works found by Hessels in the Cambridge University Library. The larger bibliography does not seem to have appeared although Hessels made a plea for "every scrap of information, as regards H.N. and his life or works."[1]

In 1868 there was printed also an article on Nicholas in Biographische Woordenboek but it is only a condensation of Nippold's monograph though with some valuable additions to contemporary bibliography.[2] Barclay in his study of "inner religion" (1876) adds very little to Nippold's biography or Hessel's bibliography but he discovered and made some use of the rich source of tracts in the British Museum.[3] Max Rooses (1882) in his study Christopher Plantin deals with Henry Nicholas because of Plantin's association with

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1. loc. cit.
2. Aa, A. J. van der, "Hendrick Niclaes," in Biographische Woordenboek.
3. Barclay, R., The Inner Life of the Religious Societies of the Commonwealth, pp. 25-35.

him reproducing the titlepage and frontpiece of Den Spegel Der Gherechticheit, and those sections of the Cronica which deal with Plantin.

An American contribution came in 1893 from Mr. A. C. Thomas who added to the Haverford College Studies the Family of Love.[1] Thomas does nothing with the bibliographical side of the study but gives an excellent short discussion using a number of early English sources. His development of the English Familists is dependent upon A. W. Boehme's Acht Bücher von der Reformation in England.[2] Thomas also used Nippold but did not follow his prejudices; instead he attempted to give a fair analysis of the Familists, carefully sifting the reports of the heresiographers. Charlotte Fell Smith's brief study "Henry Nicholas,"[3] is equally divided between biography and bibliography. This well-written article discounts tales of immorality and gives a fair view of the society. Building on the studies of Nippold, Thomas and Smith, the Quaker scholar R. M. Jones took a number of quotations from Henry Nicholas' works and gave an excellent twenty-page chapter on "The Family of Love"

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1. Thomas, A. C., The Family of Love.
2. Boehme, A. W., Acht Bücher von der Reformation in England, Bk.,IV, c. 5, pp. 536-573. Altona, 1734.
3. Dictionary of National Biography.

in Studies in Mystical Religion.[1] Although he glosses over some obvious faults of Henry Nicholas and the Familists, Jones is successful in bringing out their central tenets. The author goes much further than Thomas and Smith, also Quakers, in a favorable comparison of Henry Nicholas with George Fox, and Familism with Quakerism even to the extent of relating them in the matters of non-violence, eldership, quiet-waiting et cetera.

More recently several brief studies of Henry Nicholas have appeared. That by Belfort Bax[2] is quite unsatisfactory as is his whole treatment of the Anabaptists. Alexander Gordon in the Encyclopedia Britannica unfortunately supplies much misinformation. William Haller gives some fine points on the influence of Familism in his studies on Puritanism.[3] Mr. H. de la Fontaine Verwey, librarian-in-chief of the Universiteits-Bibliotheek, Amsterdam, has published an extensive bibliographical study which supplants all that

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1. Jones, R. M., Studies in Mystical Religion, Chapt. XVIII, pp. 428-448.
2. Bax, Belfort, The Rise and Fall of Anabaptists.
3. Haller, Wm., The Rise of Puritanism, Tracts on Liberty, 3 Vols. See indexes of these studies.

has previously been done in this area.[1] This masterly study includes valuable material on the production of Henry Nicholas' books, and gives eleven pages of original cuts. E. A. Payne, author of a number of scholarly studies in Anabaptist history, has done an exploratory piece on "The Familists," which provides many excellent insights into the nature of the movements. He discounts the unfriendly treatment by Nippold and notes that "we may trace Familist ideas among some of the little groups discovered forty or more years later by George Fox."[2] Payne, along with Haller, represents the newer school of interpretation of Familist thinking.

The investigator of the Familist encounters almost immediately several problems. Norman Penney voiced one of these when he said that "historians have found it very difficult to learn from their writings their actual position as regards religion."[3] Bax noted that "It is difficult --- to make out anything very definite as to the history of the movement and its founder."[4] This is the general consensus of opinion

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1. Verwey, H. de la Fontain,"De Geschrieften van Hendrik Niclaes," in Het Boek, pp. 161-221.
2. Payne, E. A., "The Familists," in The Chronicle, Vo. XVI, p. 31.
3. Penney, N., A Journal of George Fox, Vol. I, pp. 381-382 Note. Cf. Journal of the Friends Historical Society, Vol. II, 1905, pp. 4-5.
4. Bax, B., The Rise and Fall of the Anabaptists, p. 343.

for, as might be expected from a secret society, little was kept in the way of records and the reports of the heresiographers, as usual, have severely distorted the facts. Then, too, the student is struck by the strangeness of the figure Henry Nicholas as well as the terminology and ideals of that segment of left-wing culture which nurtured him. The reader of H.N., as Henry Nicholas is often called, soon finds himself saying with Henry More, "I must confesse in some straines of his --- I was very well pleased, but there be many others ---- rude and silly above all measure."[1] Unless the main trends of thought in Nicholas are discovered and followed one can quickly become lost in a tangle of prolix and cloudy prose. However, behind the chimerical claims of prophetical mission there is a valid witness to the worth of "inner light" mysticism, and, veiled though it is by faulty organization, a utopian dream of a sinless society. Especially in the later period of Familism a third difficulty is discovered for as the Society itself faded "Familism" came to be used as a generic name for every type of "inner light" mysticism. There is no doubt that Seekers, Ranters, Quakers and others were so denominated, thus obscuring the historical state of the Familists at that time.

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1. Nicolson, M., Conway Letters, pp. 303-304.

The word "mysticism" by its very nature is capable of being defined in many ways. Dean Inge gives twenty-six definitions in the appendix to his volume, Christian Mysticism, and has added seven more in Mysticism in Religion. For this study it might be well to keep in mind three views of mysticism. The first, that of P. L. Nettleship, speaks of the symbolic nature of things.

> "True mysticism is the consciousness that everything we experience is an element and only an element in fact; i.e., that in being what it is, it is symbolic of something more."[1]

The second definition, that of Evelyn Underhill, adopts the psychological approach to this elusive subject.

> "Mysticism is the art of union with Reality. The mystic is a person who has attained that union in greater or lesser degree; or who aims at and believes in such attainment."[2]

Dean Inge's philosophical approach has a special meaning for this study. He writes that mysticism is,

> "the attempt to realize, in thought and feeling, the immanance of the temporal in the eternal, and the eternal in the temporal."[3]

All three of these definitions are descriptive of facets of that system of thought known as Familism and

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1. Inge, W. R., Mysticism in Religion, p. 25.
2. Underhill, E., Practical Mysticism, p. 3.
3. Inge, W. R., Christian Mysticism, p. 5.

and they are emphasized at various stages in the life of Henry Nicholas and that Society, Family of Love, which was but a lengthened shadow of the man.

It is necessary here to give acknowledgement of the assistance received from many sources. The author is deeply indebted to the Rev. Prof. T. F. Torrance and the Rev. J. S. M'Ewen for the encouragement, counsel and correction given during the writing of this paper. The assistance of the New College librarian, the Rev. Dr. J. A. Lamb, in the obtaining of needed source material is heartily appreciated. Mr. John Nickalls, librarian of the Library of the Society of Friends, London has been very helpful as has Mr. Robert Pilgrim at the University Library, Cambridge. Mr. H. de la Fontaine Verwey, librarian-in-chief of the University Library, Amsterdam, has made available significant information and Mr. L. Voet of the Museum Plantin-Moretus has also sent needed facts. Thanks are due to the library staffs at the Scottish National Library, Edinburgh; the University of Edinburgh Library; the British Museum Library, London; the Dr. Williams Library, London; the Lambeth Palace Library, London; Jesus College Library, Cambridge; Woodbrooke College Library, Selly Oak, Birmingham; the Bodelian Library, Oxford; John Rylands Library, Manchester;

Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 's-Gravenhage; Bibliotheek der Rikjsuniversiteit te Leiden; Bibliotheque Royale de Belgique, Brussels; Union Theological Seminary Library, New York; Haverford College Library, Haverford, Pennsylvania.



Love and truth join hands.
A Figure of the True and Spiritual
Tabernacle

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CHAPTER I

The Development and Spread of Relevant Mystical, Eschatological, and Ethical Ideas in Europe after 1200.

CHAPTER I

Joachim of Flora once told Abbot Adam of Persigny that all the mysteries of the Holy Scripture were plain to him so that he understood them as well as the biblical prophets themselves. This gift he explained further as he described how "one Easter night, in the course of meditations, the whole richness of meaning in the Apocalypse and the agreement of the Old Testament with the New was made perfectly clear to him by Divine revelation. It had seemed to him as if a flood of dazzling bright light had all at once streamed in upon his soul."[1] Thus it was that Joachim became a pioneer in that dark span between present and last things largely unexplored in the Middle Ages.[2]

The words of this prophet carried great weight. Chronicles as far north as Germany recorded his activities with a sense of expectancy. British and French bishops of high standing sought his advice. The English King, Richard I, Coeur de Leon, paused on the fateful third crusade to ask word of the Antichrist. Three popes,

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1. Dollinger, J. J., Prophecies and the Prophetic Spirit in the Christian Era, Paraphrasing Comment. in Apocal., p. 39.
2. Gardner, E. G., "Joachim of Flora," in The Catholic Encyclopedia.

Lucius III (1182), Urban III (1185), and Clement III (1187), all requested that he make known what God had revealed to him.[1]

Nor did the influence of the Abbot of Flora diminish with his death, rather it was translated in the course of years from that of a life to that of a legend. In the popular mind he was enthroned with the great prophets and followers not infrequently envisioned him beatified in God's presence. Dante[2] more than a century later immortalizes him in the Paradisio "and, full in view,

> Shines the Calabrian Abbot Joachim,
> Whom the prophetic spirit did embue."[3]

The "Calabrian Abbott's" importance lies in the deep implications of his thought through which there was a revival of millenarianism[4] in Europe and a release of

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1. Gardner, E. G., "Joachim of Flora," in The Catholic Encyclopedia.
2. Arseniew, N., Mysticism and the Eastern Church, p.109 ff, Dempf, A., Sacrum Imperium, (Munich: 1929), Part III, Chapter III, p. 487 ff; Douie, D. L., The Nature and the Effect of the Heresy of Fraticelli, p. 22. Dempf considers Beatrice the symbol of the New Age. Douie takes exception to this. Gardner, E. G., Dante and the Mystics, pp. 328-330, 262-264, 195-198.
3. Dante, The Divina Commedia, (Translated by E. H. Plumptre), "Paradise," Canto XII, Line 139-141.
   "Il Calavrese Abate Giocchino
   Di Spirito Profetico Dotato."
4. Harnack, A., History of Dogma, Vol. VI, p. 112. "The new movement united itself therefore with the apocalyptic ideas, which, in spite of Augustine, had never died out in the West."

new concepts of eschatology.[1] It has even been said that with Joachim eschatology was introduced into the late Middle Ages, which is of some significance if it is realized that the millennium from Augustine on had been viewed as "a mere continuation of human history."[2] All idea of judgement within history had been rejected and instead the theologians of the early and high Middle Ages "saw history with time, as having an end and being itself judged."[3] "The Christian doctrine from Augustine to Thomas had mastered history theologically by excluding the temporal relevance of last things."[4] Medieval Catholicism was pledged to an "attitude of immobility," an attitude which could only "be maintained by the entire suppression of every forward movement of the intellect."[5] Thus any tendency to an eschatological interpretation of history was dismissed from the central stream of Christian thinking.[6] Into this stream plunged the Abbot of Flora with a new biblical and prophetic eschatology which did

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1. Gardner, E., takes exception to this. See The Catholic Encyclopedia, on "Joachim of Flora."
2. Tuveson, E. L., Millennium and Utopia, p. 15 ff.
3. loc. cit.
4. Löwith, K., Meaning in History, p. 155, Cf. p. 166 ff.
5. Charles, R. H., Studies in the Apocalypse, p. 21.
6. Glasson, T. F., His Appearing and His Kingdom, p. 127. Cf. Also p. 121 ff.

not dam its flow but rather supplied a parallel stream continuing into the Reformation period, commencing an era in which eschatology "exercised a great influence on the world's history."[1]

The Calabrian prophet was unconsciously in revolt against the contemporary doctrine of God and the resultant doctrine of the church. From Greek philosophy had come the supposition that God was impassible and changeless and thus nature is also changeless and even eternal. Divine intervention on the moving stage of history is thus considered entirely unlikely.

> "In the medieval Roman Church the Greek view of God and nature was carried over into the relation of heaven and earth, the Kingdom of God and the Church. Nature was regarded as impregnated with final causes, so that the eternal pattern embedded in nature could be read off by natural theology and deductive science. Likewise the Church was regarded as impregnated with the Kingdom of God, so that the pattern of the Kingdom embedded in the earthly structure of the Church could be read off the historical conscience of the Church by the teaching office. Here the Eschaton is so domesticated and housed within the Church that far from standing under final judgement, the Church dispenses it by her binding and loosing, far from being repentant and reformable, the Church can only develop according to her own immanent norms, which correspond to the fixed pattern of the Kingdom."[2]

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1. Bousset, W., "Antichrist," in Hasting's Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics.
2. Torrance, T. F., "Eschatology," in Scottish Journal of Theology Occasional Papers, No. 2, p. 37.

In the face of this, Joachim insisted on the temporal significance of last things. He maintained that the church as it then existed would not continue in its static state until "the end" but that even as he wrote the preparation for a new age was under way, an age in which "the Church will no longer be a clerical hierarchy grown worldly but a monastic community of saints in the succession of St. Benedict, destined to cure by an ultimate effort, a disintegrating world."[1] The church was "not an everlasting foundation but an imperfect prefiguration."[2] The first law of Joachim's development of the Heilsgeschichte was that a continuous process operated from the Old Testament into the New Testament and so into the "age of the Spirit."[3] "This whole process of progressive consummatio is, at the same time, a continuous process of designatio, invalidating the preceeding promises and significations."[4]

Joachim's teaching is developed in his three chief works. Concordia Novi ac Veteris Testamenti (1184-1189) uses the historical approach, Expositio in Apocalypsim (1184-1196) is an exegetical treatment,

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1. Löwith, K., op. cit., p. 146.
2. Ibid., p. 150.
3. "the traditional scheme of religious progress from the Old to the New Testament became extended and superceded." Ibid., p. 145.
4. Ibid., p. 149.

Psalterium Decem Chordarum (1184-1200) is a theological development.[1]

The Concordia attempts by allegorical interpretion to show the harmony of the Old and New Testaments particularly revealing how everything in the New is prefigured in the Old. Joachim evolves from this a philosophy of history which subdivides time into three epochs (status). Expositio explains, by flights of apocalyptic fancy, the symbolism of the Apocalypse, making several prophecies about the third great epoch which is about to break into the existing age. In Psalterium the author equates each of the epochs with one of the persons of the Trinity, in the order of the Godhead and in this progressive development shows how each is revealed in a peculiar way in a respective historical age.[2]

Employing varied medium, then, Joachim consistently pursues the theme of three epochs, the third of which is about to commence or has already begun, for he felt that there was an overlapping of the ages.[3] With the

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1. The Bodleian Library, Oxford has all three of these works. Extracts are to be found in Hahn, Geschichte Der Ketzer im Mittelalter. The British Museum has Concordia.
2. Grundmann, H., Neue Forshungen über Joachim von Fiore, p. 15-31 and Notes. Douie, D.L., op. cit., p. 36 Notes. Betts, H., Joachim of Flora, p. 23 ff.
3. Bonet, Maury, "Ages of the World (Christian)," in Hasting's Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics.

arising of the "new age," Joachim taught that the church as then constituted would pass away. The destruction of the Roman Church he found in Revelation Chapters 18 and 19, for the church in all its pomp, ceremony and corruption was none other than Babylon.[1] The villain of the Apocalyptic drama as interpreted by Joachim was the pope, a theme elaborated on by many inclined toward radical reform.[2] The church was not in that static Millennium which Augustine had described, in fact the church was not even free, but in the Babylonian captivity. Looking at the Joachimite teaching on the Antichrist,[3] it appears to be more than coincidence that one of Luther's three early tracts was entitled "The Babylonian Captivity." In the centuries succeeding its publishing this "Joachite interpretation of Revelation --- provided the terms and thought forms for the spirit of revolt and dissatisfaction as it gradually gathered strength."[4]

How completely destructive these ideas were to the church and indeed to the whole Medieval synthesis,

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1. Bousset, W., Op. cit.
2. Ibid., "This whole type of prediction came to the West in the book of Pseudo-Methodius, which was early translated into Latin." See also Bousset, W., The Anti-Christ Legend, p. 208.
3. Workman, H. B., Wyclif, II, p. 97-99. Cf. Dollinger, Op. cit., p. 111 and Note 3.
4. Glasson, T. F., Op. cit., p. 140.

Joachim's contemporaries did not even begin to comprehend.[1] Innocent II, standing at the apogee of the papacy, asked for Joachim's works in the year 1200 that they might be examined. The Lateran council of 1215 condemned the writings not because they contained a historico-prophetical eschatology that would stand the Roman Church at the bar of judgement, but because they considered them heretical in their teaching of the Trinity, a fact which would have shocked Joachim, "For of Joachim's personal loyalty to the Church of Rome there was no question."[2]

Harnack, musing on the wide outworking of Joachimism, remarked: "Strange that this movement should have begun in the hills of Calabria, the most out-of-the-way district of Southern Europe."[3] How did the world catch sight of the prophet and his message?

The fifty years after Joachim's death saw no great use of his writings nor any extensive movement based on his teachings, though he did institute a reformed branch of the Cistercian Order with some forty chapters.[4]

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1. Löwith, K., op. cit., pp. 154-159. "When Joachim opened the door to a fundamental revision of a thousand years of Christian history and theology--he questioned implicitly not only the traditional authority of the Church but also the temporal order." p. 154.
2. Charles, R. H., op. cit., p. 19.
3. Harnack, A., op. cit., p. 95, Note 1.
4. The order was approved in 1196 by Celestine III. See "Cistercian," in The Catholic Encyclopedia.

During this same period, however, a small coterie of followers became confirmed in the opinion that he was a prophet of great stature.[1] Salimbene and Hugh of Digne, an Abbot of Pisa who had most of Joachim's books, saw in the panorama of events remarkably accurate fulfillments of Joachim's prophecies. Particularly the life and death struggle between Fredrick II and the papacy and the founding of the two great mendicant orders, (Franciscans and Dominicans) set prophetically inclined imaginations on fire.[2] Joachim had said that the instrument of the Divine hand in purifying the corrupt Church and in inaugurating the age of the Holy Spirit, would be "an order of contemplative hermits, who would preach the true Gospel to mankind."[3] The barefoot order of St. Francis of Assisi and the followers of St. Dominic were highly flattered to find themselves the subject of biblical prognostication and became ardent supporters of developing Joachimism.[4] Their message was so clearly that of Joachimism that William of St. Amour comments in De Periculis Novissimorum Temporum,

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1. Smalley, Beryle, The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages, p. 290.
2. Douie, D. L., op. cit., p. 26.
3. Dollinger, J. J., op. cit., p. 118.
4. Milman treats quite fully the spread of Joachite ideas among the Franciscans. History of Latin Christianity, Vol. XII, p. 346 ff.

> "For the past fifty-five years some have been striving to substitute in the place of the Gospel of Christ another gospel, which is said to be more perfect, which they called the gospel of the Holy Spirit, or the eternal gospel."[1]

The personal make-up of the kind of man attracted by Francis would insure that he was sufficient of a mystic "to appreciate the ideal of love and the search after perfection existing nowhere in this world, which lay at the basis of Joachim's somewhat fantastic theories."[2]

Among these "Spirituales," the followers of Joachim, certain arose who sharpened his message "and gave Joachim's prophecies an anti-papal character which their author never intended."[3] This motive led to the production of certain pseudepigraphical works attributed to Joadhim and it was through these that the prophet became widely known and not by his own writings.[4] Most significant for Joachimism, however, was the publication in 1254 of Introductorius in Evangelium Eternum, [5] the "Eternal Gospel," named from the reference in Revelation 14:6. Published anonymously by Gherard Di Borgo San

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1. Neander, A., A General History of the Christian Religion and Church, Vol. VIII, p. 371.
2. Douie, D. L., op. cit., p. 27.
3. Charles, R. H., op. cit., p. 19.
4. The most important of these are: Interpretation of Jeremiah the Prophet, Scriptures of Isaiah the Prophet, Exposition of Sybil and Merlin, Vaticanum Pontificum, See Tuveson, op. cit., p. 19 ff and Note "A".
5. Preger, W., Das Evangelium Eternum u. Joachim von Floris.

Donino, of Paris, it was condemned by Paris masters and by the Commission of Agnani .[1] No copy is known to exist but from the report of the Agnani Commission something is known of it, though it seems that quotations from Joachim are more frequent than those from the volume scrutinized.[2] This product of Franciscan enthusiasm consisted of an introduction followed by several of Joachim's works or abstracts of them plus interpretation. Though this work was condemned by Alexander IV in 1256 and though the prophecies failed to materialize in 1260 and some followers deserted the cause, still the publicity afforded was profitable to the movement as a whole. Further, Joachimism still advanced apace because the "real heirs of Joachim --- were the Spiritual Franciscans, who were yet wise enough to avoid the exaggerations of Gherardo and never identified the Abbot of Flora with the Eternal Gospel."[3] There is no question but that the Franciscan movement was as permeated with Joachim's eschatological teaching as it was with Francis' concepts of love and poverty. Gemelli is typical of Roman Catholic scholars who deny this, claiming that Joachimism

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1. Betts, H., Joachim of Flora, p. 105 and 98 ff.
2. Denifle, Fr., "Protokoll Der Commission Zu Agnani," in Archiv fur Litteratur - und Kirchengeschichte des Mittelalters, 1885, pp. 99-142.
3. Douie, D. L., op. cit., p. 37 and p. 7 ff.

was only "a theoretical accretion of the Franciscan Spirit which was easily and quickly got rid of."[1] Even Gemelli, however, admits that it did not die so easily, as he speaks of "this apocalyptic malady which afflicted the Franciscan world for a couple of centuries," and that ideas were set adrift in society that "Dante and Petrarch played with ---."[2] The Franciscans went abroad vitalized in the belief that their age was pregnant with divine significance.[3] A new age was dawning, the age of the Holy Spirit, and they were the new apostles. "There is no doubt that the main trend of Joachim's teaching suggested to his followers that they stood on the brink of great spiritual developments, an awakening and renovation of the Church, an age of Christian victory."[4] They compared the three ages to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; stars, moon and sun; iron, silver and gold; etc., and some even said that what John the Baptist and Christ were to the second order, Joachim and Francis were to the third.[5]

Pin-pointing Joachimism in its appearances during

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1. Gemelli, A., op. cit., p. 48.
2. Ibid., p. 85.
3. Robertson, A., Regnum Dei, p. 297.
4. Glasson, T. F., op. cit., p. 134.
5. Robertson, A., op. cit., pp. 298-299.

the following centuries is not easy for it never represented itself as a movement but rather it emerges freqnently in isolated situations. "Joachimism existed as a deep undercurrent" becoming evident in "different groups of Fraticelli, Flagellants, Beghards, Beguines, Brethren of the Free Spirit and like."[1] This deep undercurrent was set in motion by the immediate trail of influential followers: Salimbene, Hugh of Digne, Gherard, Angelo da Clareno, John Peter Olivi, John of Parma, Ubertino da Casale, Arnold of Villanueva and a host of nameless Franciscan adherents.[2] By these propagators Joachimite doctrine "an apocalyptic socio-political excitement grew up asserting itself in a hundred different ways."[3] Zealots like Olivi "who perhaps did more than any other individual to define and crystallize its peculiar tenets,"[4] carried within themselves "the germs of great spiritual developments in the future."[5] The Beguines,[6] standing at the fountainhead of German mysticism, were great

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1. Rashdall, H., The University of Europe in the Middle Ages, Vol. I, p. 539.
2. For an exceptionally fine study of these men see D. L. Douie, The Nature and the Effect of the Heresy of the Fraticelli.
3. Harnack, A., op. cit., p. 113.
4. Douie, D. L., op. cit., p. VII.
5. Neander, A., op. cit., Vol. VIII, p. 373. See the concise history of Olivi, p. 373 ff.
6. Mosheim, Ecclesiastical History, p. 458, Note 8. Also his De Beghardis.

admirers of Olivi, calling him "the holy but uncanonized father." The Inquisitors reported that the Beguines said of him "that since the days of the Apostles and the Evangelists there has been no doctor greater than he --."[1] Likewise Olivi's Commentary of the Apocalypse "was the favorite book of the Spirituales and of their party."[2] It was through deposits like these that an underground existence was maintained and though it "slumbered as a force in Western Culture, except for some uneasy tossings-- its explosive potentiality had not ended."[3]

The "dynamic concept of history" of Joachimism was met with hostility by the Schoolmen. Aquinas accepted Joachim as a pious man but said in effect that the church is static and so is history. Thus "no purposive change, no climax in a historical plot is to be expected. There is no cumulative increase of virtue from one age to another."[4] Despite the unfavorable judgement of the great Dominican theologian, Joachimism continued to receive fresh support,[5] and there was a growing fifth column of opposition to the static

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1. Douie, D. L., op. cit., p. 81 ff.
2. Döllinger, J. J., op. cit., p. 127.
3. Tuveson, E. L., op. cit., p. 20.
4. Ibid., p. 20. "That the prophetic book is being unfolded through history is an idea totally alien to the scholastic theologians in general." p. 18.
5. Döllinger, J. J., op. cit., p. 136.

philosophy of history adopted by the church in an effort to stress "the permanence of her institutions and the unchangeableness of her state."[1]

There is no object in repeating the history of the Franciscans here.[2] From the beginning they were divided in loyalty, some adhering to the original idea of Francis and the remainder to the Pope. The strict group, or Spirituales, were Joachimites in whom were wedded the ideals of love and poverty with apocalyptic vision. Cruelly persecuted after the Council of Lyons in 1274, they found no relief but were turned over to the Inquisition by Boniface IX in 1296-1297. It was through this papal manhunt that they "became widespread,"[3] in their influence. "From Italy they spread themselves over the greatest part of Europe; and down even to the Reformation by Luther, they were involved in the hottest warfare with the Church of Rome ---."[4] In the court of Lewis the Bavarian they found protection (as did Marsiglio of Padua and John of Jandum) and in fact, the death of the Emperor in 1348 marks the end of the golden age of the Franciscan Spirituales. Again they were spread by

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1. Torrance, T.F., op. cit., p. 38.
2. See Bibliography in St. Francis of Assisi, p. 126 by J. R. H. Moorman and Gemelli, A., The Franciscan Message, pp. 328-336.
3. Newman, A. H., A Manual of Church History, p. 555.
4. Mosheim, op. cit., p. 458.

persecution, fleeing into Switzerland, Holland the Provinces of the Rhine, Brabant and Pomerania.[1] After 1368 two divisions of the Franciscans were officially recognized, the stricter group being named the Brethren of the Observation (Observantines) by the Council of Constance. This is of considerable import for "the foundation of the Observantines, and other reform movements in the Franciscan Order itself, were a return to the ideals of the Spirituales, and were inspired by the memory of their sufferings and loyalty."[2] It was more than a devotion to minor details in St. Francis' teaching which had led to the bitter struggle for it "had at its basis a conception of the meaning of the Christian revelation and of the ultimate regeneration of mankind."[3] These Observantines visualized the world on the threshold of an era, "in which all outward ceremonies and ecclesiastical organization would be done away with, and all men would be endowed with the grace of full spiritual understanding."[4] This is a fact of no small importance if it is true "that lines of connexion can be traced from the visionary Franciscans influenced by Joachim to Matthias of Janow, Wyclif and Luther."[5] That Joachimite writings were popular among

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1. Jones, R. M., Studies in Mystical Religion, pp. 175-176.
2. Douie, D. L., op. cit., pp. VII-VIII, 261. "this has persisted until today."
3. Ibid., p. VIII.
4. Loc. cit.
5. Betts, H., op. cit., p. 112. Cf. Charles, R.H., op. cit., p. 23.

German Franciscans "can be judged from a commentary on the Apocalypse written by a Saxon friar, Alexander of Bexhovide,"[1] in which there are frequent references to those sources.

Out of the left-wing mendicants then, there was formed a succession, "a host of tiny sects, which like an army of gnats, continually annoyed and disturbed the peace of the Church," a host which as the gulf between themselves and the Church widened, came "more and more to claim direct revelation, and to believe themselves special organs of the Spirit."[2]

Perhaps a measure of Joachim's influence is to be discovered in the fact that his main writings were published in Venice during the Renaissance. Simoni de Luere printed the Concordia in 1519 while the Expositio in Apocalypsim and Psalterium were done by Bindoni and Posyni in 1527.[3] Spurious writings of Joachim and works of the Spirituales were produced by Lazzeri in 1517. Grundmann lists a number of German editions of Pseudo-Joachimite works.[4] The Vaticinia Pontificum, probably

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1. Douie, D. L., op. cit., Cf. J. P. Gilson, Collectanea Franciscana II, p. 20-36. There is a manuscript of Alexander's Commentary at the University Library, Cambridge, Moore mss. M.m. 5,31.
2. Jones, R. M., op. cit., p. 175.
3. Douie, D. L., op. cit.,,p. 36 and Note 3.
4. Grundmann, H., Studien uber Joachim von Floris,pp.93-198.

two thirds of which was written by Joachim and the rest by Raban, was published in Venice in 1589, 1600, 1605 and 1646; at Ferrara in 1591; Frankfort in 1608 and probably in many more editions.[1] Selected Joachite prophecies were published in 1532-1533 by Vincentius Ferrerius in Een Vreemde Prophecie.[2] This rather gives the lie to the statement of E. G. Gardner that "We hear a last echo of these theories in -- Giovanni dalle Celle and the prophecies of Telesophorus of Cosenza during the Great Schism, but they were no longer taken seriously.[3]

A "totally alien" eschatology had come to be a part of the dynamic which was to issue in revolt against the established church. The pre-Reformation sects, the "Reformers before the Reformation," such as Militsch of Kremsier, Matthias of Janow, Hus as well as Wyclif and his follower Michael Purvey were all subject to Joachimite teachimg.[4] Harnack sees the stream of chiliasm leading into the Anabaptist and related movements as well as the main reform parties.

> "At a later time Hussism incorporated and wrought over a great part of the Franciscan elements and as it

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1. Betts, H., op. cit., pp. 35-36 and Note 1.
2. Nederlandsche Bibliographie 1500-1540. Items No. 1761-2. The prophecies were published in Antwerp by Henry Peeterson.
3. Gardner, E. G., op. cit.
4. Bousset, W., op. cit., Preuss, H., Die Vorstellung von Antichrist im Spätern Mittelalter, 1906 gives a detailed study particularly of Luther.

> "spread widely, even beyond Bohemia, among the lower orders it prepared the way for the great Baptist movement and the social revolutions of the sixteenth century -- from the point of view of Church History and the history of culture, the study of the powerful movement, essentially one throughout, which began with Joachimism and culminated with the Hussites and Baptists, is of the deepest interest. Like the 'Illuminism' (Aufklärung) in the 18th century and the Romantic ideas in the 19th, Joachimism spread over Europe in the 18th century, not as a new system of dogma, but as a new mode of viewing history and the highest problems ---."[1]

Germany in the 13th century witnessed the evolution of another strain of reform not entirely unrelated to the already discussed, that is, the infusion of mysticism into the forming lay orders. Harnack finds that "the period from 1046 to 1200 was the period of the monachising of the priests; that from 1200 to 1500 brought monachising of the laity."[2] This trend eventually carried the practice of "spiritual" religion from cloistered halls to common households and that in time when a "new age of the spirit" was being heralded abroad. Further, it brought into mysticism "a purer and truer conception of God as a comparison with the Romanic branch will corroborate."[3]

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1. Harnack, op. cit., p. 95, Note 1.
2. Ibid., p. 110.
3. Thompson, J. N. and Johnson, E. N., An Introduction to Medieval Europe, p. 1002. Cf. Arseniew, N., Mysticism in the Eastern Church.

The fountainhead of the spread of the new mysticism was the Mendicant orders, the Franciscans and Dominicans. German mysticism is particularly indebted to the Dominicans[1] for it was the effects of the school of Eckhart and his successors that issued in the Friends of God and the Brethren of the Common Life, not to mention numerous minor but important "communalities of the spirit."

Like Bernard of Clairvaux, Hugo and Richard of St. Victor, Albertus Magnus and Bonaventura, Eckhart received his impetus to mysticism from Neo-platonism as interpreted in Pseudo-Dionysian literature.[2] Unlike them, his speculations carried him to t he very brink of Pantheism,[3] but at the same t ime to popular expositions of his exalted meditations.[4] By this means the mysticism employed by the few as an escape from the "hair-splitting subtleties and barren abstraction" of scholastic theology and as a detour about empty ceremonies, began to develop

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1. Newman, A. H., op. cit., p. 486. "It is remarkable that while in France, Italy and Spain, the Dominican zeal manifested itself in persecuting heretics, in Germany it expanded itself in profound contemplation of the love of God, and in striving after oneness with God."
2. Blakney, R. B., Meister Eckhart, p. XXVI.
3. Deutsch, S. M., "Eckhart," in Herzog-Hauck Encyclopedia, Third Edition.
4. Eckhart is classified as Pantheistic by most writers. Cf. Fairweather, Among the Mystics, p. 27. However, Jones, R. M., Mystical Religion, p. 225 and Blakney, R.B., op. cit., p. XX take exception to this opinion.

into a popular movement, a movement which though in the church was actually opposed to its sterile and static condition.

Joachimism was an intellectual revolt against a congealed eschatology and philosophy of history. German mysticism was a revolt against the effect of this congealing on the level of personal religious experience. Thus, while the "Deutschen Mystiker" began in neo-Platonism, then considered compatible with the Roman theology, a new system was compounded, including, albeit unconsciously, elements of contemporary systems.[1] Like Joachimism it was in the Roman Church and manifested no desire to be schismatic and yet it implicitly contained a dynamic destined to rupture that body.

Meister Eckhart[2] (1260-1327), "from whom God hid nothing," was identified by his enemies with the Beghards, Beguines and the Brethren of the Free Spirit.[3] If the general tone of his extant writings is any measure, there seems to be grounds for this charge, but he had no organic connection with those bodies. This

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1. Thompson, J. N., and Johnson, E. N., op. cit., p.1002.
2. For bibliographies of Eckhart see Pfeiffer, F., Meister Eckhart, p. XV; Blakney, R. B., Meister Eckhart, p. 306. Pfeiffer gives a catalogue of Mss.along with location on P. V. A technical study of Eckhart by S.M. Deutsch appears in Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia. An excellent short study appears in Chapter III of Seesholtz, A. G., Friends of God, Bibliography, p. 229-230.
3. Jones, R. M., op. cit., p. 217 and222-223.

does not say that he was not tremendously influential with them, for his instruction to the laity in the common tongue[1] included lectures to "the many semi-religious communities and brotherhoods of that date."[2] Eckhart directed his words to what he considered an exclusive order made up of those "who knew the truth," for he said "der warheit bekennet, der weiz das ich war spirche." To whoever would receive it the "master" taught "an inwardness of God-conception reminiscent of the life in a seed that is about to burst the shell."[3] To know God the shell must be shattered; "Wiltu den kernen haben, so muostu die schalen brechen." Yet even as he looked at a congregation Eckhart could say with a twist of indifferent irony, "If anyone has understood this sermon, I wish him well! If no one had come to listen I should have had to preach it to the offering box."[4] For a generation he preached unhindered to multitudes principally at Strassbourg but his fame and teaching passed into all Europe.

On salvation Eckhart said, "God never tied man's salvation to any pattern of life ---. So one must be permeated with the divine presence, informed with the

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1. Blakney, R. B., op. cit., p. XIII, "He is said to have done for the German language what Dante did for the Italian."
2. Pfeiffer, Franz, op. cit., p. XI.
3. Blakney, R. B., op. cit., p. XVII.
4. "Creatures Seek God Through Me," translated by Blakney, R. B., op. cit., p. 226.

form of the beloved God who is within him, so that he may radiate that presence without working at it."[1] Salvation means union, he taught, and this union is accomplished by the medium of love. "When God made man, he put into the soul his equal, his active everlasting masterpiece. --- That work is love and love is God. God loves himself and his own nature, being and Godhead, and in the love he has for himself he loves all creatures, not as creatures but as God. The love God bears for himself contains his love for the whole world."[2]

This concept of love gives the "master" an active and progressive ideal of perfection. "Every creature is on its way to the highest perfection. In all, there is a movement from life towards being."[3] The stress is taken from means (emanations) and placed on the spark, or ground (Funken, Funklein) of the soul.[4]

Eckhart speaks often in words which must have found great favour with the "brotherhood" groups. "For, truly, if you imagine that you are going to get more out of God, by means of religious offices and devotions, in

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1. "Talks of Instruction," ibid., p. 10. Cf. the pungent sentences quoted by Seesholtz. "Habe Gott allzeit in Herze!" "Sorge dass Gott dir alles werde." "Darauf setze all dein studieren dass Gott dir gross werde." op. cit., p. 73.
2. "Creatures Seek God Through Me," Blakney, R. B., op. cit., p. 226.
3. Ibid., p. 224.
4. Inge, W. R., Christian Mysticism, p. 162.

sweet retreats and solitary orisons, than you might by the fireplace, or in the stable, then you might just as well wrap a mantle around his head and stick him under the table. To seek God by ritual is to get the ritual and to lose God in the process for he hides behind it. On the other hand to seek God without artifice, is to take him as he is, and in so doing, a person 'lives by the Son,' and is the Life itself."[1]

Scholastic though he was, Eckhart was not satisfied with the God of realistic philosophy. Thus he equates that impassive and unchanging God with what he calls the Godhead, "the core, the soil, the river." Contrasted with this is God who is actively interfering in the historical pageant of affairs.[2] "Thus creatures speak of God - but why do they not mention the Godhead? Because there is only unity in the Godhead and there is nothing to talk about. God acts. The Godhead does not. It has nothing to do and there is nothing going on in it. It never is on the lookout for something to do. The difference between God and the Godhead is the difference between action and non-action."[3] This was not a new

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1. "The Love of God," Blakney, R. B., ibid., p. 127.
2. For the influence of this idea of Eckhart's on Nicholas Berdyaev see Mackay, D.G.M., "The Relation of God and Man in the writings of Nicholas Berdyaev," in Scottish Journal of Theology, Dec. 1950.
3. "Creatures seek God Through Me," Blakney, R.B., op.cit. p. 225.

concept but released in conjunction with contemporary ideas it is of signal import.

This was the message so readily accepted by the enthusiastic non-professional religious population which abounded in Europe.[1] Nor did the condemnation of Eckhart after his death stem the tide. His appeal (Rechtfertigungsschrift) was denied by the papacy on February 22, 1327 but before the Bull of John XXII was signed on March 27, 1329, Meister Eckhart had, as he would have put it, returned to "the soil, the core, the river." It has been said that he was condemned because he had reduced the historical facts of Christianity "to an idealistic or mystical expression of truth that lies within the scope of human reason."[2] That may be, but it appears that he was saying from the mystical side what Joachim said from the Apocalyptic, that there is a relevance of the eschatalogical now and that the eternal impinges on the temporal.

The Brethren of the Free Spirit and the related Beghards and Beguines are usually considered pantheistic as was Eckhart and this is apparently true.[3] They are also accused of immorality and this was occasionally so,

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1. Blakney, R. B., Op. Cit., p. XXIII, XXIV.
2. Fairweather, Wm., Op. Cit., p. 28.
3. Trench, R. C., Lectures on Medieval Church History, p. 363.

although they were founded in purity of idea. Rufus Jones has well said that "they were excessively individual, gave too much chance for caprice, and launched, without sufficient store of charts and compasses, on the dangerous seas of spiritual freedom."[1] They are significant for this study, however, in that they were a melting pot of several ideas. The probable founder, Ortlieb of Strassbourg, had imbibed the Parisian heresy Amalricianism and introduced its tenets into the Brethren.[2] It has already been noted that much of radical Joachimism was accepted by the Brethren through their admiration for John Peter Olivi and his writings.[3] Further, the followers of the Free Spirit, hung on Eckhart's every word.[4]

Amalricianism as it came to Germany included these ideas: man and God are identical, there is no reality to matter, the resurrection of the dead is the regeneration of the believer, sacraments are unnecessary, Hell is the consciousness of sin. They further taught a historical progression in three stages. The age of the Father began with the incarnation of God in Abraham; the age of the Son began with the incarnation of God in

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1. Jones, R. M., op. cit., p. 195.
2. Ibid., p. 192. Amalric, p. 1207.
3. Douie, D. L., op. cit.
4. Leete, F. D., Christian Brotherhoods, p. 72 ff.

Mary (Jesus); the age of the Spirit begins with the incarnation of God in the Amalricians.[1] These are teachings which appear at a later date among the Libertines and Free Spirits as they showed themselves again in the social disruption of the Reformation era. The Brethren of the Free Spirit, according to the Anonymous of Passeau,[2] did not demand that their members break with the church but allowed them to worship as they were accustomed. By a system of degrees, however, a new member, if willing, was led to break with Roman tradition by following prescribed steps into a "life of freedom." This led to two classes, the second being for the élite or striver, who had no respect for tradition, sacrament, symbol or form. It is not surprising that Harnack discusses these people in his study of Gnosticism.[3]

The Brethren of the Free Spirit, in the course of the 15th century, spread the above views abroad "over certain parts of France, Germany and the Netherlands, and especially of Swabia and Switzerland."[4] The most patent

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1. Lea, History of the Inquisition, Vol. II, p. 326 ff. Workman, H.B., Christian Thought to the Reformation, p. 19. "Amalric," in New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia.
2. Preger, W., Geschichte der Deutschen Mystik im Mittelalter, Vol. I, pp. 461-471.
3. Harnack, A., Zur Quellenkritik der Geschichte des Gnosticism.
4. Mosheim, op. cit., p. 552.

example of this is the Men of Understanding which arose in the Netherlands about 1411. The leaders Egidius Cantor and William of Hildenissen professed visions, promised divine revelation to supersede the New Testament, said that the resurrection had taken place in Christ, and that in the end all creatures will return to a state of felicity in God. Further, they are reported to have taught that the period of the old law was the time of the Father, the period of the new law was the time of the Son, and the remaining period was that of the Holy Ghost.[1] As late as 1453 wandering Beghards were carrying from place to place the ideas of "the Free Spirits." In that year Nicholas V ordered them to unite with the tertiaries of the Mendicant Orders thus absorbing into those organizations many of these itinerant teachers.

With this background in mind it is not so difficult to understand the flourish of mystical, pantheistic and millenarian groups at the beginning of the 16th century. It would have been more unusual if in the maelstrom of religion there had been no occurence of a progressive philosophy of history, no announcement of an imminent age of the Spirit. It was to be expected

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1. Baluze, Miscellanea, Book II, p. 277 ff, as quoted in Mosheim, Ecclesiastical History, p. 554, Note 2. Cf. Jones, R. M., op. cit., p. 187 and Note 2.

that men should arise who had visions and claimed revelations superseding the New Testament , and who taught perfectionism, and that man was the image of God in the sense of union with God, as the incarnation was of the Holy Spirit.[1] That belt across Europe from the Adriatic to the North Sea was filled with it in the 14th and 15th centuries, despite persecutions, and such seed sown to the wind reaped the whirlwind. In the "Libertines of the Netherlands, France, Germany and Switzerland in the 16th century, and even in some of the Anabaptists were found doctrines and practices associating them with the Brethren of the Free Spirit."[2] This "popular pantheism of the Middle Ages, "writes Newman, "persisted until the sixteenth century."[3]

The line of German mystics who followed Eckhart but who avoided his dangerous approach to pantheism, made, at least by Reformation standards, a great contribution to popular mysticism. They followed "The Master" and taught by "the spiritual beauty of their lives, their constant pursuit 'of the eternal uncreated truth,' and the intense earnestness with which they emphasized the

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1. Jones, R. M., op. cit., p. 176.
2. Herkless, J., "Brethren of the Free Spirit," in Hastings's Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics.
3. Newman. A. H., op. cit., p. 557.

fact of experience and the necessity of spiritual communion with God."[1] Some, like Henry Suso (1295-1365), were very close to Eckhart. In his work Book of Eternal Wisdom he defines redemption as "emancipation from the form of the creature, renewal in the likeness of Christ, and transformation into the Godhead."[2]

The Friends of God[3] had an influence so wide that it is hard to measure. Its leaders, Nicholas of Basel, Rulman Merswin, Henry Suso and John Tauler preached extensively in such cities as Strassbourg, Cologne, Basel, Constance, and Nuremberg.[4] Informal groups under their cultivation sprang up everywhere.

> "The most remarkable thing about the Gottesfreunde --- is the essential lay character of its devotion. Uncounted thousands, scattered over a large part of Europe, met together informally, attended sermons by mystic preachers -- built up an amazing system of education and inspiration by correspondence, circulated the famous treatises on mysticism along with many lesser contemporary accounts of conversion ---."[5]

John Tauler[6] (1300-1361), "The Enlightened doctor," was a convert of Nicholas of Basel who told him

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1. Workman, H. B., op. cit., p. 205.
2. Fairweather, Wm., op. cit., p. 30.
3. "Henceforth I call you not servants---But I have called you friends." John 15:15.
4. Seesholtz, A. G., Friends of God, pp. 83 and 184. This very thorough work has a comprehensive bibliography, pp. 223-239.
5. Cheyney, Sheldon, Men Who Have Walked With God, p. 204.
6. Nicholas of Basel, "History and Life of John Tauler," in Life and Sermons of Dr. John Tauler, translated by Susannah Winkworth.

he was being "killed by the letter."[1] Tauler was a follower of Eckhart and Suso; but under Nicholas of Basel the New Testament mysticism of John and Paul tipped the scale against neo-Platonism. The sermons of Tauler were widely read. Luther in 1515 was thrilled by the eloquence and evangelistic spirit of them and in a letter to Spalatin he remarked that he had never seen a theology saner or more Biblical.[2] In one of Tauler's popular sermons we hear echoes of Eckhart; "as a sculptor is said to have exclaimed indignantly on seeing a rude block of marble, 'what a godlike beauty thou hidest!' thus God looks upon man in whom God's own image is hidden,"[3] and again "we may begin by loving God in hope of reward, we may express ourselves concerning Him in symbols (Bilder) but we must throw them all away, and much more, we must scorn all idea of reward, that we may love God only because He is the eternal nature as the real substance of our own soul."[4] Tauler speaks frequently of the three conditions of men leading to perfection. In the final or third stage one presses on "till he come

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1. Milman and Neander take this to be true from the above history. See Note 2. Nicholas of Basel is generally identified with the 'Friend of God from the Oberland.'
2. Stiansen, P., "Church Reform in the Late Middle Ages," in Bibliotheca Sacra, August, 1948-, p. 341.
3. Winkworth, Susanna, Theologia Germanica, p. LXII. Cf. Eckhart's sermon, "The Image of the Soul," in Pfeiffer, F., op. cit., p. 195-196.
4. Loc. cit.

unto the infinite ocean of the Godhead. And therein he shall be lost without his own knowledge, and dazzled by excess of light and love. There it shall be given him, to know all that belongs to true perfection."[1]

Eckhart, Suso and Tauler with their fellow preachers taught, each in his own way, that man must open his whole self to God. "That was 'eternal life' to them. Each was convinced of the possible birth of God in the soul of man," and taught "that the ways of God varied and were open to all the children of men because God needed man and had created him in a special likeness."[2] This was the message they impressed on the religious thinkers of Europe.

The Theologia Germanica, another product of the Friends of God, followed much the same theme. The first line of this little book (published in over 60 editions) is this: "St. Paul saith, 'When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away!"[3] What is this"perfect" which is to come? Speaking in language akin to Eckhart, the author says that the "perfect," "is a Being, who hath comprehended and

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1. Winkworth, S., Life and Sermons of John Tauler, Sermon IX, p. 247. Cf. Sermons X, p. 255; XV, p. 299; XVII, p. 313; XXV, p. 383.
2. Seesholtz, A. G., op. cit.,pp. 192-193.
3. Theologia Germanica translated by Winkworth, S., p.1.

included all things in Himself and His own substance, and without whom and beside whom, there is no true Substance. For He is the Substance of all things ---."[1] Sin is turning from this Perfect[3] but if a man will follow God he is led to perfection by three stages: "first, the purification; second, the enlightening; third, the union."[3] In the last stage man is made a "partaker of the Divine Nature," "illuminated with the Divine Light" and "inflamed with Eternal Love."[4] "Now behold, when this Perfect Good, which is unnameable, floweth into a person able to bring forth, and bringeth forth the Only begotten Son in that person, and itself in Him, we call it the Father."[5] In the hands of the learned Luther such doctrine could be interpreted in the larger area of right doctrine and he could say "that next to the Bible and St. Augustine, no book hath ever come into my hands, from which I have learnt -- more of what God, and Christ, and man and all things are. --- God grant that this book be spread abroad."[6] But it must be considered what this

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1. Ibid., p. 2.
2. Ibid., p. 6.
3. Theologia Germanica translated by Susannah Winkworth, p. 42. See Bohringer, Fr., Deutchen Mystiker, p. 126 & 132.
4. Ibid., p. 143.
5. Ibid., p. 193.
6. From Luther's preface to the 1518 edition. It was the first book he published (1516) running through 17 editions in his lifetime. Winkworth, S., ibid., p. XV.

book meant to those not well founded in "the Bible and St. Augustine." Curiously enough it was later identified by one English historian as a work of the Familists,[1] while Benjamine Bourne found it contained "many Anti-christian Familistical Doctrines."[2] Samuel Rutherford maintained that "H.N. (Henry Nicholas) wrote in dark and obscure terms, following much that wicked piece called Theologia Germanica" and quotes Knewstub as saying that "this form of writing --- is an evident note of a seducing spirit."[3]

The Brethren of the Common Life[4] are linked with the Friends of God in the person of Jan Ruysbrock (1293-1381) but their impact on the Netherlands and the Rhine Valley was made under the founder Gerhard Groot (1340-1384), Florentius Radewyn, Thomas á Kempis and others.[5] This semi-monastic order made an evangelical mysticism of a high type available to the common people, laying thus a wide groundwork of mystical thinking devoid of dogmatic expression. It is true that there is a

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1. Strype, J., Annals of the Reformation, Vol. II, i, p. 564.
2. Bourne, B., The Discovery and Confutation of the Mystery of Antichrist the Familists.
3. Rutherford, Samuel, The Spiritual Antichrist, p. 56.
4. See full bibliography in Herzog-Hauck Encyclopedia, Vol. III, p. 472, and the interpretation by Albert Hyma, The Christian Renaissance. Also Cf. Ullman, Reformers Before the Reformation.
5. See Thomas á Kempis, The Founders of the New Devotion, translated by J. P. Arthur.

marked difference between these Brethren and those of the Free Spirit for "They counted a constant mindfulness of God's presence a greater blessing than the 'Flight into the one.'"[1] Nevertheless they gave a mystical flavour to the culture of Northwest Europe by their preaching, writing, societies and especially by their schools. Like Eckhart, Tauler and the Friends of God, they appealed to men in the use of the vulgar tongue and so by their efforts there was established a "new mysticism in every county of Europe."[2] Operating within the framework of the church, like Francis and other brotherhood groups, their chief rule was "To observe the fundamental law of love."[3] They stressed freedom of will and of conscience but above all a personal experience of inward religion. It is no exaggeration to say that under the teaching and example of these leaders of the "devotio moderna," "in the fifteenth century Mysticism passed into common life."[4]

In summation it can be said that those formative ideas found in the environment and in the thinking of Henry Nicholas were released in Europe beginning in the

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1. Cheney, Sheldon, Men Who Have Walked With God, p. 205.
2. Workman, H. B., op. cit., p. 209.
3. Kettlewell, S., Thomas à Kempis and the Brethren of the Common Life, p. 173, See also page 163.
4. Workman, H.B., op. cit., p. 209. Cf. Huizinga, J.B., The Waning of the Middle Ages, p. 178.

12th and 13th centuries. Joachim proposed a dynamic concept of history opposed to the static philosophy supported by the church. A new society, he taught, would arise which would replace the church in the emerging age of the Spirit. In the same period Francis of Assisi popularized and made practical a theory of mystic love which in the Spirituales was wedded to the dynamic historical concept. The Beghards and Beguines and the Brethren of the Free Spirit owe much to the Spirituales but were strongly influenced toward pantheism by the Amalricians who also confirmed them in their eschatological belief of the third age. Scattered by persecution, pockets of mystical pantheistic belief, heavily colored by eschatological hopes, were established all over Europe and became especially strong in the Low countries. The mystical societies when forced into the Third Order of Franciscans carried their ideas into these groups.

Eckhart, born in the significant year 1260, founded that German mysticism around which the Gottesfreunde rallied. Eckhart, Suso, Tauler and the Theologia Germanica all speak sharply to the Free Spirits and yet these fringe elements fed on the main stream of mysticism. The frequency of the warnings only shows how little many understood the message of mystical freedom and that the very continuance of the Gottesfreunde

guaranteed the survival of the Free Spirits. The tremendous popularity of the "Deutchen Mystiker" heightened the interest in lay mysticism and impressed its perfectionist teaching and Spirit-centered faith indelibly in the soul of the Germanic people.

The "devotio moderna," linked to the Gottesfreunde by Jan Roesbrock, continued the secularization of mysticism but held it under ecclesiastical control. The ideal of perfectionism, the practical ethic of love, the importance of the inner Word, and the possibility of union with God were the teachings disseminated by them across Europe. This also was being done in related literature such as: The Mirror of Perfection, Theologia Germanica, The Sermons of Tauler, and the Imitatio Christi; and in a less evangelical manner by the "Tertius Ordo" of the Franciscans and Dominicans.

CHAPTER II

The Expression of Relevant Mystical, Eschatological and Ethical Ideas among the Left-Wing Elements in Early Sixteenth Century Europe.

CHAPTER II

It has long been recognized how deeply indebted the leaders of the Reformation in Europe were to late Medieval elements which had within them the vital force of reforming power but could not release it since conditions religiously, socially, politically and economically were not ripe. The great Reformers have even been considered more as the children of a Reformation than as the instigators of one; but, be that as it may, it is quite evident that the same thought-patterns which provided their intellectual content and the same forces which spurred them to action affected men of a different religious stamp. On every hand eddies of spiritual excitement were stirred up by the tide of reform and it soon became apparent that there was another type of reformation abroad which did not conform to the pattern of Luther, Calvin, Zwingli or even to the main Anabaptist parties. The theology of these spiritual independents was not discoverable in any classified <u>theologia dogmatica</u> for they were followers of the <u>theologia mystica</u> each a law unto himself. They believed that they were carrying the Reformation to its rightful conclusion and thought of themselves as the harbingers of a new age. They looked back to the apostles but not for standards of ecclesiology

rather that they might salvage the doctrine of the Holy Spirit scuttled by those who had bound the Word of God.

Commonly these "spiritual reformers" placed a greater value on the lex insita than on the written word of God though they reverenced the Scripture and made a genuine effort to put the Sermon on the Mount into action in their lives. The sum of their religion was to love God and the sum of their ethics was to love man, for their energizing concept was not "faith" but "love." The expression of their belief was theologically vague, thus making it possible for a wide variety of moderns to claim them as their rightful Reformation ancestry..

It is to this side of the Reformation that Henry Nicholas belongs; to the left branch of the Medieval heritage; and it is in this area, too, that he made his contribution to the continuing change in English religion until his ideas were finally absorbed in other parties which gave a superior utterance to the same ideals. Strongly influenced though he was by Roman Catholicism, Henry Nicholas drew from his milieu many other factors which shaped that strange religious party of which he was the father. His idea of love as the means of salvation and the root of all social ethics,

the belief that union with God is the right of every Christian who will climb the golden staircase to perfection, the possibility or rather the duty of perfection, the expectancy of continued revelation and visions, his acute eschatological consciousness that this is the day of judgement; all these came from that melting pot of ideas new and old in which he lived. Münster, Amsterdam, Embden, Antwerp, Bremen, Cologne, Liege, Leiden, all of the cities which he knew so well, were hotbeds of covert religious thinking and havens for radical reflection. The Erasmic humanism in his early education, the Franciscan principles in his religious training, the piety of his home, combined to make him sensitive to the beehives of left-wing thought which he encountered. The fact that Nicholas does not name any individual, book or party which he admired is unfortunate and yet this very fact makes it clear how dependent he was on casual environmental contacts as a source for his developed deviations.

It would be unprofitable to examine every individual in the left-wing parties and altogether impractical. To avoid such difficulties several representative parties and thinkers have been chosen as typical of contemporary areas of thought. It will be seen that when the Roman

structure began to crack by reason of inner strains and pressures many imprisoned medieval ideas found free expression in the several camps of independent Reformation thinkers, each party possessing its own mental and moral idiosyncrasies.

The Libertines, a small but active body, arose in the Netherlands but spread to France and Switzerland. They are said to have "originated with Anthony Pockes, Gerhard Ruff, Quintin and others --- in Flanders."[1] Margaret of Navarre, sister of Francis I and several influential leaders among the Calvinists were moved to support them.[2] Their ambitious claim that they "penetrated further into the truth than the Reformers did"[3] attracted many inclined toward spiritual or mystical reform. Calvin reports having met numbers of them in Paris at the home and shop of De la Farges and the meeting was not a happy one. One, Quintin, interpreted everything in terms of the Spirit "who is and lives in all creatures." "It is this sole Spirit," Quintin said, "which does everything; man has no will, no more than if he were a stone."[4] Later Calvin met the same

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1. Mosheim, op. cit., p. 681. Cf. Blunt, J.H.M., Dictionary of Sects.
2. Calvin, J., "Instructio Adversus Fanaticani --," in Tractus Theologici, p. 599 ff.
3. D'Aubigne, History of the Reformation, Vol. VI, p. 357.
4. Ibid., Vol. III, p. 92 ff. Reproduced here is Calvin's record from Contre La secte Phantastique et Furieuse des Libertins, Geneva 1545.

group in Geneva during the spring of 1537 when Hermon of Liége and Andrew Benoit, of Holland came to that city. This party was representative of the Spirituales who had "found their way into Western Europe"though "Germany and the Netherlands were, above all, their proper countries ---."[1]

These Libertines, abounding in the Low Countries, form an integral part of the religious picture in the early 16th century. Mosheim, who did considerable research on the subject, quite unequivocally states that the Libertines are related to the Brethren of the Free Spirit and the Beghards since their doctrine is identical,and further,the Netherlands "in the 14th and 15th centuries was full of this sort of people."[2] The fact that clear-cut distinctions between parties of the radical reformation did not exist makes this of signal import.[3] A fluid state prevailed that was devoid of well defined theological articles and there was much interaction between emerging parties so that out of the seething cauldron of ideas each man had to draw what he felt to be true. Bainton's remark that "a thermometer is more

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1. Ibid., Vol. VI, p. 357. Cf. Vol. II, p. 121.
2. Mosheim, op. cit., p. 681-682, (See notes).
3. Dosker, H. E., The Dutch Anabaptists, p. 8 ff.

appropriate than a ruler for measuring such theologies," is very apropos.[1] Nicholas himself seems to have contacted the Libertines in some form while in Amsterdam and there is little doubt that numbers of his followers received their early bent for this type of religion from that source. Barreveldt, Plantin, van Hasselt and others of his chief adherents and supporters likewise found encouragement from the same sect.

Among those influenced by this type of thinking was Johannes Campanus (1495-1575)[2] who, while in a Lutheran charge at Jülich, encountered a sect similar to the Brethren of the Free Spirit which had flourished there earlier. These semi-pantheistic free thinkers, numerous in Flanders and Brabant after 1520, were variously called Loists, Libertines and even Lutherans.[3] They held with pantheistic emphasis that salvation was universal and eternal punishment an impossibility because of the nature of God and His relationship to the "inner spirit" in each man. Their pantheism was limited, however, by a neo-platonic dualism of spirit as good and the material

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1. Bainton, R.H., "The Left Wing of the Reformation," in The Journal of Religion, Vol. XXI, 1941, p. 131.
2. Rembert, Die Wiedertäufer im Herzogtum Jülich, pp. 160-305.
3. An abstract of their doctrine is given by Rembert, op. cit., and Döllinger, J.J., Beiträge zur Sektengeschichte des Mittelalters, Vol. II, pp. 664-668. These authors also give extracts of pertinent writings.

world as evil. Man in the flesh, they taught, cannot please God but man in the spirit cannot but please God. These sectaries also derived from medieval sources a triple-epoch theory remarkably like that propagated by the Spirituales among the Franciscans. Led by these individuals Campanus eventually became anti-Lutheran which won him much support from the Catholics of Jülich and nearby provinces,[1] and which gave him opportunity to teach his pantheistic doctrine for a time in Roman Catholic communities in northwestern Germany. This pantheistic persuasion is especially evident in his doctrine of the Lord's Supper for he took "This is my body" to mean "This is a corporeal substance which belongs to me as creator."[2] In keeping with those medieval eschatological expectations which he accepted from the Loists he spent much energy in calculating prophetical dates and declared that the "restitution" of all things was at hand. By this latter emphasis he moved a number of

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1. Campanus was also influenced by Erasmic Humanism in his contact with Witzel in whose company he studied the church Fathers at Wittenberg 1523-1531. He had so acceded to the Free Spirits that Lutheranism made little impact and Erasmic Humanism drove him yet further away.
2. Campanus was at the Marburg Conference in 1529 and agreed with neither Luther nor Zwingli. Sebastian Franck later advised him to read Servetus' writings and he drifted into Anti-Trinitarian views.

well educated ministers such as Röll, Klöpriss, Vinne, Staprade out of Erasmic Catholicism into eclectic protestantism and then to moderate Anabaptism.[1] The acceptance by many intelligent men of Henry Nicholas' seemingly brash announcement that this is "the day of Judgement," the "Age of the Spirit," the "day of the Restoration of the true Israel," must be thought of against a background in which such occurrences were not uncommon.[2]

Back and forth along the Rhine valley, that great natural highway, travelled many Free Spirits and mystical Anabaptists who found a frequent change of environment beneficial. These were not long welcome in any place and as they continued in their travels they spread their ideas and encouraged little groups who held similar doctrine or who dissatisfied with either Catholicism or the Reformation, were seeking "spiritual" truth. Some of these wandering preachers were Chiliastic and stirred up revolts as at Münster and Amsterdam but most of them held moderate eschatological views which centered not on a material kingdom but on a spiritual one. Their authority was the Holy Spirit and they sought to inaugurate, generally unconsciously, the Age of the Spirit.

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1. Newman, A. H., op. cit., Vol. II, p. 191. Some of these men later turned Chiliastic and perished at Münster.
2. Cramer, S., and Pyper, F., Bibliotheca Reformatoria Neerlandica, Vol. IV, p. 524 ff. Pyper's notes on Van Den Gheloove show the mystical atmosphere fraught with uneasy expectancy abroad in the Netherlands. Cf. Glasson, T.F., His Appearing and His Kingdom, pp. 145-155.

Among these mystics none was more influential than Hans Denck (1495-1527),[1] "the Appolo of Anabaptists,"[2] who is dealt with at some length here since he represents a left-wing mysticism broader than any party; a mysticism common in Germany and the Low Countries and as such, a significant part of the environment of Henry Nicholas. Denck had drunk deeply of Medieval mysticism and traces of sermons like Tauler's "The Bridegroom and the Bride," are frequently found in his writings.[3] As a proof-reader he may well have absorbed much of the Theologia Germanica and the Imitatio Christi which were first put in print at that time.[4]

With his own theological stress centering as it did on the "inner word,"[5] Denck felt that Luther and the other Reformers gave the doctrines of sin and justification "an artificial construction -- Einbildung -- and that their conception of Scripture and the sacraments

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1. Coutts, A., Hans Denck, gives a good bibliography of both contemporary and recent works, p. 259. See also works listed in Fredrick Weis' Johannes Denck.
2. Keller, L., "An Apostle of the Anabaptists," in Baptist Quarterly Review, Vol. VII, p. 34. Berthold Höller so styles him.
3. Lindsay, T. M., A History of the Reformation, Vol.II, p.436.
4. Evans. A. P., An Episode in the Struggle for Religious Freedom: The Sectaries of Nuremberg - 1524-1528. Thomas Münzer apparently introduced him to the Augsburg 1506 edition of Tauler's Sermons. See Jones, R.M. op. cit.,p.19.
5. Newman, A.H., op. cit., Vol. II, p. 183. Weis, Fred., Life, Teachings and Works of Johannes Denck, pp. 35,62. Jones, R.M., op. cit., p. 2 0. Coutts, A., op. cit., p. 197-204. "Ceremonies in themselves are not sinful, but he who thinks he will get anything either from Baptism or the Eucharist is still in superstition." Wideruff, Art. 7.

was destined to clamp the new-found faith in iron bands, tie it to outworn traditions."[1] Denck does not himself jettison Scripture but remarks that "Important as this inner word is, it is not sufficient to produce faith; and when I seek witnesses and helpers I find that there is nothing which so perfectly serves this purpose as the Holy Scriptures."[2] To seek the truth without the Scriptures is perilous for without them "he who independently investigates the dark way of the divine mysteries stumbles."[3] But the "outer word" without the "inner word" leads to vanity. Denck, conditioned as he was by Medieval mystical concepts (which were, de facto, an escape from solidified Roman Catholic dogma) felt that the Reformers were falling into the "serious error" of accepting outward authority.[4] Repelled by this and in spite of his high appreciation of Scripture Denck often seems to be teaching the error of Montanus.

> "The word which is in the heart we must not deny, but listen gently and earnestly to what God has to say to us, and at the same time not absolutely reject any outward testimony, but listen to and test everything.--"

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1. Jones, R. M., op. cit., p. 19. Cf. Coutts, op. cit., p. 91.
2. Keller, L., op. cit., p. 41.
3. Loc. cit.
4. On the attitude of the Anabaptists to the Reformers and visa versa see Bender, H.S., "The Anabaptist Vision," in Church History, Vol. XIII, 1944.

> "and then go on in the fear of the Spirit. Then the mind will become clearer and clearer every day until we hear God speaking to us in the plainest fashion, and we become certain of His will, which is that we should renounce all self will, and give ourselves up to freedom which is God. It is then we resemble God, and aim at attaining the character of God, as sons of God and joint heirs with Christ. We live as God would have us live, and as Christ lived. But it is not we that live, but Christ that lives in us."[1]

The Christian religion is a personal and an inward matter. "The kingdom of God," Denck wrote in Was geredet sey," is in you, and he who searches for it outside himself will never find it, for apart from God no one can either seek or find God, for he who seeks God already in truth has Him."[2] This inward religion is not to issue in immorality, however, but in purity of life, a purity not obtained by "faith" so much as by "following." Like the Gottesfreunde, Denck stresses not justification by faith but Nachfolge Christi and the principle of Bussfertikeit, contriteness before God. Salvation, the new birth, is by Christ but evidence of that experience in a new life is necessary. "He who depends on the merit of Christ," he says in his dying

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1. Weis, Op. Cit., p. 27.
2. The variance of opinion on the "inner word" is discussed by Wiswedel, W., "The Inner and Outer Word," in Mennonite Quarterly Review, Vol. XXVI, No. 3, 1952.

words uttered in Oecolampadius' home," and yet continues in a fleshly wicked life, regards Christ precisely as in former times the heathen held their Gods. He who really believes that Christ has saved him can no longer be a servant of sin, for no one believes rightly until he leaves his old life." As in all mystics who stress purity and some degree of union with God, the ideal of perfectionism creeps in. The "inner word" is "a spark of the Divine Spirit" and it is this which leads by the Nachfolge Christi to His image.[1]

Like Eckhart, Tauler and others of the German mystics, Denck finds love to be the great theme. In salvation it is love that operates. "Oh blessed is the man who in his need finds the love of God and comes to Him for forgiveness." (Vom Gesetz Gottes, p. 33).[2] The Saviour is the supreme example of this love. "It has pleased the eternal Love that the person in whom love was shown in the highest degree should be called the Saviour of his people." (Was geredet sey, p.16). Love also is the measure of the Christian. "All who are saved are of one spirit with God, and he who is

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1. Emmot, E. B., A Short History of Quakerism, p. 49.
2. Following R. M. Jones, Spiritual Reformers of the 16th and 17th Century, p. 20 ff. Cf. Coutts, A., op. cit., p. 164, Newman, A. H., op. cit., Vol. II, p. 182.

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the foremost in love is the foremost of those who are saved." (Vom den wahren Liebe, p. 8). To be a Christian is "To love God alone and to hate everything that hinders love." (Vom Gesetz Gottes, p. 12). Within the community of all who believe in Christ union should not be sought in ceremonies and doctrine rather they should "make all externals yield to love."

Denck's teaching was of "the religion of the Spirit." He spread abroad in his own passive manner the concept that neither Roman Catholic dogma nor yet the "frozen letters" of Reformed orthodoxy could teach the truth, rather this was the work of "the Holy Spirit of which there is a spark in every man."[1] "Therefore," writes Denck, "we must surrender our hearts and wills to the Master (i.e., Christ the Inner Word) who teaches all scholars, and who alone has the key to the Bible which contains all treasures of wisdom."[2] Denck was teaching, it appears, "in feeling as well as ideas" a faith comparable to that of the Society of Friends.[3]

Denck died in 1527 and thus his outreach was limited but he is only one of a great number who held

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1. Coutts, A., Hans Denck, p. 36.
2. Ibid., p. 37.
3. Heath, Richard, "Hans Denck, The Anabaptist," in Contemporary Review, December 1892.

similar beliefs and who in the circles of unsettled seekers found a ready hearing as had the evangelical mystics of the Middle Ages. How numerous and influential these men were R. M. Jones has demonstrated in his studies.

Closely associated with Denck at Strassbourg, Augsburg, and Worms was Ludwig Hetzer (1500-1529) with whom he made a translation of the Old Testament prophets.[1] Hetzer also was influenced by the "Deutschen Mysticker," especially the Theologia Germanica which he prepared for publication by Peter Schaffer, in Worms 1528.[2] Standing, like Denck, entirely outside the main Reforming parties, yet not entirely with the Anabaptists, he clearly expressed "the radical religious individualism of mysticism.[3] In the preface to his translation of Baruch he wrote:

> "Whoever does not possess God within his heart may seek him forever and never find him. Whoever searches only in the Bible for knowledge, will find it but it will be a useless wisdom which does not improve him. This indeed happens to all who receive their belief only from reading and hearsay, and who in support of their faith only say I have read about--"

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1. Newman, A. H., op. cit., Vol. II, p. 182.
2. Weis, F., The Life and Teachings of Ludwig Hetzer.
3. Troeltsch, E., The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches, Vol. I, p. 371.

> "it in this or that Chapter of the Bible. For no matter how learned a man may be he cannot understand the Scriptures unless he comprehends them and experiences them in the depths and truths of his soul."[1]

He was moved deeply by the wrangling over points of doctrine among the Reformers and his constant appeal was to "the Spirit of God" who "is the sign of all Christians" and who "joins us to God."[2] He felt that "God Himself speaks in the deeps of man's soul"[3] and if men would but listen then unanimity of doctrine would universally prevail.

In Johann Bünderlin,[4] also a disciple of Denck, there emerges a speculative mysticism strongly reminiscent of Eckhart and Suso. Bünderlin taught that God was always going out of Himself into forms of self-expression.[5] His highest manifestation of Himself is in Angels where "He objectifies Himself, mirrors Himself." The next expression is in man who inwardly

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1. As translated in Weis, F., op. cit., p. 344.
2. Ibid., p. 107.
3. Emmot, E. B., op. cit., p. 48.
4. The most comprehensive account is given by Nicholadoni, F., Johann Bunderlin. According to R.M. Jones, op.cit.,p. 34-35, the three rare works of Bünderlin can be found bound in a single volume in the Königliche Bibliothek in Dresden. (1) Ein gemayne Berechnung über der Heiligen Schrift Inhalt etc.(A general consideration of the contents of Holy Scripture) Strassbourg: 1529;(2) Aus was Ursach sich Gott in die nyder gelassen und in Christo vermenscheist ist etc. (For what cause God has descended here below and has become incarnate in Christ) 1529; (3) Erklärung durch Vergleichung der biblischen Geschrift, etc. (Declaration by comparison of the Biblical Writings etc.) 1530.
5. See Jones, R. M., op. cit., p. 35-36 summation of Aus was Ursach.

is made in the likeness and image of God but who bears also the fleshly element. Man has free will to choose what will dominate within him but God is always as near as the light is to the eye pleading with the "inner word" and "He labors unceasingly to be born in us and to bring forth His love and His spiritual kingdom." Man must participate in this eternal love with which God loves him.[1]

In his work on Scriptures the entire theme, evolved with considerable repetition, is that God's revelation is twofold.[2] The "living Word" in the souls of man is the chief of these but God also speaks in an "historical word." Every stage of human progress is "marked by the passage from the dominion of the external to the sway and power of inward experience." God is thus training mankind for the time when images and figures will be unnecessary and all men will live by the "inward word." In such a relationship says Bünderlin, "Love must bloom and the spirit of the man must follow the will of God written in his heart."[3]

In his third work he discusses external customs which have been incorrectly reinstated "without the command of God or the witness of Scripture."[4] Religion

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1. Loc. cit.
2. See Jones, R.M., Op. Cit., pp. 36-38 summation of Ein gemayne Berechnung.
3. Loc. cit.
4. See Jones, R. M., op. cit., pp. 38-39 summation of Erklärung durch Vergleichung.

does not consist in these ceremonies but is "a matter of the inward spirit, --- of obedience to a living word, of love for an infinite Lover." The period of "signs and symbols" is ended; thus when the new age comes ceremonies and sacraments fall away. Those who hold "the key of David," who have entered upon "the true Sabbath of the soul" hold lightly outward and mechanical religion. Bünderlin concludes, "When the Kingdom of God with its joy and love has come in us we do not much care for those things which can only happen outside us."[1]

Bünderlin's system of thought was modified in one important way by his disciple Entfelder[2] who added that there were three well-defined epochs in which God accomplished His revelatory work. Under the law, God revealed Himself in externals by outward forms of training and discipline; the second stage was the Divine revelation in the Son by which men might see His character and heart outwardly; finally, by the Holy Spirit the One God reveals "His essential nature of active Goodness -- Goodness at work in the World."

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1. Aus was Ursach, p. 33.
2. Little information about Entfelder has come to light thus far. Veesenmeyer's article in Gabler's N. Theol. Journal (1800), Vol. IV, pp. 309-334, on which R. M. Jones' comments are based, is seemingly the only work done on this interesting figure. Entfelder was an intimate friend of Hubmaier in 1527 but after meeting Bünderlin in Strassbourg (1529-30), closely followed his doctrine.

Everything up to that time had been only a pointer to bring the soul to the "inner living word." Now, says Entfelder, Christ can be, and must be born in the heart of every man. This alone can ensure salvation and lead a man to "give up the Babel-habit of constructing theological systems."[1] Only after such an experience can the soul find its rest in "the origin and Fount of all Love." In keeping with his eschatological interpretion of history (i.e., his belief that they were entering an age pregnant with direct Spirit-revealed truth) Entfelder relegates any doctrinal expression of the Christian faith to a place of insignificance.

Chief among the naturalistic or rationalistic "Spiritualisten" was Sebastian Franck (D. 1542).[2] Sebastian Franck appears to have had intimate contact with Denck, Bünderlin and Schwenckfeld prior to 1530 and their ideas uncovered his nascent desire for a "spiritual faith" as opposed to one of ceremonies. Schwenkfeld's[3] quietistic attitude to the Church pleased him,[4] while Bünderlin he praised as a man or reverence,

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1. Jones, R. M., op. cit., p. 43.
2. Neve, J. L., A History of Christian Thought, Vol. II, p. 43.
3. See Erbkam's article in Hauck-Herzog Encyclopedia, Vol. XIII, p. 776 ff.
4. Hegler, A., Geist und Schrift bei Sebastian Franck, pp. 28-48.

scholarship and possessed of an enlightened reason.[1] Under this influence he taught that men must unlearn all that which they had received from the Pope, Luther, or Zwingli. The external church, he said, was finished and from thenceforth "the inward enlightenment by the Spirit of God is sufficient."[2] The three faiths (Lutheran, Zwinglian and Anabaptist) are to be supplemented by a fourth, "well on the way to birth, which will dispense with external preaching, ceremonies, sacraments --."[3] This will be "an invisible, spiritual church in the unity of the Spirit and of faith, to be governed wholly by the eternal, invisible Word of God."

In Franck's Chronica[4] he gives an interpretation of history quite similar in style to the biblical history of Henry Nicholas written a few years later in his Evangelium Regni. The Chronica purports to prove that from the Patriarchs to the present there has by stages been a progressive revelation of the "inward light."[5] Franck concludes that "everything does not hang upon the bare letter of Scripture; everything hangs rather, on the spirit of Scripture and on a spiritual understanding of

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1. Newman, A. H., Op. cit., Vol. II, p. 190.
2. Jones, R. M., Spiritual Reformation, p. 49.
3. Franck, S., "Turkenchronik," from extracts translated by R. M. Jones, op. cit., p. 44.
4. Chronica, Zeitbuch und Geschichtsbible, Strassbourg, 1531.
5. Smith, J. F., "Sebastian Franck, Heretic, Mystic and Reformer of the Reformation," in Theological Review, Vol. XI, 1874.

the inner meaning of what God has said, If we weigh every matter carefully we shall find its true meaning in the depth of our spiritual understanding and by the mind of Christ.[1]

Three years before his death in 1542 at Basle, Franck wrote Das verbütschierte Buch, (The Seven-sealed Book), in which he gives a mystical account of the soul's journey to God. "If he will travel away from himself and away from the world and seek only God as the precious pearl of his soul, he will come steadily nearer to God, until he becomes one spirit with God the Spirit, but let him not be afraid of the mountains and valleys on the way and let him not give up because he is tired and weary, for he who seeks finds."[2] Here, too, there is a parallel in Henry Nicholas' writings, specifically in Terra Pacis, a True Testification of the Spiritual Land of Peace, first published in 1546 at Amsterdam, which is also an account of a spiritual pilgrimage. Both these works were published in English translations by Giles Calvert in the middle of the next century.

Franck insisted on the supremacy of the "inner word" over the "outer word."[3] The church is split in

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1. Franck, S., Chronica, p. 452 as translated in R.M. Jones, op. cit., p. 50.
2. Franck, S., Das verburtschierte Buch, p. 5 as translated in extract in R.M.Jones, Op. cit., p. 52.
3. Dosker, H. E., The Dutch Anabaptists, p. 61.

fragments because it has substituted the dead page of Scriptures for the self-revealing Spirit. This dead letter is what crucified Christ in Jerusalem and literalism is causing Him to be crucified afresh.[1] "In Pentecost all books are transcended." All revelation comes from Christ who cannot be limited to the historical personage of Galilee for He is "a Christ reborn in many souls, raised again in many victorious lives, and endlessly spreading His Kingdom through the ever-widening membership of the invisible Church."[2]

Franck's liberal ideas were carried out by his followers, "Franconists"[3], and Dirk Coornhert, an open admirer of Franck, adopted many of his ideas.[4]

Dirk Coornhert (B. 1522) was an interpreter of rationalistic mysticism and therefore suspicious of enthusiasm, visions, and private "openings."[5] He was acquainted with Henry Nicholas and came to oppose him for though they had a mutual belief that the church was about to be replaced by a new order which would break

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1. Jones, R. M., op. cit., p. 61.
2. Franck, S., Das verbürtschierte Buch, p. 101.
3. Bibliotheca Reformatoria Nederlandica. See S. Cramer's remarks, Vol. VII, p. 280.
4. Pyper, F., "A number of Coornhert's writings afford evidence that he had been subjected to a large degree to Franck's influence." Ibid., Vol. X, p. 475.
5. Heppe, H., Geschichte des Pietismus und der Mystik in der reformierten Kirche (Leiden, 1879). Jones, R.M., op. cit., pp. 124-132. Arnold, G., Kirchen-und Ketzerhistoria (1741), Vol. II, p. 377.

into the present order by the power of the Holy Spirit, they differed radically as to how this was to take place. Coornhert as an Erasmian denied the Calvinistic view of the human will and he had absorbed from his mystical studies the belief that deep within was a spark of divinity, bruised but not destroyed by the Fall.[1] The Reformers, he averred, were in error in their view that the church was a visible church rather than a spiritual fellowship, an error which led them to emphasize external ceremonies rather than "inner experience." Coornhert himself interprets the Scriptures allegorically and spiritualizes all sacramental truth. True baptism is not an outward act but an inner identification with the life, death and resurrection of Christ; communion in its true sense is the soul feeding on Christ; the real Sabbath is the inward prevailing peace of the soul. All outward doctrines and rites must retreat before love, for Christ himself put love and its practice first. This is also the substance of Henry Nicholas' doctrine especially as developed in The First Exhortation of H.N.

Coornhert's eschatological expectancy led him to declare that the organized church as it stands should

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1. Coornhert translated Erasmus' Paraphrases of the New Testament. See also Coornhert's works on divine decrees listed in Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, p. 814, Note 5,

be disbanded as it is apostate and an "interim church" formed to await the impending divine act by which the whole world will be gathered into the true church of Christ. Like Schwenkfeldt, with whom he has much in common, he refused to gather around himself a nucleus for this was the work of the Holy Spirit. The law of the "interim church" was brotherly love not only manifested between members but toward the whole world.[1]

The most extreme of the mystical left-wing thinkers was David Joris (1501-1556)[2] who is frequently linked with Nicholas and even said to be founder of a party which Nicholas took over. Joris was at first a Lutheran but was soon drawn into the whirlpool of more radical religious expressionism and associated himself with the Anabaptists, though consistently rejecting the Münsterite revolutionary theory.[3] After the Münster

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1. The accession of Coornhert's ideas by the collegiants after the Synod of Dort 1619 is described by R. M. Jones in Spiritual Reformers. He includes remarks on their similarity to the Quakers. pp. 113 ff.
2. Basel University, Davidis Georgii Holandi Haeresiarche vita and doctrina. (Basileae, 1559) In German, David Georgen ausz Holand dess Ertzkätzers warhafftig Histori. (Basel 1559). See also the account of Joris' son-in-law, N. Blesdikius, Historia Davidus Georgii (Deventer, 1642). Nippold, F., "David Joris," in Zeitschrift für die historische Theologie, 1863, pp. 52-55. Bainton, R. H., David Joris --. British Museum has several of Joris' writings and a number of related 16th and 17th century works.
3. Joris was baptized in 1534 and ordained a bishop in 1536 with Obbe and Dirck Phillips.

fiasco Joris took a leading part at the Buckholt (Westphalia) Synod of Anabaptists, held during August 1536, unsuccessfully attempting to unite the three participating factions. (i.e., The quiet Anabaptists led by Dirck and Obbe Phillips, the Hoffmanites and the Münster remnant). This failure and the flattery of followers who declared him to be the annointed of God led Joris to establish his own party and to assume a new role.[1] Swayed more than ever by pantheistic and mystical modes of thought, Joris came to a pattern of teaching with eschatological emphasis which set him apart both from the legalistic literalists and the crude chiliasts whose motives were more political than religious. Menno Simons recognized this and utterly rejected all that Joris signified in religion even threatening with the bann any Mennonite who read his works.[2]

Joris, a prolific writer, wrote over 1,000 tracts as well as several folios,[3] his Magnum opus being the lengthy Wöder Boeck(Wonder Book) dated 1542.[4] The style

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1. See Bainton, R., The Travail of Religious Liberty, p. 125-126 which gives a rhapsodic letter from a female admirer and Joris' response. "The glory of the Lord shone round about me eight or ten days thereafter---."
2. B.R.N., Vol. VII, p. 416. Joris also appealed to Luther, Bucer and John a Lasco for support but of course was completely rebuffed by them also. Brandt, G.,op. cit., p.75.
3. Davis, J., Apocalypsis, p. 41. Burckhardt, P., David Joris und seine Gemeinde in Basel, covers the Basel period thoroughly. Cf. documents discussed in James Murdock's History of Michael Servetus, p. 425 ff.Cramer,S.op.cit.,II,282.
4. British Museum has 1542 and 1551 editions of T. Wöder Boeck and four of Joris' other writings. See also Joris' works in B.R.N., the masterly collection by Cramer and Pyper.

of these works is uniformly "so obscure and confused that they seem rather like idle tales than rational discourses,"[1] yet Joris convinced his followers that they were being examined by the great of this world who soon "would be so convinced of his sublime wisdom, that they would cry out with admiration, in the words of the prophet Isaiah, Lo! this is our God, we have waited for him and he will save us."[2]

It is in the Wonder Boeck amid a "medley of enthusiastic fantasies" and "allegorical interpretation of Scripture" that Joris strongly asserts his supposed divine mission and the impending divine act in history.[3] Like Bünderlin and Entfelder he explains that religion up to his coming was wrapped in figures and mysteries which are now fulfilled.[4] Joris goes further, however, for he egotistically and blasphemously identifies himself as the central figure of the new age.[5] As Moses was the prophet of hope and Christ the prophet of faith so Joris is the prophet of love who would raise the tabernacle of God by meekness for he was the true Messiah who would never die.[6]

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1. Brandt, G., Op. cit., p. 77.
2. Loc. cit.
3. Newman, A. H., op. cit., Vol. II, p. 186.
4. See "Successio Anabaptistica", B.R.N., Vol. VII, p. 48. According to this source Joris said all previous revelations were only temporary expedients.
5. Whiting, C. E., Studies in English Puritanism, pp.284-5.
6. Harnack, A., op. cit., Vol. VII, p. 132. Harnack remarks of his philosophy of history, "David Joris, subjected the Trinity to a Sabellian treatment representing it as a threefold revelation."

He was the third David for after David the Psalmist came Jesus the Son of David and now David Joris.

It is evident that Joris did not originate his three age philosophy without stimulus from the floating mass of ideas of 16th century Holland. It has been observed that his "speculations have much in common with those of Joachim of Floris" and that his general teachings "resemble those of the Beghards and the Brethren of the Free Spirit."[1] As did the Free Spirits, Joris denied heaven and hell, said ceremonies and works do not affect the holiness of man's heart, taught that the Scripture must not be taken literally for the Spirit gives life but the letter kills, maintained that "true believers" begin a new existence for they are indwelt by the Spirit and are in a sense deified.[2] It is not inconceivable that Joris got his eschatological concepts from this source also for the Beghards and Free Spirits had an affinity to such ideas as their admiration and acceptance of Amalricianism and the teachings of John Peter Olivi in an earlier day adequately demonstrates.

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1. Newman, A. H., Op. Cit., Vol. II, p. 186.
2. "Successio Anabaptistica," in B.R.N., Vol. VII, p.48. Cf. Davis, J., Apocalypsis, p. 43. More, Henry, Enthusiasm Triumphant, sect. XXXIII, p. 23. Dosker, H., The Dutch Anabaptists, p. 54.

Something more must be said, however, for while it is true that Joris belonged to that broad pattern of heresy which occasionally manifested itself in groups like the Men of Understanding, he may well have received confirmation of his eschatological beliefs from Joachimite writings. As already noted, Venice in this period produced Joachim's Concordia (1519), Expositio in Apocalypsim (1527) and Psalterium (1527) as well as pseudo-Joachimite and Spirituale writings (1517). A number of German editions of pseudo-Joachimite works appeared in the 16th century, while in the Low countries selections of Joachimite prophecies were published (1532 & 1533) in Een vreemde Prophecie by Vincentius (Ferrerius).[1] These eschatological writings called forth by the Zeitgeist, were widely circulated in the religious underground. That Joris came in contact with some of these writings is not unlikely especially when one considers both his company and inclinations.

Joris refused to transfer his dynamic eschatology into political chiliasm. The two reasons for this mark the bounds of his very unsystematic theology. For Joris the true church was, on the negative side, a suffering church and not a persecuting church. The age of the

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1. Nederlandsche Bibliographie (1500-1540). Items no. 1761-1762. They were published in Antwerp by Henry Peeterson.

Spirit is to be introduced by meekness and not by the sword. Likewise Joris rejected Taborite chiliasm because the positive mark of the church was love. It is the pantheistic mystic who speaks when Joris writes:

> "How comely and beautiful is love. How excellent is she before God and his angels as she comes in her majesty in festive peace in the last day, as she appears more radiant than the sun! Then shall she be praised and honored above all others, for in her is the world redeemed and all men made blessed. Who understands this? Consider love for she is known neither by angels nor devils nor man. Her children are without Father and Mother in the flesh, like the Son of God in eternity. They are brought forth by the living word of faith in the will of God by the Holy Spirit to his glory and to a vision of eternal truth. Be mindful of this.
>
> God himself is love, for love is his life, his desire, his honour and glory, a crown of exaltation and beauty from his eternal holy wisdom for a light to the angels. She is the most holy and beautiful tabernacle of God's eternal unseen being, his holy heaven, the seat or throne of the honor of his high majesty, his own glorious being and body, adored and crowned, blessed above all, triumphant in eternity. God has made faith for a way. Hope leads through Christ to the truth, but for life the Holy Spirit has revealed love, the most beautiful and abiding being of God in eternity, for whom through the glory of his countenance all things were made, both seen and unseen, for joy and eternal happiness in heaven and peace on earth."[1]

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1. Bainton, R., The Travail of Religious Liberty, pp.136-7.

It was such mystical utterances as this blended with a message of urgency which won Joris a hearing and by dint of his unusual personality, appearance and pseudo-prophetical proclamation there soon gathered around him an enthusiastic following. Few of these understood what Joris' teaching signified and it is doubtful if he realized the implications of his system himself, until he was wholly entangled in a pantheism which led him to declare that he was deity.[1] His flight to Basel in 1544, just four years after Henry Nicholas founded his party, left many of his followers at loose ends and they quite conceivably joined the House of Love.

Henry Nicholas lived in a day when religious issues were debated with enthusiasm reserved for politics or sporting events in this present age. The ideas formulated by the Libertines and Loists, by Denck and Hetzer, by Bünderlin and Entfelder, by Franck and Coornhert, and even by that weird prophet Joris, were live issues sensible to the average man and delighted in by the religious dilettante. They seriously discussed the seat of final divine authority in this world; did it lie in the Spirit or in the written Word? Was the Bible

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1. Bainton feels that in Basel, Joris "abandoned his messianic pretensions in favor of mysticism and allegory." p. 257 op. cit., Burckhardt differs here.

"only a shadow of a word, a manger of Christ, a monstrance, a sheath, a lantern, a witness,"[1] or was revelation found in the written page itself?

Faith was a great virtue, these left-wing elements agreed, but is not love the greatest of all virtues? In the face of severe persecution and even death many found Sebastian Costellio's plea, "From the bottom of my heart, I call you to a spirit of love," (Defensio, 1526)the clarion call to new attitudes of toleration and they asked with that free thinker:

> "Oh Christ, dost thou see and approve these things? Hast thou become a totally different person from what Thou wert? When thou wert on earth nothing could be more gentle and kind, and more ready so suffer injuries ---. Has thou changed to this? --- Dost Thou command that those who do not understand Thy ordinances and commandments as those over us would require, should be drowned or drawn and quartered, and burned at the stake?"[2]

Love alone they felt, could deliver from persecution, wrath, dissension and warfare so evident in the ranks of Christians in their time. Gentle figures like Hetzer cried out against religious quarrelling pointing to the Holy Spirit, the giver of truth and spiritual fruit, as the One who could quell all disturbance.

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1. Marmix of Aldergondes on Franck's doctrine. Quoted in Dosker, H., op. cit.,pp. 62-63.
2. Concerning Heretics as quoted in Jones, R.M. op. cit., p. 95.

The progressive view of history also found a responsive note in the early transition days of the Reformation. There emerged in Europe again the Joachimite belief in three ages of history which followed successively one upon the other, each bringing a higher revelation of God and an improved religious state for man. The Libertines, though crossing the threshhold into pantheism, were preaching an age of the Spirit as were the Loists who undeniably proclaimed the three-epoch theory. Bünderlin's progressive concept was rounded out by Entfelder who taught that in this unfolding age of the Spirit, God as goodness was at work in the world through love. Joris taught the same theory but smothered it in pantheism. Even the rational mystics Franck and Coornhert joined Schwenckfeld in quietly awaiting the advent of the Holy Spirit in a new order which would replace the church. The dynamic of the new order was to be love.

Imbedded in the teachings of these men was the ideal of perfectionism both individual and social. They agreed that a forensic righteousness was insufficient to bring into the world peace and toleration, and so they uniformly turned to love a s the agent of salvation, and not to faith. Their dependence on Medieval "Deutschen Mystiker" is evident. Perfectionism and inner light theology led them to minimize the value of all external

forms of religion which they viewed as not sinful but not necessary.

These are some of the more visible facets of left-wing religious thought as it was found in the early Reformation age. It was these ideas in conjunction with Henry Nicholas' strict Roman Catholic Franciscan training which shaped the prophet of the House of Love, and it was these forces which he attempted to combine in a society that would fulfill the very essence of the progressive divine revelation to man.

CHAPTER III

The Biography of Henry Nicholas and the Rise of the House of Love in the Low Countries.



A portrait of Henry Nicholas
Ephraim Pagitt, Heresiography

CHAPTER III

The story of the Huis der Liefde on the Continent is largely the story of Henry Nicholas himself.[1] He was the vortex around which all the consequential events revolved, and with his death the movement faded into insignificance, and his followers were integrated into other parties. Even among the many unique 16th century left-wing radicals Henry Nicholas stands out as a novel figure. Born at the opening of a revolutionary century he cut a divergent path later followed by many of those whom Troeltsch has called "the step-children of the Reformation." Nicholas drew from the religious reservoir of his time something of the teachings of the Observantine Franciscans, the vagaries of the Brethren of the Free Spirit, a hint or two from the Anabaptists, something of the independent spirit of Erasmic Humanism and spurred by the impulse of the age welded them together into a mystical semi-pantheistic system.

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1. The story of Henry Nicholas is told extensively in two manuscripts found in Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit te Leiden. They are, Chronica. Chronika des Hüs-gesinnes der Lieften by Daniel a fellow elder with H.N., and Acta H.N. De Gescheften H.N. by Zacharias a fellow elder with H.N. Ordo sacerdotis. De Ordeningen des priesterlicken States, also at Leiden, describes the hierarchy. Mirabilia Opera Dei, by Tobias an elder, is in German and English, and gives a partial biography of H.N. The latter work is in the British Museum Library and the Union Theological Seminary Library, New York. See H.F. Verwey in Het Boeck 26 (1940-1942), p. 191 FF. F.Nippold, "Heinrich Niclaes und das Haus der Liebe" in Zeitschrift für die historische Theologie, 1862, pp. 326-330.

Münster in Westphalia was at the beginning of the 16th century a city of some standing among the metropolises of northwestern Europe.[1] It was not large but its ideal situation had led to its selection as the seat of the bishop-prince in the state of Münster and had made it a center for trade so that its Marktplatz was a whirl of activity with a number of powerful guilds in evidence.[2] The local government by this period was no longer solely under an autocratic bishop-prince but had developed into a rough and tumble check and balance system of divided authority under the city council and a union of the guilds, resulting in a not too stable system of government with the mass of the people reduced to oppression and servitude.[3] The atmosphere was such that "in all departments of life perplexity and confusion prevailed. A tremendous spirit of unrest had taken hold of the people, and gloomy forebodings, such as commonly precede all great revolutions in history, filled every mind."[4]

Here in Münster, later to be the home of much that was infamous, Henry Nicholas was born in January of 1502.[5]

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1. Janssen, Johann, History of the German People, (10 Volumes) See the index volume for numerous descriptive sections on Münster.
2. Lins, Joseph, "Münster," in The Catholic Encyclopedia.
3. Lindsay, T. M., A History of the Reformation, Vol. II, p. 451.
4. Janssen, J., Op. cit., Vol. V, p. 302.
5. Chronica 3:2. There is a slight confusion since his birthday is dated according to the reign of Maximillian II and not by year. See Nippold, F., Op. cit.,pp. 340-341.

His very birthplace was enough to throw suspicion on him and those who bitterly criticized him after 1535 did not fail to correlate his religious proclivities and place of origin though there is no direct evidence of his consorting with "heretics" until his arrival in Amsterdam. His father was a member of the guild of cloth workers and must have been moderately successful since he could afford to send his son to a Latin school. The elder Nicholas was an exceptionally pious Roman Catholic and from earliest childhood the boy Henry was taken daily to the mass and preaching services of the Franciscans of the Observantine branch whose devoutness, asceticism and mystical approach to their faith was locally admired.[1] Nor was this the extent of Henry Nicholas' indoctrination for each evening in family worship the teachings of the church were reiterated to inculcate in the children a reverence and love for Catholic ceremonies.[2] The Acta and Chronica also relate that up until his eighth year Henry and his father had long talks about salvation in Christ and the significance of the mass.[3] It is not to be wondered at that he imbibed a deep respect for Romanism which he never

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1. Gemelli, A., The Franciscan Message to the World, p.121. "The Observants -- cultivated a simple popular style of preaching based directly on Sacred Scripture."
2. Thomas, A. C., The Family of Love, p. 3.
3. Acta 2:6, Chronica Chapter 4, (Nippold, F., op.cit., p.341.

entirely lost, and which fixed in his mind a belief in ceremonies and the necessity for searching out the significance which lay hidden within them.

The extremely pious nature of the elder Nicholas and his wife and the activities described causes the investigator to wonder if they were members of that middle way "the third order" (Tertius Ordo) of the Franciscans which was designed for those who sought a holy life but could not take regular orders.[1] This order was then under the control of the Friars Minor and as is shown in the contemporary account of Mariano of Florence, they were active in the Netherlands.[2] According to the rules of the order it would have been quite possible for the father of Henry to have been a Tertiary though there is no plain statement indicating that he was.

If the accounts are at all true, Henry Nicholas, could not by any standard have had a normal childhood. By reason both of physical and psychological sensitivity he lived an almost semi-monastic life centered in his strongly Roman Catholic home. At the age of five his formal

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1. Flew, R. N., The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology, p. 160. Cf. Hutton, E., The Franciscans in England, p.169.
2. Oliger, Levarius, "Third Order of St. Francis," in The Catholic Encyclopedia. Cf. Gemelli, A., The Franciscan Message to the World, p. 73-76. "Wherever--the religious pulse of the people was quickened by the preaching of the Friars Minor, the Third Order sprang up." p. 75.

education began under Cornelius a Franciscan schoolmaster, and though he was commended for his diligence in learning, his mother shortly withdrew him from school and instructed him herself.

Nowhere in his writings does Henry Nicholas make mention of Francis of Assisi. However, the fact that he points out the admiration of his father and himself for the Observantine Franciscans, their way of life, and devotion to the principles of St. Francis does indicate his feelings in the matter.[1] It is impossible that the boy Henry should live in such a pious home, be subject to Franciscan teaching, sit week by week for thirty years under Franciscan preaching, have a Franciscan confessor and advisor, and not be filled with stories of St. Francis of Assisi. He undoubtedly heard how Francisco Bernadene the son of a cloth merchant[2] had a series of visions which led him to found a great reform movement whose theme was "love, poverty and perfection."[3] Home, confessor, preaching, teaching all left on the plastic mind of Henry Nicholas a picture of a spiritual hero who withstood the scripture learned of his day and suffered much "for the love of God." The little book by Brother Leo of

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1. Mirabilia Opera Dei, p. 3.
2. Moorman, J. R. H., Saint Francis of Assisi, pp. 9-28.
3. Leo of Assisi, St. Francis of Assisi the Mirror of Perfection, p. XIV.

Assisi, the friend and confessor of Francis, entitled Speculum Perfectionis, Seu S. Francisco Assisiensis Legenda Antiquissima,[1] had wide circulation in Europe particularly among the Franciscan Observantines and their adherents, and its stories would have made a deep impression on the mind of a sensitive child. Francis is pictured here as circulating among mankind a challenge to a deeper love of God and of man.[2] This "love" is the essential relationship which irons out social and doctrinal differences alike and which leads to the further ideals of humility, perfection[3] and prophecy.[4] The legends of Francis, as recorded by Leo, are full of incidents of direct communication with God.[5] The significance of this mystic as hero in Henry Nicholas' environment is hard to overestimate.[6] It was this early moulding which turned him into a prophet of Love subject to visions, though other elements certainly enter in at a later period.

The precociousness of the boy Henry is envinced in an occurrence during his eighth year; an event which according to his own interpretation as given to his biographers, was one of the guiding factors of his

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1. Loc. cit.
2. Ibid., p. 58 ff.
3. Ibid., p. 152.
4. Ibid., p. 180.
5. Ibid., cf. p. 81, p. 175.
6. Hoornbeck, J., Summa Controversiarum, p.393.

life.[1] During family prayers the elder Nicholas made a remark which aroused the theological insight of his son and led him eventually to draw conclusions which are fundamental in his doctrine and in that leaven of religious thinking called Familism. Tobias tells the story like this:

> "In the eighth year of the age of Henry Nicholas (in the days of Maxmillian the first, being made Roman Emperor by virtue or power of the Electoral Princes of the Roman Empire and the German Nation) it fell out in an evening in a winter season, that the father of Henry Nicholas exhorted his Family, and instructing them (with many words), That they should fear God, and to give praise and thanks unto him for the grace he bestowed on man.
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> The same time, the Lord opened the mouth of the childe Henry Nicholas, and with this the childe spoke to his Father and said, Instruct me, O my Father, what is that singular Grace bestowed on us, for which we ought to give praise and thanks to God."[2]

The father, in the account, was greatly moved at the wisdom of his son and unfolded to him the Genesis story of Adam's fall and the consequent sinful state of all mankind. He told the boy of the atonement made by Jesus Christ, and concluded by explaining how the perfect estate of man lost in Adam was restored in Jesus Christ. This was the cue for the speech by Henry which is the

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1. Tobias, Daniel and Zacharias in their biographies are apparently only recording Nicholas' interpretation of the events of his life and are by no means giving scientific historical accounts.
2. Mirabilia Opera Dei, p. 2.

point of the whole tale.

> "Then said the Child, O my Father, I doe read indeed of the suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ and I hear it daily testified in sermons that God the Father had bestowed on us this great mercy and that his beloved Sonne Jesus Christ hath suffered the ignominious death of the Crosse by reason of sinne but I find not according to the Truth, that the sinne is amended in us, nor that the true Righteousness wherein Adam was created and placed is restored in us or set up again."[1]

Try as he might the father was unable to untangle the discrepancy existing in Henry's mind between the perfedt atonement of Christ and the imperfect result in the life of those who professed salvation.[2] In despair the elder Nicholas took his son to his Minorite confessor[3] who also proved unable to cope with the issue and who in company with another priest administered to the boy a tongue lashing and a promise of absolution if he would repent from his grave doubts. The words of the boy to the confessor reveal again the motif of perfectionism which dominates the account.

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1. Ibid., p. 3.
2. Ibid., p. 5.
3. "and went next day to the Minorie-brethren to his Confessor (for he thought in his judgement that these brethren of the Minories which were called also Observators) were the most holy and most judicious in Godly things and able to give good instruction to him and his sonne." Loc. cit.

> "Now if all--should be fulfilled or satisfied, then as I conceive nothing should be wanting in God's work or in man's upright life, and obedience to God, and all things must be restored to his right form, and seeing there is yet defect therein, thereupon I aske where doth the fault lie, (in God or in us that the worke of God and his will is not performed in all, on us and in us, and that not the righteousnesse and the good life of Jesus Christ, but the sinne and death reigneth and hath dominion over us, for me thinks, that the right ground of this (whereof we now speak) is not yet by many entered into, nor rightly understood and the most necessary part of our Godlenesse in Jesus Christ, and the obedience which God requireth of us, through his Son Jesus Christ, is still to be performed by us and in us."[1]

With this the horrified Minorite brother declared to the boy that perhaps he was already condemned to hell for his unbelief, at which Nicholas began weeping and crying out, "Oh that I and all men might be saved."[2]

This was a traumatic experience for the already introverted child and for a long time he went "up and down with a sad heart" withdrawing from his childhood friends and pondering those things which fermented in his brain.[3] It is probable that this treatment at the hands of the Franciscans cut Nicholas deeply not only because of his great admiration for them but because the very ideal of perfection of which he spoke was a central theme in Franciscans' preaching. This is particularly evident

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1. Ibid., p. 12.
2. Ibid., p. 15.
3. Loc. cit.

since they were Observantine Franciscans who demanded a return to the original teachings of St. Francis which in their concept of love were perfectionistic. Flew remarks that "implicit in the aim of the Friars Minor was the belief that perfection was possible for all men."[1] That which had among the fifteenth-century Franciscans led to the establishing of the Observance was the desire "to climb still higher up the road heading to spiritual perfection" and the "same unquenchable thirst for perfection tormented the souls of the sixteenth-century Franciscans of the Observance."[2]

Henry's public education was resumed in a Latin school at Münster which was at this period an educational center of some small importance. The Bishop-prince Eric of Saxe-Laurenburg (1508-22) who was active in improving the church through the holding of Synods and reforming religious foundations, also was an educational reformer.[3] Rudolph of Langen and John Murmellius under his patronage made the cathedral school a nursery of humanistic learning and a pattern for other schools.[4] His thinking

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1. Flew, R. N., The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology, p. 160.
2. Gemelli, A., The Franciscan Message to the World, p. 116.
3. Lins, J., "Münster," in The Catholic Encyclopedia.
4. Jannsen, J., op. cit., p. 72, Vol. I. Jannsen treats here Murmellius' contribution to humanistic education in Münster.

apparently was not strongly affected by the widened scope of humanism and he became "still more and more an earnest lover of the Service and Ceremonies of the Roman Catholique Church and the requiring of it, and being alone busied himself dayly, with divine matters and with the fulfilling of the Godliness in Jesus Christ."[1] It is evident that Henry was not an ordinary child but one

> "dowered with a constitution which made him susceptable even as a child to intimations and openings, and which turned him with an instinct like that of the homing pigeon toward Divine things. He was, like George Fox, a boy apart from the throng, solitary and brooding, full of vivid imaginations, and unsatisfied with the ordinary, traditional explanations which were given to the boyish minds of the period."[2]

During his ninth year Henry Nicholas received an answer to the problems which his spiritual advisors had found too difficult. Typical of many mystics who find the conventional way of theology unsatisfying, he detoured the factual and had the first of a series of visions which acted as roadmarkers in his career. Still brooding over his problems, Henry one night while dozing in the border land between sleep and consciousness suddenly felt,

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1. Mirabilia Opera Dei, p. 16.
2. Jones, R. M., Studies in Mystical Religion, p. 429.

> "compassed about with a mighty great being of the glory of God and the same was a very great mountain of glorious beauty. ---- and when he was surrounded by the huge great mountain and was thoroughly illuminated in all his being with the glory thereof, then this great mountain wholly united itselfe with him in his whole spirit and mind, with the same great and glorious Mountaine, and he became so great and broad, that he became also an equal greatness and like being, with the same in altitude, latitude and profundity."[1]

In this "flight into the One," this union with God, Henry Nicholas found an interpretation of Christianity which dissolved his perplexities for with this

> "revelation and wondrous work of God, it was declared to Henry Nicholas that the same and the uniformity thereof within the man is the true accomplishment of the Godlinesse in Jesus Christ, and the righteous judgement of God, or the great day of the Lord, (which for righteousnesse) is promised to come upon the earth."[2]

From the perspective point of manhood Nicholas took this childhood opening to mean that beyond the frozen frontier of theologia dogmatica there lay the fertile field of mystical experiential faith whose fruit was perfection in Christ by the "obedience of the service of love." The fulfillment of salvation came when man was "Godded with God" and "Christed with Christ."

Immediately subsequent to this vision of unity with the transcendant God, Nicholas received a revelation

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1. Mirabilia Opera Dei, p. 15.
2. Ibid., p. 16.

which he later took as indicative of his entire ministry. In a sense it was his first call to the high office of "Prophet of Love" for as he drifted into sleep there was "revealed unto him --- wonderful things which should befall him, and the saints of God."[1] He dreamed,

> "that many Saints of God were with him on the earth and that the same Saints of God and he, joyntly rejoyced with one another in the Godliness of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that he loved all men highly to the same Godliness and called and invited them all thereto that they with him should rejoyce in the same, and that he also (out of great love) showed to manifold men great friendship and many kindnesses ---. And that he held forth unto them --- the transcendant worthy nobleness of man and the most peacable life of Godliness, to which God both created man and has chosen him thereto through Jesus Christ."[2]

He was awakened from this dream when the great crowd of those who understood his message but opposed it came to hurl themselves upon him and his followers to destroy them. He awoke with a cry which brought his parents to his bedside, but the boy kept those things in his heart and told no one. He relates that he lay ill after this and that it was some time before "his joynts

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1. Mirabilia Opera Dei, p. 17.
2. Loc. cit., Cf. Jones, R.M., Studies in Mystical Religion, p. 43. Jones remarks: "Compare this vision of the 'multitude of saints' with George Fox's vision at Wenslydale. 'The Lord opened unto me, and let me see a great people in white raiment coming to the Lord." (A Journal of G.F. Ed. 1901, Vol. I, p. 110).

healed." Whether this vision and dream was induced by the delirium of fever is not really important here, for the emphasis placed on it was the product of his later development when in "his manly oldnesse with the grey hair" he declared his doctrine.[1]

Little is known of the rest of Henry Nicholas' childhood and youth for the Mirabilia Opera Dei leaps from his ninth year to his thirty-ninth to recount the next great divine revelation in a vision.[2] From the Acta, however, it appears that he left school and began at the age of twelve to work in his father's business in an apprenticeship of great value to him as attested by his later prosperity.

During his days of apprenticeship Henry Nicholas witnessed with all Europe the bursting of the dam which held back the growing force of reform, and the emergence of one of the greatest figures of the Reformation, Martin Luther.[3] Immersed as always in the Service and Ceremonies

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1. For comments on his visions see Thomas, A. C., The Family of Love, p. 5; Jones, R. M., op. cit., p. 431; Nippold, F., "Heinrich Niklaes und das Haus der Liebe," p. 345.
2. The Chronica and Acta tell in a few paragraphs all that is known of this time, dealing mainly with his distaste for Luther.
3. Charles V soon took steps to supress Lutheranism in the Low Countries by ordering their books burned. Aleander supervised this and urged the Inquisition be adopted as it was in 1522-23 in two of the provinces and in three more in 1524-25. Printers of unlicensed books were threatened with branding, whipping and the loss of hand or eye. Cadoux, C. J., Philip of Spain and the Netherlands, p.63.

of the mass and preaching, Nicholas came across one of the writings of Luther and his reaction shows his temperment and the fruits of his solidly Romanist education. "In der Zeit wo H.N. aus den Junglinsjahren in's mannliche alter trat, immer aber der Deinsten und Ceremonien der Messe un Predigt eifrig ergeben, da war im Schreiber aufgestanden von Augustinerorden, Namens Martin Luter."[1] The reading of the tract aroused in Nicholas all the predjudice built up in his childhood against any anti-Roman doctrine and he expressed deep displeasure with the writing. It had the effect of causing him to look for the fulfillment of the work of Christ in some other area than the resurrected Augustinian theology. "Faith" could not be the deliverer from the fleshly life which bound man and prevented him from experiencing perfect salvation and an undimmed view of God. Love, the Franciscan virtue, led to the deepest experience of God and the most complete holiness of life. Nicholas turned his back completely on Lutheranism because "the grounds

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1. Acta 3:14, On considering what work of Luther's this might have been: first no date is given for the event in Acta or Chronica except between 1515 and his marriage in 1521. Secondly, Luther's 95 theses spread across Europe in the common tongue by the end of 1517 and during 1518. Thirdly, Luther's three early tracts were issued in 1520. Quite possibly it was the Babylonian Captivity.

of true righteousness" and the "fulfillment of godliness in Jesus Christ" was not taught.[1] In all his writings, the mercer-prophet stresses that people dispensed with the ceremonies and services of Romanism too soon for these were a divinely ordained means by which the Gospel "was daylie set fouth and preached or published in Figures unto the people,"[2] and to those who practice them they are "imputed -- much rather for righteousness because they have shown therein, their good will unto the Righteousness."[3] On this same count Nicholas found Luther's remarks on the priestly office of the Catholic Church offensive particularly since that Reformer had long been critical of the Franciscans.[4] From the other side, Nicholas in these years so faithful to the services and preaching of the Catholic Church no doubt heard reports of Lutheran immorality and the inability of the Reformer who taught

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1. Chronica 8:4, "der Grund der wahren Gerechtigkeit und die Erfullung der Gottseligkeit in Jesu Christo in ehnen nicht gelehrt."
2. Evangelium Regni, p. 70. Nippold rather overplays Nicholas' actual position here for while he is critical of H.N. as a heretic Luther is an archheretic.
3. Ibid., p. 70B.
4. As early as 1510 Luther had written a forward to Erasmus Alber's satirical Parody of Bartolomeo da Pisa's Liber Conformitatum. It was entitled Der barfusser Mönch Eulenspiegel und Alcaran mit einer Vorrede Marthini Luther and ran to three editions. Cf. Gemelli, A., The Franciscan Message, p. 120.

justification by faith alone to curb the sensual passions of his followers; this is especially likely since the Franciscans were the bitterest enemies of Lutheranism.[1] On the basis of this it is felt that Familism in its Continental foundation was not a Protestant sect but basically a Roman Catholic heresy.[2] Henry Nicholas was attempting, in what was the last and final dispensation, to reveal the spiritual message of the two previous ages but particularly to fulfill the typological truth concealed in the Roman Catholic "Ceremonies and Services."

This encounter with Luther's writing had one very positive effect on Nicholas, it moved him to read the Bible for himself.[3] With a little persuasion he moved his father to buy a Bible in the German language, which was not difficult to obtain since prior to Luther's German New Testament, (1522), and, in fact, before "the year 1518 at least fourteen complete translations of the Bible in High German and five in Low German had been circulated."[4] By this means Nicholas became well acquainted with the Scriptures, as a glance at his later works attests, for they are studded with as many as twenty-five references

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1. Gemelli, A., op. cit.,pp. 120-125.
2. Cf. Barclay, R., Inner Life of the Religious Society of the Commonwealth, pp. 28-29 N.
3. Chronica 8:5-7, "sondern wurde auch selbst berwagen die Bibel zu lesen." (Nippold,F., op. cit., p. 350).
4. Janssen, J., op. cit., Vol. II, p. 301.

for each page and indeed a great portion of some writings are paraphrases and combinations of paraphrases of Scripture.[1] The Evangelium Regni follows the outline of the Bible, the Old Testament especially, and the Psalms of Henry Nicholas are a conglomorate of David's Psalms. The father of Henry also read the Scriptures and in the interchange between them the son memorized large portions of the Bible.[2] His method of interpreting the Scriptures is chiefly the product of his allegorically centered education under the Roman Catholic Franciscans somewhat tinged with medieval mysticism still current in Netherlands and indeed throughout Germany.

The reader of the Acta, Chronica and Mirabilia Opera Dei is led to notice that they make a considerable point of Nicholas' continuance in the Roman Catholic ceremonies and services as though to underline his later teaching that many people outside of the Family of Love threw away the Romish services and ceremonies too soon. The position of the Familist leader within the church does seem anomalous to his developing realization that its service was empty since the church itself was "Anti-Christ" which "hath exalted himself, with his deadly

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1. This "mosaic method" was used by St. Bernard of Clairvaux. See his Malachy of Armagh, (Ed. H. J. Lawlor) and Lawlor's notes.
2. "In der That weisen H.N. Spätere Schriften eine grosse Bibelkenntniss auf;" Chronica, 9:8-9 (Nippold, F., Op.Cit., p.350)

service and false Light."[1] This is explained, however, by his paradoxical idea that Romanist "Images, Figures, and Shadows" have made the truth clear in the "dark years" revealing it "in the true Being of the uncovered Face of Christ."[2] It was undoubtedly his own experience which led him to adopt this view for like other Roman Catholic mystics he experienced in the sacraments a communication of "the otherness," "the supernatural" in which there was a "participation in everlasting life." The fruitage of this sacramental mysticism Nicholas found beyond the sacraments themselves for as a progressive seeker he "outgrew," perhaps unconsciously, the externals themselves and entered the divine "truth and being" which they veiled.[3] There is something of this in Franciscan teaching but in his developed understanding of his experience, Nicholas seems indebted to the Rhineland mystics like Tauler and other Gottesfreunde.

According to the customs of the time, the parents of Henry Nicholas contracted a marriage for him in his twentieth year with a maiden who had no fellowship with frivolousness.[4] This young woman is not named here,

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1. Evangelium Regni, p. 66.
2. Ibid., p. 72.
3. Underhill, Evelyn, Man and the Supernatural, p. 181. See also the discussion of sacramental mysticism in M.A. Ewer, A Survey of Mystical Symbolism, pp. 135 & 137 FF.
4. Chronica, Chapters 8-9, and 13-19, give what is known of the family.

and although the two sons and three daughters are frequently mentioned in the writings, her name is never disclosed.[1] His family are not recorded as taking a very active part in his heretical pursuits and soon after his flight from Embden in 1560 the family was allowed to re-establish their business, an indication that they had sworn loyalty to the established church. One son, Franz, did manage a printing press under his father's auspices at Cologne and was helpful in the movement but he died before the Embden period ended.[2]

About the time of his marriage Nicholas established a cloth business of his own and became moderately wealthy, making connections which were to assist him in pursuits other than commercial. He enjoyed a sustained success, thus enabling him to bear the financial burden of the movement he was to found, including the extensive publication of his writings. The mystic as business man is not as contradictory as it would first seem. William Fairweather has said that;

> "Probably the very name (Mysticism) has a deterrant effect upon many minds, seeing it has come to be too much associated with dreamy visionaries without -- "

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1. Nippold remarks "Ihr Name wird nicht gennant wohl aber der Name seiner Kinder," p. 350, N. 75.
2. See Nippold, op. cit., pp. 356-358 for discussion of the children: Franz, Nicholas, Clara, Dinhna and Maria.

> "aptitude for the ordinary affairs of life. In reality history tells another tale. As Wm. James has said: 'Saint Ignatius was a mystic, but his mysticism made him assuredly one of the most powerful, practical, human machines that ever lived.' In many other instances, too, mystics have shown first-rate business talent."[1]

Nicholas was apparently an impressive person even as a young man. Years later neighbors who had lived next to him could still recall him; describing him as quite tall though "somewhat grosse in bodie," and "very brave in his apparell" for he would "go in his crimson satin doublet every holiday."[2] On a chain around his neck he wore a large reading glass which dangled with dignity on the broad expanse of satin and velvet. He was, all in all, the picture of the ideal bourgeois cloth merchant.

Having launched successfully in business and settled down in a happy marriage Nicholas might have been expected to forget the visions and dreams of his childhood and adolescence but it was not so. He was ever occupied with devotions as a pious Catholic and, according to the reminiscences recorded by his biographers, continually preoccupied with the social ethic of love and the personal ideal of perfectionism. Developing branches of eclectic Lutheranism and quite possibly some of the wandering

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1. Fairweather, Wm., Among the Mystics, p. VI.
2. Rogers, John, The Displaying of an Horrible Sect,(1578).

"Pentecostalistic" Anabaptists influenced him at this time. Certainly the last years of his stay in Münster he must have come in contact with Anabaptists of the various emerging parties. Ludwig Keller has adequately shown that Western Germany and the Netherlands were saturated with Anabaptism in this period and especially "the Westphalian cities Soest, Lippstadt, Lemgo, Unna, Dortmund, Minden, Blomberg, Osnabruck etc,"[1] and it is these cities which surround Münster. How much Nicholas had to do with these intrusive elements is problematical for though he was still firmly Romanist for some time after this and though he denies any fellowship with them, his probing mind may have been open to much that zealous Anabaptist trader-preachers had to say to him.

Between 1520 and 1530 the young mercer seems to have found reinforcement for the revelation of his childhood "God wills that Himself in man be worked and practiced." (Wo Gott als Gott Mensche ist.)[2] The efforts of the Brethren of the Common Life made this a popular doctrine and there can be no reasonable doubt that

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1. Keller, Ludwig, "An Apostle of the Anabaptists," in Baptist Quarterly Review, Vol. VII, 1885, p. 32.
2. This principle not unknown in Franciscan thought was the prime tenet of the "Deutschen Mystiker." See Theologia Germanica, Chapters XXX and LI, also Seesholtz, A.G., The Friends of God, p. 162.

Nicholas observed their order and very possibly read their literature widely published and used in the locality of his origin. Huizinga in his excellent work, The Waning of the Middle Ages, notes:

> "In the Netherlands --- moralism and pietism became the essence of a very important spiritual movement. From the preparatory phases of the intensive mysticism of the few issued the extensive mysticism of the 'devotio moderna' of the many. Instead of the solitary ecstacy of the blessed moment comes a constant and collective habit of earnestness and fervour, cultivated by simple townspeople in the friendly intercourse of their Fraterhouses and Wendesheim convents. Theirs was a mysticism by retail."[1]

This "retail" mysticism of the 'devotio moderna' in conjunction with the widespread 'third order' of the Franciscans, may well have provided Nicholas with the suggestion for his own lay society. Caught in the maelstrom of such influences, Nicholas began once again to give utterance to those questions which were continually with him, a course which brought him in 1529 under the suspicious eye of the magistrates on the charge of Lutheranism. This does not mean that he had lost his earlier bias against Lutheranism and had become a Lutheran. Two things must be said about this: first, Lutheranism was the specific organized heresy in Münster

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1. Huizinga, J., The Waning of the Middle Ages, p. 205.

at that time and it is natural that the authorities should consider any vague error to be Lutheranism; second, the Lutheranism preached in Münster was not entirely the doctrine of Luther but was an eclectic sect which had much Lutheranism but much from other sources as well. All of which with the paucity of detail in the sources leaves the investigation in a quandry for on the one hand Nicholas may have been for a time friendly with this hybrid Lutheranism, while on the other hand the magistrates may merely have assumed his vague errors were Lutheranism, since that was the dominant heresy in the city. In any case a brief examination of the existing situation is necessary.

The final years of Nicholas' stay in Münster had lying across them the shadow of coming events. That "state of almost perpetual dissaffection which marked the communal personality of the laboring class burgeoned forth in open insurrection in the years 1525, 1527 and also 1529 the year of the famine and plague."[1] This social struggle which aided greatly in the formation of the Chiliastic Anabaptist party and led to the extravagances of the Münster Kingdom caused the sensitive Nicholas to cringe. Much of his criticism of those who

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1. Lindsay, T. M., op. cit.,pp. 451, 452.

presumed themselves religious and yet were arrogant, violent, greedy and without love date from these bloody outbreaks, especially where he speaks against "envy, division, contention or discord, highmindedness or pride, subtiltes, deceit, craftiness, cruelty, arrogancy, disorderlyness --- malisciousness, commotion or uproar, treachery etc."[1] These years also marked the rise of two figures which Nicholas must have known, Bernard Knipperdolling, a man of his own guild, and Bernard Rothman.

Knipperdolling, the wealthy cloth merchant, was thoroughly saturated with Lutheranism[2] and succeeded in spreading it to some extent in Münster before the arrival of the Strassbourg Chiliast Melchior Hoffman in 1533 at which point he became a Melchiorite Anabaptist, a choice which brought him to death by starvation in an iron cage suspended from the spire of St. Lambert's church.[3] It may have been association with this radical fellow guild member that laid Nicholas open to the charge of Lutheranism in the confusion of 1529.

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1. A Figure of the True and Spiritual Tabernacle, 1655. Chapter 19, No. 4, p. 145.
2. Weber, N. A., "Anabaptists," in The Catholic Encyclopedia.
3. Lutheranism had been spreading rapidly in Münster since 1524 under Fredrick III (1522-32), who did not find it an unattractive faith. Franz of Waldick (1532-33) gave no opposition at all.

Bernard Rothmann an obscure chaplain of the Church of St. Maurice outside the walls of Münster also emerged as a voice to be heard in 1529. A humanist scholar, he preached with moving eloquence sermons which glowed with an appealing reasonableness that carried the more weight with the people since he was himself the son of a poor smith. His power with his listeners grew until in 1531 they arose and tore down the images, altars and relics after one of his sermons, an incident which led to his exile for a year.

It was against this background that Nicholas was charged with Lutheranism and it is not surprising that he had little difficulty in convincing the magistrates that he was a loyal Roman Catholic for, despite some kind of doctrinal deviationism, that is what he was.

The suspicion of the Church about the orthodoxy of Nicholas did not in reality find its basis in a fear of Lutheranism but in a dread of the pantheistic heresy which had arisen so frequently in the Middle Ages and only the confusing circumstances caused the officials to mistake the symptoms which made them uneasy. Their concern was about that "spiritual state called dulcedo dei, the sweetness of the delights of the love of Christ,"[1]

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1. Huizinga, J., op. cit., p. 178. Cf. Bainton, R.H., The Reformation of the 16th Century, pp. 123-128.

which though rendered largely innocuous by the systematizing of the 'devotio moderna' still occasionally erupted into license. John Gerson in his De diversis diaboli tentationibus expressed the fear in the maxim "Amor spiritualis facile labitur in nudem carnalem amorem," spiritual love easily falls into sheer carnal love. The worry of officials and priests that Nicholas had run afoul of Lutheran antinomianism was based on their deeper but less immediate concern with that semi-pantheistic mystical love which saw no need for a church.

Remaining under the cloud of suspicion, Nicholas with his wife and children moved to Amsterdam. Leaving behind him Münster, "still regarded as a stronghold of the Catholic Church,"[1] he entered Amsterdam which was rapidly becoming a left-wing center rivalling Strassbourg and Augsburg as the "New Jerusalem."[2] Every left-wing element seems to have been represented here and the migrant mercer had opportunity to choose his company from a wide selection. He soon became associated with some who

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1. Janssen, J., op.cit., Vol. V, p. 453.
2. Ibid., p. 471. Janssen writes also that in "Holland, West Friesland, Oberyssel and Brabant the larger towns were hotbeds of Anabaptism." Cf. Cornelius, Niederländische Wiedertäufer, pp. 5-12; Block, P.J., History of the People of the Netherlands (Translated by Ruth Putnam) p. 315, "In Holland alone there were thousands scattered in little communities and inspired by itinerate preachers."

"von der katholischen Kirche abgefallen waren, aber sich Gerechtigeit befleissigten."[1] These heretics "who exercised themselves with righteousness" are generally assumed to have been Anabaptists.[2] It must be remembered, however, that every shade of the left-wing was represented in Amsterdam; humanist, mystic and pantheist ideals appeared in highly individualized forms and were combined under the catalystic power of those political, religious and economic motives present beneath the surface. It may well have been that the sect was an echo of the Free Spirits which still lay dormant in the cities of Holland, Brabant, Flanders and coastal areas to the north and east.[3] It is quite clear that Lutheranism is not indicated but Anabaptism is not the only alternative, and indeed it must be remembered that Nicholas himself remarks that he had kept aloof from all Anabaptist sects. Cramer has little basis for arguing that "Hendrik Niclaes in zijn aanhang het Huis der Liefde, zijn zonder twijfel echte Anabaptisten."[4] Their

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1. Acta 5:4, (Nippold, p. 351).
2. Bax, B., The Rise and Fall of the Anabaptists, p.339. "There is little doubt that here he definitely joined the Anabaptist sect." Cf. Knappen, M.M., Tudor Puritans, p. 372. Familists "combined Anabaptism with what were later called Quaker principles."
3. Fuller, Thos., Church History, XVI Cent. Bk. IV, p.114. Fuller in contrast with others of his time, links Nicholas with the Free Spirits and not the Anabaptists.
4. Cramer, S., B.R.N., VII, p. 287.

confession of Faith "Dat uprecht Christen-gelove---" has points in common with the Anabaptists but is by no means an Anabaptist confession.[1] Cramer and Nippold make much of the idea that the Family of Love got from Anabaptist sources the belief in a separation of God's children from the world. Recent studies like that of Bainton show the Anabaptists as "The Church Withdrawn"[2] with a basically pessimistic philosophy but the Familists do not follow this view at all. Rather in Familism optimism reigns for the House of Love is the seed of God planted in the world to bring forth the third epoch, that of the Holy Spirit. Calvin and Luther aimed at a "Reformation" of the church, Anabaptism sought a "Restitution" of the true church[3], but the Familists with a progressive philosophy of history looked for the inauguration of the age of the Holy Spirit. They expected their dynamic new society to remain in the church but to shatter it asunder, to fulfill its services and to supersede it in a peaceful revolution. The Anabaptists in their concept of separation have much in common with the Donatist policy[4] while the Familist scheme is more comparable to the dreams

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1. Nippold, F., op. cit., p. 545. Nippold gives the twelve articles and a summation of each.
2. Bainton, R. H., The Reformation of the 16th Century, p.95.
3. Littell, F. H., The Anabaptist View of the Church, p.72.
4. Bainton, R. H., op. cit., p. 97.

of the earlier Joachimites. The chief point in common between the two parties is their "ethical urge" which the Familists derived primarily from the Franciscans and the Anabaptists from a literal interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount.[1]

Perhaps an insight into this relationship of 1531 in Amsterdam can be found in his supposed meeting with David Joris for he is reported to have been an acquaintance of "the third David" and to have corresponded with him regularly from this time. Arnold's[2] account of this relationship has been unswervingly followed by many more recent historians and used as conclusive evidence that Nicholas drew all his ideas and methods from David Joris, though R. M. Jones, E. A. Payne and R. Bainton all dissent from this opinion.[3] The Dutch historians accept the biased evidence of Coornhert and Arnold, and make Nicholas, without any doubt, a disciple of Joris or at best a pale replica.[4] Cramer, in a manner quite unworthy of his

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1. Bender, H. S., "The Anabaptist Vision," in Church History, Vol. XII, 1944, p. 14, p. 22. Cf. Smucker, D. E., "The Theological Triumph," in Mennonite Quarterly Review, January 1945, p. 6.
2. Arnold, G. Kirchen und Ketzer Historia, Vol. II, Bk. 16, Ch. 21, p. 36.
3. Payne, E. A., "The Familists," in The Chronicle, Vol. XVI, p. 31. Payne states that Nippold's monograph has misrepresented Nicholas and that he has been followed by most later writers.
4. Knappert, L., "Henry Niclaes," in Niew Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenbock, Vol. V, p. 368 concurrs with Cramer. Smith, C. F., "Henry Nicholas," in D.N.B., "He no doubt imbibed his chief doctrines from David Joris." Mosheim, Kirchengeschichte, Vol. VII, p. 291-293 is less specific, "analog seinem Urtheil uber Joris."

otherwise fine scholarship, says "Hendrik (Nicholas) is geheel en al een copie van David Joris. Hy stand met dezen ook in briefwissling,"[1] and then classifies them both unjustifiably with all other radicals as Anabaptists. It is true that Joris was for a while an Anabaptist but left them because he "had another spirit than they." Nicholas was never an Anabaptist but rather disapproved of their Puritanism and classified them with the "Schrifgeleherten" as his descendants did with others in 1604. If Joris and Nicholas met, as perhaps they did, it was in the gatherings of those latest adherents of pantheistic and mystical heresies which periodically appeared in the Valley of the Rhine and Lowcountries after the thirteenth century.[2] Those ideas of the Antichrist, the third age of the Spirit, the inner light, continued revelation, and the worthlessness of external ceremonies, which both held in common, were by no means novel in that area for they errupted in the Loists, Men of Understanding and in Anabaptists like Denck, Bünderlin, Entfelder, as well as in a modified form in Sebastian Franck and the Collegiants. Both Joris and Nicholas were children of that strange complex of ideas which were "in the air," each giving to it his own peculiar structure.

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1. Cf. Cramer, S., in B.R.N., Vol. VII, p. 285.
2. Hoornbeek, J., Summa Controversiarum, pp. 391-392.

Joris, governed completely by the doctrines of the Free Spirit and disturbed by delusions of Deity was a wild prophet. The thinking of Nicholas impregnated as it was with Franciscan "spiritualism" caused him to avoid extremists ravings and turn as a prophet of the last age to the founding of a society of love. The activistic chiliastic war cries of David Joris stand in sharp contrast to the quietistic Familist's "intense purpose to rise above everything outward and to exhibit in worship and in daily practical life the actual spirit and love of Christ."[1] Joris went to the length of declaring himself the equal and the supplanter of Jesus Christ and even God, since God is all and all is God; but Nicholas, while announcing himself as the prophet of the age of the Spirit, only claimed to be "Godded with God" as he said all men should be.[2] If in some manner Nicholas had been receptive of the ideas of Joris he highly refined them.

The business of Nicholas continued to expand and prosper in Amsterdam but during the nine years he did not cease to pray that God would "reveal His perfect truth on earth."[3] This persistence was rewarded with a second

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1. Jones, R. M., "Mysticism (Christian, Protestant)," in Hastings Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics.
2. Thomas, A. C., The Family of Love, p. 23. Thomas with Jones and others feels that Nicholas by "Godded with God" means no more than filled with the Holy Spirit.
3. Mirabilia Opera Dei, p. 19.

vision in which he heard a voice say to him , "Fear not, I am He who is All in All."[1] In the course of the vision Nicholas at last discovered his destiny, he was to be a divine messenger bringing to mankind a new revelation from God. The Almighty continued speaking as God, saying,

> "Now in the full maturity of my holy understanding I will reveal myself more fully, and what thou couldest not bear in thy youth, so that thou makest known everything to the children of men which I impart to thee. For, for this purpose have I born thee from thy youth on my heart, for a house for me to dwell in, and up to this time I have preserved thee from all destruction in which the evil and ungodly shall inherit death and the good and obedient eternal life."[2]

Assured of the divine purpose for his life, Nicholas began to take steps, confirmed in a later vision, to found the House of Love or as it was variously called, the Family of Love, Familia Caritatis, Huis der Liefde, Hus der Lieften, Haus der Liebe, Famille de la Charité. The two steps he took were of extreme significance for they sum up the entire method which the movement employed in the propagation of its ideas and in the conservation of its gains. First, Nicholas began to record something of his visions and to develop his unusual ideas using

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1. Mirabilia Opera Dei, p. 20.
2. Ibid., p. 21.

the storehouse of material received in his early training and the prevalant thought which his curious mind investigated. In this manner he began his extensive writings and the publishing of them which led to the growth of the Family in the Low countries and its second bloom in England. Next, the newly chosen prophet appointed several elders, David, Elidad and Tobias, who assisted him in the managing of affairs but who were chiefly employed in the instruction of neophytes and in the secret winning of converts.

The third vision of Henry Nicholas further confirmed his previous revelation and led him to gather his few followers into a tightly-knit organization. He was also instructed to depart for Embden at what proved to be a very opportune moment, for the Anabaptists and all left-wing non-conformers were finding life in Amsterdam quite unbearable. His literary activities increased and Nicholas now began to use his initials H.N. rather than his name in his writings. These initials are said to have had the mystical significance Homo Novus for Nicholas was a new man "Godded with God."[1] According to John Rogers

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1. Jessop, Edmund, Discovery of the Error of the Anabaptists, p. 89. "the most blasphemous and erronious sect this day in the world commonly called by the name of the Family of Love, whose author was one Henrie Nicolas or H.N., for so they will have him called: that is (as they expound it) Homo Novus, the new man, or the holy nature or holiness, which they make to be Christ---."

Henry Nicholas had early come into difficulties in Amsterdam being accused, along with his brother John who was a brewer, of sending money to support the Münster Kingdom.[1] He left in 1533 "when a certaine sturre was in the town tending to a tumult," but returned only to be driven away at a later date. Since John Rogers gathered his material from interviews with elderly members of the Dutch Church in London and that not until 1578, the contents must be carefully sifted.

The choice of Embden as a place of refuge was natural enough for East Friesland, under the regency of the evangelical and tolerant Countess Anna, was one of the few places in Europe where those with left-wing leanings could find refuge.[2] Menno Simons also made his headquarters in Embden until forced to flee to Cologne in 1543 and though they were both there for three years there is no indication that they ever met.[3] Life at Embden was not easy for Nicholas either for he had not been there long when he was imprisoned on suspicion of heresy but soon released as nothing uncatholic was found about him.

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1. Rogers, John, The Displaying of an Horrible Sect.
2. Newman, A. H., A Manual of Church History, p. 178.
3. Cramer, S., B.R.N., p. 286, "Menno heeft in zijne geschriften Henrik Niclaes niet genoemd."

By the media of literary propaganda the movement became widely known and won adherents in Holland, Brabant, Friesland and France.[1] It operated secretly making no use of preaching , quite in contrast to all other reform parties and to David Joris, but Nicholas and his elders by personal influence built up their society carefully member by member into a solid group. There was much opportunity for such work since Nicholas travelled widely in the years 1540-1560 from his headquarters in Embden and though the sources tell almost nothing of this time by its close, the results show it a time of steady expansion.[2]

The prophet was not always successful in winning over those whom he approached; Dirk Volkhert Coornhert is a prime example of this.[3] Nicholas seems to have felt that Coornhert with his opposition to externals, his allegorizing of the Scripture and desire for an "interim church" would find in the House of Love as a fulfillment of what he sought. Thus he tried to bring Coornhert "under his yoke" by showing him "several of his books

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1. Hallywell, Henry, An Account of Familism (1673), says he spread his doctrine "by Letters and Emissaries -- in many places in Germany forty miles distant from him; so that the sect of Familists grew and increased for a good while before it was known who was the Fomenter of it." p. 8.
2. Coornhert, D., Spiegelken, 'Vorrede', as quoted by Nipold, p. 355. Coornhert speaks of the increase of Nicholas' personal wealth and the growth of Familism in these years.
3. Brandt, G., History of the Reformation in the Low Countries, p. 142.

including his chief work not yet published, The Mirror of Righteousness."[1] Coornhert recalls that he tried to confute Nicholas out of the Scripture but could get no reply from him except, "Wisdom is always justified of her children."[2] The very fact that there was much in common between them, though Coornhert would have been the last to admit it, drove that scholar to write Spiegelkin von de ungerechtigheyt (Mirror of Unrighteousness) a direct attack upon Henry Nicholas and his chief work.[3] This diatribe had the effect of directing the followers of Sebastian Franck and similar groups away from the Family of Love, and held Nicholas up to ridicule before that segment of the population which followed the mystical sects. Nor was the relationship of Nicholas with the Anti-trinitarian Anabaptists very successful either. Adam Pastor "became a strong antagonist of the David Joris party and of the 'House of Love,'"[4] the extent of his opposition becoming evident in his writing, Unterscheit tusschen Richte Leer unde Valsche Leer.[5]

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1. Loc. cit.
2. Loc. cit.
3. Nippold, F., op. cit.,pp. 337-338. Coornhert also wrote against David Joris in the work entitled Kleyn Monster.
4. Dosker, H., The Dutch Anabaptists, pp. 58-59.
5. B.R.N., Vol. V., pp. 351-581.

Midway through this twenty years when Nicholas was at the peak of his manhood, he had his fourth vision. In it he received a new sense of union with God, a comprehension of Divine Perfection, and a panoramic view of the hosts of heaven. He was also given to understand details of the earthly kingdom and reannointed as the prophet of the Holy Spirit of Love.[1]

Sometime within the Embden period or at its end, Nicholas made a visit to England. Nippold and Barclay suggest that it was in 1560 when the authorities of Embden sought to imprison him that Nicholas fled to England.[2] It is entirely conceivable that he could have been in England as a refugee for a time since he had friends there and Christopher Vitells had already been actively propagating Familism in the Eastern countries for five years though it is not now possible to find adequate proof for this. Likewise, Bax's suggestion that the Journey spoken of in the vision of his 65th year

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1. Bax, B., op. cit., Bax is quite beyond the limit of fact when he says that "in this year, he started in a mission as the third Anabaptist prophet. Whom he deemed the first and second is not quite clear, though probably Melchior Hoffman and Jan of Leyden (or possibly Matthys) were meant," p. 339.
2. Barclay, R., The Inner Life of the Religious Life of the Commonwealth, p. 35 N. Nippold, F., Op.Cit., p. 369-370. Nippold is definite about this tracing the speedy rise of Familism in England from this visit. He has found no support, however, from the Acta or Chronica.

"was possibly England," is difficult to substantiate though it also lies within the realm of possibility.[1] A single reference dates a visit to England with some certainty and that is the mention by Fuller fixing it early in the reign of Edward VI (1552-1553) not long after his fourth vision by which he became the prophet of the Holy Spirit of Love.[2] Several English writers assume a visit, like Hallywell who wrote, "From Amsterdam he sailed over into England, and here divulges and communicates his destructive Errors among a compnay of Artificers and silly Women, who being unstable and not well principled in the Rudiments of Christian Religion became an esie prey to this white Wolf."[3] Fuller also claimed that he had been a member of the Dutch Church in London which seems unlikely when the vigilance of its ministers is taken into account. These ministers Martin Micronius and Nicholas Charinaeus may well have met Nicholas in London and certainly they knew of him as evidenced in their diatribes against him in which as Dutchmen they desire it made plain that they were not related to the Family of Love in any way. Their anxiety to declare their freedom from heresy is understandable since it was common knowledge that a number of men from England had conferred with

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1. Bax, B., Op. Cit., pp. 341-342. Cf. Nippold, F., Op. cit.,pp. 370-379 on this vision.
2. Fuller, T., Church History, Vol. IX, p. 282 ff.
3. Hallywell, H., An Account of Familism, p. 9.

Nicholas on the Continent on matters of faith and openly praised his mild nature, humility, and patience.[1]

It is quite conceivable that Nicholas who travelled, extensively during the Embden period had visited England on several occasions. From Harwich to Antwerp where he spent a good deal of time is only 135 miles and many engaged in the cloth trade made this journey frequently. It may have been here that men from England met him and conferred with him. The contact with these men no doubt paved the way for his English trip, after which journey the dynamic center of the sect was transferred to the vicinity of London.[2]

The reader of Henry Nicholas' works searches in vain through dense tangle of mystical verbiage for a chapter which might describe the beliefs or practices of the society in a cogent form. But then why should it be expected that a Book of Common Order or something of its like would be concealed in the pages of such writings for secret mystical organizations have never done so. The matters of worship and administration alike

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1. "A confutation of the Doctrines of David George and H.N. the Father of the Familie of Love," (1579) in Knewstub, J., A Confutation of Monstrous and Horrible Heresies Taught by H.N., p. 39B.
2. Nippold, F., Op. cit., p. 370. "Und nach England wird überhaupt nach allen Anzeichen mehr und mehr der Mittelpunkt der Secte verlegt."

were revealled by the Elders only to the initiate in private conclave. On the other hand, it is more surprising that Daniel, Zacharias and the anonymous elder should have set their hand to writing the three descriptive Leiden manuscripts which sets aside some of the mystery surrounding the Family of Love.[1] No other copies of these manuscripts are known and they were never translated into English possibly since their strong Roman Catholic sympathies would have been obnoxious in England thus hindering the progress of the movement. The English Familists as it was were often accused of being papists, tools of the Jesuits and of "having more things in common with papists then we have."[2]

The manuscripts by H.N's elders show a hierarchical system which at first made an appeal to the natural love of many for the "high flown," esoteric and mysterious for in spite of the plea for humility in the Family of Love there was this element which gratified human pride. When at a later date H.N. revised the system making it almost wierdly complex, this hierarchy became the chief rock upon which the Continental society foundered. It

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1. Chronica by Daniel, Acta H.N. by Zacharias and the Ordo Sacerdotis by an elder remaining anonymous.
2. Knewstub, J., Op. cit., To The Reader, p. 4. Cf. John Rogers, The Catholic Doctrine of the Church of England. (Parker Society, 1854), p. 187. Strype, J., Annals, Vol. II, ii, pp. 590-591.

is doubted if the Family as transplanted to England ever employed the organization as originated by Henry Nicholas but rather was ruled by a more simple eldership.

To become one of the "Good-willing-ones," a member of the House of Love, does not seem to have entailed much difficulty. The candidate had to be at least thirteen years of age and to confess before an elder of the society his inclinations and desires regarding God and the House of Love, whereupon he was declared a member, the elder pronouncing upon him a benediction of God's power and sealing it with a solemn "Amen." The new member was charged to be true to the Service of Love and commissioned to further that Service among mankind. For all ranks obedience to the superior was mandatory especially for the new member who gave his spiritual care into the hands of the Elder. The new follower was impressed with the need for growth in his spiritual life for the aim of the society was to lead the lower orders on step by step until each was grown up to the "full stature of Christ," and become "Godded with God."[1] They were told that "God is a living God, a perfect, clear Light and Love itself. This God manneth Himself and we may become likewise, through his godly Light, godded and made a conformable

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1. An Introduction to the Holy Understanding of the Glasse of Righteousness, Chapter XXV.

willing spirit with Him."[1] To this end the instruction of the membership was carried out by the elders who taught out of the writings of Henry Nicholas the path to perfection, no doubt making use of the countless scripture references in the margins of the books. The frontpiece of The First Epistle of H.N.: A Crying Voice of the Holy Spirit of Love (1574), has a woodcut purporting to show a group of young members being instructed in the truth of the House of Love. No catastrophic conversion was demanded prior to acceptance into the communality but rather as in Roman Catholicism the novice gave a mental ascent and submission to the will of the cult. There is no evidence that baptism in any form was practiced by the membership other than baptism of their infants as they continued in the services of the Roman Catholic church. The new member after his submission, followed the leading of his elder through the pitfalls of temptation and the dangerous ground to the "Spiritual Land of Peace."

The meetings of the Family of Love were held at times which did not conflict with the Roman Catholic mass and were necessarily secret since their "mystical theology" was only discussed within the society itself

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1. Exhortatio I, p. 35.

A ſhorte Inſtruction of an Howſhold-father, in the Cõmunialtie of the Loue of Jeſu Chriſt.



O Yee beloued Childzen and thou Famelie of Loue / reſpect well this good Doctrine and Exhortation of HN / and take the Inſtructions of theſame, effectuallie to heart: and vnderſtande, what is requyred of you therwith-all. Not that yee ſhoulde take vnto you alone the [a] Knowledge of thoſe-ſame / ether exerciſe you onlie in the Knowledge therof. but to take-heede rightlie vnto the Requiringe of thoſe-ſame / and [b] to ſhew-fourth Obedience therin.

a Iaco. 1. d.

b Mat. 7. 12. e. Ioan. 15. b.

2. For to receaue onlie the Knowledge of the godlie Teſtimonies / and not to obey or accompliſh thoſeſame and their Requiringe: and ſo to knowe and to ſpeake anything, againſt the Obedience / is verelie [c] the Seede of the olde Serpent: and that is the falſe [d] Light which ſeduceth and eſtraungeth the Man from God and his Trueth / and worketh by hym much Contention and Diſcorde.

c Genes. 3.

d Eſa. 5. h, 59. b

3. And the Diſobedience is [e] the Seede of the Woman / wherthrough ſo much Falſhod is com into the Worlde: and

e Gene. 3.

and since they were always under the ban of law and subject to persecution. John Rogers in 1578 noted that:

> "They are called together ever in the night time: and commonly to suche houses as be far from neighbors, one of them doth alwayes warne an other: and when they come to the house of meeting, they knocke at the doore saying, here is a Brother in Christ, or a Sister in Christ."[1]

The society held that both the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount were to be fulfilled in the practice of the "Good-willing-ones" and in line with this idea they kept both Saturday and Sunday as holy days upon which they abstained from work and alcoholic beverages. The "Communality of Love," however, met on the first day when the elders opened H.N.'s writings to teach "what the service of Love was" and how true righteousness is now revealed. The members were catechized in the wisdom of the Family of Love from such works as H.N's Proverbs, On the Beatitudes, On the Seven Deadly Sins, Documentall Sentences, Of the Eight Vertues or Godlynesses, et cetera. The longer works like The Glass of Righteousness and Evangelium Regni were expanded by the elders for edification of the membership.

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1. Rogers, John, The Displaying of the Family, Sig.H.iii.

Those susceptible to mystical lore and with an appreciation of openings and visions enjoyed the reading of H.N.'s experiences. The Revelatio Dei, one of the books read in these meetings, describes a vision which came as he walked in the land of "Pietas."

> "I was combred very much in my thoughts, and in the solitariness of my inward being with the wonderful works of God, and in what manner God should accomplish his works, and his upright judgement now in the last time.
>
> In this same comberament of mind, my heart became lighted with clearness, and my whole inward minde was pierced thorowe with winds of life and delectable sweetness.
>
> Furthermore, out of this same light and sweet winds of life, there appeared unto me, a great mighty and glorious being; the same opened my heart and spread forthe my inward minde (with it self) very wide and broad; yea so wide that the whole heaven and the universal earth stood comprehended therein.
>
> After that I saw and behold the Lord sat in the heaven, as in a seat and he filled the whole heaven like as a man filleth a stool or seat wherein he sitteth, and with his feet he reached even unto the earth, as on his footstool, and reached over so with his feet the universal earth. And this same revelation multiplied itself in my sight, where-through I humbled my whole being, before the Lord and his glorious Majesty.
>
> I rejoyed me also very much (with great thanksgiving unto God) for that--- the day of the Lord (which shall endure for ever) was showed unto me for to behold; and that I had reached or attained unto the same precious time."[1]

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1. Revelatio Dei, Chapter 2, p. 5. The vision is reminiscent of the illumination of John Tauler in "The Book of the Master of Holy Scripture," Chap. 9. See the translation by Susanna Winkworth, The History of Life of the Revelation Dr. John Tauler, p. 45.

This and the other visions were for the late Medieval mind an authentication of the truth in the teachings of Henry Nicholas and led them to submissive obedience to the Service of Love.

The spiritual journey to perfection was a favorite theme of discussion among the Familists centering in the Terra Pacis: A True Testification of the Spiritual Land of Peace though it was the nucleus of all Nicholas' writings in one form or another. The clearest presentation of this theme is in The Eight Vertues or Godlynesses, which was popular reading both in the Netherlands and in England until at least 1660.

These "Eight Vertues" are presented as a pattern for the membership that they might "live and walk in the same going forth from the one -- into the other, till unto the perfectest." They teach that a state of sinless perfection is possible in this life and that this state is not instantaneously achieved but the gift of God to those who advance stage by stage.[1]

The initiate begins by yielding to the "pleasure or Will of the Lord" for "ye shall altogether forsake,

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1. There is a strong similarity between this brief tract and the lengthy work of Rulman Merswin, Neun-Felsen Buch, (The Book of Nine Rocks). It may be that works of German mysticism and the Gottesfreunde were in the hands of Henry Nicholas. Merswin emphasizes as does H.N. the yielding of self will. In Merswin's final step "a person becomes God," in H.N., "Godded with God." Cf. Seesholtz, A.G., Friends of God, pp. 151-154, esp. p.153.

hate, and leave all your own lusts, pleasures and will, and give over yourselves wholly to the Lust or Will of the Lord."[1] The second step is to "love the Lord your God in his Law or Ordinance with all your heart and thoughts, and your neighbor as your self,"[2] and thus "ye shall altogether forsake, hate and leave your own selves and your own Law or Ordinance, and all your love to the same and to your own selves."[3] The seeker now abandons all his own "chosen righteousness or holyness" and gives himself "to the righteousness of God, or body of our Lord Jesus Christ."[4] In the fourth step there is a forsaking of the "Lordlyness" of self and "the ungodly and corrupt world" and a giving over to "God's Lordlyness."[5] Step five similarly instructs a submission to "the stool of God's Majesty" which ensures a possession "of the high love-reign God head."[6] This leads to a vision of the peace of perfection and the pilgrim is instructed,

> "leave all your own vision of peace or all your vision wherewith ye out of the flesh, and out of the earthly and natural or bloody being, have perceived or ----"

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1. Ibid., Article No. 4.
2. Ibid., Article No. 7.
3. Ibid., Article No. 8.
4. Ibid., Article No. 10 and 11.
5. Ibid., Articles No. 13 and 14.
6. Ibid., Articles No. 16-17.

> "or looked into your own peace and perfection according to the flesh, or after the creaturely manner, and shall in the same vision become altogether blind --- and give over yourselves altogether to God's vision of peace and of perfection."[1]

In the seventh step the seeker becomes "the Anointed of God" by "the anointing of the joyful Oyl or comforting of the Holy Ghost and with all peacableness of heart and mind."[2] The final stage or "eighth Vertue or Godlyness is the new Life of the true life of God the Father, of the Son, and of the holy-Ghost, which is full of all Vertues or Godlynesses, full of all Love, Grace and Wisdom, full of all power of God, all spiritual goods--."[3]

This was the "summum bonnum" which it was possible for any man, who would so dedicate himself, to reach. There was taught then in the gatherings of the House of Love a "perfectionism" which might have been heard from the lips of Eckhart, or Suso, or Rulmann Merswin, or Tauler or the mysterious Friend of God from the Oberland, but here it was bound by the rules of an inferior society in an effort to prevent the excesses of Brethren of the Free Spirit who were so close to the Gottesfreunde in doctrine but so very far from them in practice.

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1. Ibid., Article No. 19.
2. Ibid., Article No. 22.
3. Ibid., Article No. 25.

Singing played an important part in the fellowship of the House of Love judging from the psalms, songs and poetry printed in the works of Henry Nicholas. Among these are: Cantica:Liederen offte Gesangen, Dorch H.N., A New Balade or song of the Lambes Feast, The Psalms of H.N. in Mirabilia Opera Dei, Refereien Unde Rondelen Edder Rymesche et cetera. A carefully copied manuscript in the Lambeth Palace Library Psalms and Songs: Brought Forth through H.N. (1574-1600) shows the use of these in England as does the English edition of Mirabilia Opera Dei. Whether these were read or sung in the "Communality of Love" on the first day of the week may be doubted but they well may have been used in informal fellowship. Nippold, Thomas, Jones, Bax and Barclay all find them artistically inferior and somewhat puerile in content.

The House of Love observed a number of holy days not on the Christian calendar but set aside in the new calendar fashioned by Nicholas. Especially holy were Christmas day, the birthday of John the Baptist and that of the Virgin Mary. In this calendar even the days of the week were renamed to signify certain truths and stages of spiritual advancement. The seven days were: Hillich is Godt, Jaget Nae Liefte, Kumpt Tom Leven, Lievet De Döget, Maket Frundtschop, Nafolget De Lere, Overwinnet Idt Böse.[1] The fifteenth day of each month

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1. Die Openbaring Godes, Unde Syne Grote Prophete, Chap. XIV.

also received a symbolical name.

The Familists made use of the Lord's Prayer[1] in their public worship and encouraged private prayer among its membership. Henry Nicholas in the First Exhortation, gives several long penitential prayers for those who have not yet reached "the land of rest" where there is freedom from sin.[2] All the "Good-willing" are urged to devote themselves to spiritual exercises and are instructed to "give yourselves daily unto prayer: Leave not off to pray to God."[3] Prayers are given for use at night, in the morning as well as before and after meals. One of the prayers for the table reads:

> "Blesse the Lord, in all the Workes of his handes. For his Right-hand hath blessed and hallowed it all. Blessed be the Lord, the most highest, which feedeth his people with meat and drink, and nourisheth us with his word of life, namely his communiality of the love in all good blessing. Amen.
>
> O Lord God, heavenly Father; nurture our heart in this holy feare: and blesse us with thy wisdom that we may blesse thee, in righteousness: and not misuse thy gifts, which we take to us: but may receive and enjoy those same, with thankfulnesse, at thy bountiful hand, in thy holy Name, and in all obedience of the Love: Amen.[4]

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1. First Exhortation (1656), p. 18.
2. Ibid., p. 175.
3. Ibid., p. 160.
4. Ibid., p. 49.

The note of praise is very evident in their prayers as in this passage from a daily prayer.

> "Therefore praise our God, and extoll his holy name: for his great-mightinesse endureth for evermore, Amen.
>
> We thanke and praise thee, O Lord God heavenly Father, O thou true God, for all thy goodnesse. For thy blessing is alwaies over us, in thy house of love, and thou guidest us therein, with thy right hand.
>
> Where is there such a God, as our God of Love, which is so Almighty; and such a God service, as the most holy God-service of his Love, which is so lovely and teacheth us so uprightly.
>
> Laud, honor, praise and thanksgiving be to God everlastingly, which hath out of his bountiful goodnesse, prepared all this for us: and giveth us there-to his everlasting Life."[1]

During the Embden period Nicholas composed most of his 187 works consisting of books, tracts, psalms, hymns, poems and epistles. None of these works were printed in this city, however, but were done elsewhere and sent to central points for distribution,[2] a strategy no doubt prompted by Nicholas' knowledge of the trade shipping lanes. It is wondered how many of his books went out in the numerous crates of cloth sent abroad by the prosperous merchant of Embden.

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1. First Exhortation, Chapter X, p. 51.
2. Aa, A. J. Van der, Biographisch Woordenboek, Vol. XIII, p. 179, "Zyne geschriften werden meest alle te Embden vervardigd, en door Dirk von Borne de Bohmbergars, Christophel Plantyn en Augustyn von Hasselt gedrukt, terwijl Henrik Jansen uit het dorp Barneweld en voor anderen de verspreidung en van zorgden."

Henry Janssen from the village of Barreveldt, called both Hiel and Barreveldt in various writings, appears to have been in charge of the spread of the literary propaganda.[1] Barreveldt himself was a figure with strong mystical leanings. Max Rooses says of him "C'était un simple artisan, peu instruit, mais fort disposé à l'enthusiasme mystique."[2] Where he received his education is not clear, but his inclinations are similar to those of the Brethren of the Common life though with a more strongly mystical emphasis. He composed several lengthy works himself which were printed by Christopher Plantin, his close friend and confident.[3] It may well have been Barreveldt who, in 1565, instigated the revolt that shattered the ranks of Familism in Europe.[4]

The presses which struck off the work of Henry Nicholas were operated by adherents who willingly risked ruin in the "service of the House of Love." When the severe penalties are recalled their courage is the more admired. First among the printing of Familist literature, chronologically at least, was Dirk van Borne, who struck off a number of smaller tracts or open letters at Deventer.

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1. Loc. cit.
2. Rooses, Max, Christopher Plantin, p. 76.
3. Ibid.,pp. 76-77. These are listed by Nippold, F., Op. Cit., p. 400.
4. On the identification of Hiel as Barreveldt see Nippold, F., Op. Cit., pp. 394-402.

This was not van Borne's first experience in printing such literature for he had done the Wonderbook of David Joris in 1542.[1] The presses of the Bohmbergers at Cologne also produced Familist literature as did the establishment managed by Augustyn von Hasselt at Kampen. The latter printer was trained by Plantin at Nicholas' request and his equipment was supplied through the largess of the prophet, who seems to have had much confidence in his young convert.[2] "In dessem middelen tyde ouerst, so richte H.N., tom meestendeel up syne sulvest kosten; eine gantze Druckerie op, in dem Lande von Oueryssel, unde dat mit Augustyn van Hasselt, die he daer-tho gewonnen hadde, um to Kampen int openbaer to drucken --."[3] From the Kampen press came an array of Henry Nicholas' smaller writings in German, Latin and French in such quantities that the source was soon traced and van Hasselt forced to flee to Wesel, taking with him his entire equipment. He was soon forced to move again, settling in Cologne, where he printed works in German and Latin.[4] Nicholas'

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1. See Nippold, F., "Heinrich Hiclaes," p. 359, note 110 and his more complete remarks on van Borne in "David Joris," Zeitschrift f.d. historische Theologie, 1863.
2. Ibid., p. 361, note 15. The Chronica almost monotonously repeats "auf sein kosten." Cf. Chronica 22: 15, 26-29; 5:5-7. See Rooses' Christopher Plantin, p. 365.
3. Chronica 4:18,4. Roose, p. 395.
4. Chronica 4:18,4, also 3:24, 59-60 as printed in Roose's Ibid., p. 393-400.

Den Spegel der Gherechticheit / dorch den Geiſt der Lieffden/vnde den vorgodeden Menſch H. N. vth de Hemmeliſche Warheit betüget:

Tho ene warachtige Vorklaringe der Höuetſummen der vprechter Gerechticheit/ offte Köninclicker Kronen des ewigen Leuens.

Hört dit/O ghy alle Völckeren/anmercket alle die in deſſem Tyde leuen/ beyde Rycke vnde Erme thoſamen: Mynen Mundt ſal Wyßheit ſpreken/ vnde myn Herte Vorſtandt vorthbrengen.

Pſal. 48.

De Mundt des Gerechten geit mith Wyſheit vmme/ vnde ſyn Tunge ſal ſpreken dat Gericht. De Wet ſynes Godes is in ſynem Herte / vnde ſyne Gangen ſlipperen nicht.

Pſal. 36.

Title-page of Den Spegel

DEsse sal groot zyn/ vnde he sal werden geheten ein Són des Alderhógesten: vñ Got de Heer sal em geuen Dauid synes Vaders Stúl: vnde he sal ein Kóningk zyn ouer dat Hús Jacobs in de ewicheit/vnde synes Rijcks sal gein ende zyn. Luc. 1.

Dar sal ein Rúde vpgá van dem Stañe Jsaij/vñ ein sprúteth syne wortel sal Vrucht vorthbrengen/ vp welcken rusten sal de Geist des Heren/ de Geist des Wyßheides/ vnde des Vorstandes: de Geist des Rátz vnde der sterckté: de Geist der Kentemissen vnde der frúchten des Heren/ &c. Gerechticheit sal dat Gordel syner lendenen zyn/ vnde de Gelooff dat Gordel syner nyren. Jesaie 11.



Ein Kint offte ein Erffgenam is vns geboren / ein Són is vns gegeuen/wēs herschoppie vp syne scholderen is: vnde he heiet Wonderlick Raet/ Krefte/ Róse/ ewich Vader/ ein vredsam Prítz vp dat syne Herschoppie grot werde / vñ des vredes gein ende/ vp den Stúl Dauids vñ syn Kónink Rijck sal he sittē/ vp dat he idt bereyde vnde sterckе met Gerechte vñ Gerechticheit van nu an beth tho in ewicheit. Jesaie 9.

Den Gláuigen is Sy. ein gelecht / wie in ein gelooffet / sal nicht beschammet werden. Jes. 28. 1. Pet. 2.

Wie im ein gelooben/ die gotes furcht bor. of dett. Joan. 3.

Joannes heft met Water des berouwes gedópt tho beteringe/ óuerst de Christus Godes (de Wech/de Warheit vnde idt Leuen) dópet met dem hilligen Geiste/vnde met dem Vúre/welckes Wann is in syne hant/vnde he sal reynigen synen Blúr/vnde sal vorsamelen de Weyte in syne Schure: óuerst idt kaff sal he vorbranden met vnblusschelicken Vúre. Mat. 3. Luc. 3. Mar. 1. Joan. 1.

He sal dat Recht met de Warheit vorthbrengen: he sal noch bytachtich/noch grimmelick zyn: vp dat he vp Erde dat Recht doe: vnde de Heidenen sullen vp syne insettingen wachten. Jes. 42.

Frontispiece of Den Spegel

son, Franze, who had been in charge of the shop at Embden, also was engaged in the publishing of his father's books at Cologne.

Christopher Plantin (1514-1589), one of the most skilled printers and book binders of the 16th century, became an adherent of Henry Nicholas through his writings sometime before meeting him in the early 1560's.[1] Plantin, after a successful career as a bookbinder, opened his press in Antwerp early in 1555 and soon had twenty-two presses, which enabled him in a few years to produce his 1600th book, including an edition of the Hebrew Bible which ran to 3,900 copies. By 1560 he is said to have surpassed all his rivals in the "perfection, beauty, and number of publications."[2] Plantin, however, was busier than the princes and prelates knew for even as he "sent thousands, and tens of thousands of missals, breviaries, diurnals, antiphonaries and psalm books to Philip II,"[3] his presses were stamping out the pages of Henry Nicholas' chief work Den Spegel der Gherechticheit;[4] while he was corresponding with Gregory XII concerning the printing of Cardinal Ximenes Polyglot

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1. Chronica 22:15 in Roose, Ibid., Roose gives eight very large pages of extracts from the Chronica dealing with Plantin's relations with the Familists.
2. Wallau, H. W., "Christopher Plantin, in The Catholic Encyclopedia.
3. Voet, L., Museum Plantin-Moretus, p. 11. The publishing house of Plantin is now a museum open to the public. It was damaged by a V-2 on Jan. 2, 1945 but is now restored.
4. Rooses, M., Christopher Plantin, opposite p. 62 reproduced the two title-pages as done by Plantin.

Bible he was contracting also for the publishing of outlawed mystical tracts.[1] In 1562 he was suspected of being an acquaintance of Henry Nicholas and Henry Janssen (Barreveldt) but from his refuge in Paris he satisfied authorities of his innocence and in the following year he was allowed to re-establish his business.[2] Absolved from the charge placed against him, Plantin continued until his death in 1589, to publish heretical works even though he broke finally with Henry Nicholas in 1568.[3] As a loyal son of the church he received a Roman Catholic funeral and was "buried in the round gallery of the high choir of Antwerp Cathedral" with epitaph "Prince of Printers" carved across his tomb.[4]

The writings of H.N. were attacked by the Council of Trent in 1570 and 1582 and by Papal Bull in 1590. In the Antwerpener Index Von 1570, which was printed oddly enough by Plantin (Ex. officina Christophori Plantini MCLXX), the name of Nicholas appears."Henricius Nicolai, sive libri omnes H.N. signati, que et sine loco et impressoris nomine sparguntur in vulgus."[5]

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1. Voet, L., op. cit., p. 7.
2. Nippold, F., op. cit., p. 360 and Note 112.
3. "Il se separa problamente de la secte en 1568," Roose, op. cit., p. 76.
4. Voet, L., op. cit., p. 12. See Rooses, M., Catalogue of the Plantin Moretus Museum, Mr. Voet, the curator, informs me that there are three works of H.N. in their library. Epistola H.N. (1577), Institutio Puerorum (1573), Cantica H.N. (1573).
5. Reusch, H. Fr., Die Indices Librorum prohibitorum des Jahrhunderts, p. 295. Cf. also p. 341 (München, 1882)p.448.

After successfully eluding detection for some twenty years, Henry Nicholas came under the scrutinizing eye of the city council in Embden. Fortuitously he received intelligence of the proccedings against him and taking all his books he fled leaving his family and belongings behind.[1] Tobias writes about this event:

> "But at the same time in the nine and fiftieth year of the age of H.N. --- then sought the Magistrate where H.N. dwelleth in the East (through the false relations of the enemies of H.N. and through the false slanders which they had spoken against him among the people) to lye in wait for H.N. for to lay him fast in prison: and so with the consent of the same aforesaid Magistrate) was H.N. (in the same land where he dwelled) very vehemently persecuted. And many ambushes were laid for him, for to bring him into prison. But the Lord smote them all with a great blindness, who were his enemies and persecuted him: insomuch that they could by no means apprehend H.N."[2]

Tobias dramatizes the escape in apocryphal terms as he writes of his master that "the Lord manifest his mercy and assistance to him, carried him (by the hand of his Angels) openly before the eyes of his persecutors

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1. There seems little necessity to take seriously the gossip recorded by John Rogers in London in 1574 that Nicholas fled because a woman whom he said was his cousin reported that she had intimate relations with him as one of his three wives. See Rogers, John, The Displaying of an Horrible Secte."
2. M.O.D., p. 75.

away from the land without hurt: and no man knew him, or coulde find out which way he travelled."[1] From this it seems that Nicholas aware of impending danger, walked out of the city as though on business and omitted to come back. He covered his tracks so well that he eluded his pursuers and reached "another land, which the Lord showed him, and wherein it should be more quiet and peacable for him to inhabit."[2]

The authorities incensed at his escape confiscated all his goods which were considerable, and though it was the middle of winter turned the family out into the street without food or money. Friends took pity on them but they suffered greatly for the next six months, the hardship causing the death of Nicholas' wife. Before her death, however, she sent for one of the sons who knew the hiding place of Nicholas and requested that he bring a message which might clear the father of all the charges against him. It seems that she was not really aware of the sectarian activities of her husband. The reply of the exiled merchant addressed to the "ehrbaren, weisen und vorsichtigen, günstigen, lieben herren,"[3] admits

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1. M.O.D., p. 74.
2. Loc. cit.
3. Nippold, F., op. cit., p. 367, (honorable, wise, circumspect, benevolent, beloved gentlemen) The letter appears in Acta, Chapter 10.

absolutely nothing of guilt but rather insists that he had never been schismatic, and had never composed or brought to light any books which could be considered heretical or even misleading. His whole former life, said Nicholas, disproved the charges against him for he had isolated himself from all sectaries. Further, he felt a love for all men, a love such as is the basis of all true religion surpassing ceremonies. He draws to the conclusion of his appeal remarking that he had known for a year of this slander against him but had been unable to discover the source.[1] At a first glance the whole action of Nicholas here seems cowardly and his letter hypocritical if not a downright lie. It certainly is no exhibition of heroism but in the face of circumstances this is quite possibly the best thing Nicholas could have done as far as the welfare of the society of Familists was concerned. The letter from the point of view of the Börgemeisteren was full of falsehoods but from Nicholas' side it was all absolutely true. He had kept aloof from Lutheran and Anabaptists elements alike and he did not deny the dogmas of Catholicism, instead he felt that the Service of Love was the fulfillment of everything that had been

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1. Nippold, F., P. 367 considers this "hypocrisy" quite typical of H.N. and remarks that the letter is an unmitigated lie (unbedingte Lügenhaftigkeit).

concealed in Romanist theology and ceremony. He had consistantly attended the services of mass and preaching while awaiting that Divine intervention which would establish the House of Love as the Israel of God in the New Age.

Aside from all of this, there seems to have been little doubt what would have happened to Henry Nicholas had he returned to Embden and seeing the treatment of his family he stayed away. His activities from 1560 to 1565 are not known but he was not idle. Many new adherents were drawn to the exiled prophet and the movement grew apace in the chief centers of its influence; Amsterdam, Embden, Antwerp, Paris, Kampen, Cologne, Rotterdam and Dordrecht.[1] It was now also that he met and conferred personally with Christopher Plantin for the first time. His work as an author continued and he composed a number of psalms some of which are included by Tobias in Mirabilia Opera Dei.[2] While others are interspersed through the various works of H.N. these are close imitations of the Biblical Psalm employing much of their thought and language as found in the German editions. He imagines himself as David being pursued by

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1. Nippold, F., op. cit.,pp. 387,388.
2. A manuscript of Psalms is in Lambeth Palace Library, (Ms. 859).

his enemies, a devotional exercise employed by many under persecution. It is known that he visited Kampen between 1560 and 1565 though he did not stay long in one place as is indicated by the frequent use of the similitude of travel in works composed in that period.

During his 65th year he received his fifth vision, a highly complex revelation which if genuine was indeed a feat of memory to recall. This supposed contact with the divine mind actually led to the dissolution of the movement on the Continent for several reasons which will be discussed. The period of disruption subsequent to the rebellion of Holland against Spain was to be one of significance for the Household of Love, for H.N. hear the Lord say, "H.N. arise and be diligent to perform thy journey towards the land which will be convenient and peaceful for thee to dwell in and conceal thyself very carefully from thy dispisers: and keep thyself apart for a time from thine acquaintance and friends, according to the flesh: especially from those with whom thou hast (outwardly) most friendship."[1]

He had, it appears, been betrayed by close friends to whom he had revealed something of the content

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1. M.O.D., p. 87 ff.

of his doctrine. Most likely being a personable individual he had been received into border-line religious circles but when those who sheltered him discovered that there was more to his simple doctrine of love than appeared on the surface, they turned against him. Of these his biographer writes:

> "Those were letter-learned and did seem to be so wise: and to whom he had showed all love and friendship, were yet so ignorant, blind and misunderstanding, that they envied him and unadvisedly resisted the truth of God: and shamefully despised the fulfilling of the godliness in Jesus Christ: and also persecuted him with wicked hearts, of lying slanderous lips, whom they had most cause to love, for as much as he shewed all love and all ministrations to the Godliness in full explanation of them."[1]

He was pursued unrelentingly from one hiding place to another by these former acquaintances who were now "blood-thirsty in their spirits and minds." They were most probably Roman Catholic for Tobias says they "have always been the Letter-learned, and also the urgers of ceremonial Services."[2] Because of this betrayal H.N. was commanded that he should speak no longer to anyone but the twenty-four elders and the four seraphim who would travel with him in the household of love, and through whom he would direct the society.

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1. M.O.D., pp. 74-75.
2. Ibid., p. 78.

The vision explains the spiritual struggle of life in terms of a spiritual journey carrying it out in detail too great to repeat here.[1] The elders of the movement, twenty-four in number, are each given spiritual names which follow alphabetical order: Abia, the fatherly will of God; Abdiel, his testimony; Banaias, his understanding; Colia, his voice; Daniel, his judgement; Elidad, his love; Foelicitas, his holiness; Gabriel, his strength; Honanias, his pity; Jadaja, his knowledge; Joacim, his resurrection; Lazarus, his help; Malaliel, his illumination; Melchiel, his kingdom; Nehemias, his consolation; Odaja, his creed; Patroba, his fatherliness; Roseas, his secrecy; Salamiel, his peace; Sophia, his wisdom; Tobias, his goodness; Urias, his light; Veritas, his truth; Zacharias, his remembrance.

This array of elders was surmounted by the four chief seraphim who were the four apostolic evangelists in the House of Love. They were Fidelitas, God's faithfulness or the lion of the tribe of Judah and the root of David; Raphael, God's helpfulness, or the lovely human countenance, out of the tribe of Benjamin and the root of Paul; Joshue, God's faithfulness or the bull out of the

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1. See Terra Pacis where this vision described in Acta Chapter XVII ff., and Chronica Chapter 24 ff. is developed into a full scale "Pilgrim's Progress."

tribe of Levi and the root of Aaron; Prudentia, God's forsight, or the eagle of the tribe of Joseph and the root of Peter.

An immediate sequel to the above vision was the sixth revelation which continued this extensive spiritual journey covering seven times seven days to be begun in a spirit of obedience to and dependence on God. All earthly things were to be renounced and a vegetarian diet adopted.

The first week's journey took the pilgrim to the land of Speculum Justitiae where in a clear mirror true righteousness was seen. The close of the second week saw the pilgrim in the land of Disciplina, where the host and hostess were the Love of doing God's will and Willing Obedience. Tempted through the third week by fleshly lusts the land of Abstentia was reached where fasting and prayer were taught as well as how to conquer lust. In the fourth week the pilgrim arrives in Augustia where he found the way to the new life to be a narrow one. The fifth week shows the seeker how perserverance was won as he travelled into Perseverentia. Through severe temptations the land of Coena, where the true supper of the Lord is eaten, is reached. The host and hostess are "The Life of Jesus Christ" and "The Blood of Jesus Christ" and the cup is the passion of Christ. During the seventh week the wanderer is filled with the Spirit of Christ.

United with Christ the pilgrim is able to overcome his foes though he is severely criticized for claiming such a union. At the close of the seventh week the land of Consummatio is viewed and complete satisfaction in Christ found. Here too, the truth is learned that one must suffer with Christ if he is to triumph with him and the Bible becomes an open book. The Pilgrim sees the panorama of the promised land which belongs to God and the "living ones" and on the 49th day he rests in the death and burial of Christ and the journey to the "land of the living ones" is consummated. The 50th day marks the revelation of God to the Pilgrim in fulfillment of the prophecy "Now is the time of the judgement of God and of his saints fulfilled." Filled with God's spirit of understanding which transcends human knowledge, the power of God is revealed and the Pilgrim is obligated to pass it on. This is God's revelation to H.N. and all people should enter this Service of Love for only such can be the children of God.

In addition to these spiritual exercises, which were meant to be carried in some manner known only to the elect, an onerous duty was proposed. Each Pilgrim must rewrite the works of H.N. in such a way that the wicked should not understand them and yet so that they would be distinct to the believer. This task was to be completed in a single course during which no wine or meat was allowed.

The vision of Nicholas provided for the House of Love a new hierarchy which was to replace the eldership and ministry as formerly known. This hierarchy was a shadow of the Roman Catholic system though Nicholas with his characteristic flair for novelty added esoteric names, each with its own hidden significance, for the offices.[1] At the apex of the pyramid stood the "Highest Bishop" beneath whom ranged the "four and twenty elders." Next to this governing body came the administrative officials the "Seraphims" or "Archbishops," who directed the three orders of priests; "the Priests of the Majesty of God, or the Bishops;" "the Priests of the Rule of God;" and, the "Priests of the Paradise of the Lord." These leaders were inaugurated into their offices in elaborate ceremonies which employed eight kinds of "holy waters" and eight "holy ungents." The seventh and eighth were reserved for the supreme bishop, the sixth and fifth for the archbishop, bishops and the eldership; the remaining four were for the lower order of the priesthood. In order to be chosen as a priest an member needed to be able to read, write, and to know German, the holy

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1. Nippold, F., op. cit., pp. 549-563 gives a three-chapter summary of the Ordo sacerdotis, the Leiden mss. concerned with the "priestly orders," the "cult," and the "organization." See also Barclay, R., The Inner Life etc, pp. 29-32 and Thomas, A. C., The Family of Love, both of which follow Nippold.

language, well enough to interpret the writings of Henry Nicholas. They were required to give up all their property to the society except "themselves, their mind and knowledge" and their support was to be underwritten by a tithe from the members while the higher orders were supported by a tithe of the tithe. Both men and women were allowed to enter the priesthood though women were limited to the elementary divisions. Spiritual celibacy was demanded and bestowed by a process of separation, meditation and consecration controlled by the archbishop but this did not limit normal marriage relationship, a matter in which they compare to the "third order" of the Franciscans,

It is not difficult to see how Henry Nicholas' vision fostered dissension in the party. The radical reorganization was contrary to the entire spirit of the time which decreed simplicity to be the trend and thus showed very clearly the anachronistic nature of the House of Love. His latest visions were not understood by his close followers who knew his mind and spirit and those who were loose adherents or who were not capable of abstruse mystical thought found them highly unsatisfactory. Nicholas made the error common in founders of sects, he forgot about the rank and file who provide the strength of any movement.

That which was intended as a fresh start for the Continental branch of the Family of Love actually proved

to be its undoing. The followers who had been strongely moved by the basic message of the House of Love were shocked at the fantastic rigmarole which Henry Nicholas now attempted to foist upon them. As the membership began to dwindle, Nicholas tried to prop up his temple by an additional vision in his 69th year and only succeeded in completely pushing the walls out. The faithful had no desire to enter the desert Unitas that they might pray three weeks for the awakening of men even if that desert was suitably surrounded by Abstinentia, Augustia, Maledictio and Purgatio. Hubert of Rotterdam, Cornelius Janssen of Dordrecht, his own son-in-law, Christopher Plantin, and even his protegé, Augustyn von Hasselt, all deserted him. So also did his old friend Barrenveldt, who may well have led the revolt since he became the leader of a considerable remnant which existed until the end of the century. Plantin, always an admirer of Barrenveldt, now became his follower, accepting his mystical doctrine;[1] both of them remaining conscientious Roman Catholics with no qualms about hypocrisy.[2] There

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1. Rooses, M., Op.cit., p. 82 ff discusses Barreveldt's doctrine. "Barreveldt preached the absolute identification with God and considered public worship an indifferent thing." See Rooses, M., Catalogue, p. X.
2. Ibid., op. cit., p. 76.

is correspondence to show this relationship continued until Plantin's death in 1589 after which Barreveldt remained in touch with Moretus, Plantin's son-in-law, until the third of April 1594.[1] Augustyn von Hasselt also continued his relationship with the remnant for as late as 1591 he was meeting Barreveldt and printing his writings.[2]

H.N. did all he could to win back his members but it was entirely in vain for though they were polite while in his presence, in his absence they mutually agreed that his visions were of his own manufacturing. To call the world to "the service of Love" was in agreement with their ideas but to arrange the "good-willing" in a complex hierarchy and subject them to "gnostic" degrees as well as a multiplicity of precepts and regulations was out of the question.[3] The prophet communicated often with Barreveldt but he was unable to dissuade him from his course, and since he held the key to the situation, the fate of the sect was sealed. Rarely has a movement collapsed so quickly and so completely as the Huis der Liefde on the Continent.

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1. Rooses, M., Op. Cit., p. 78.
2. Ibid.,pp. 79-80.
3. Ibid., pp. 63-68.

There are a very few references to the group after this. Cornelius Coornhert notes a few Familists in Harlem in 1577 and during the next decade Cornelius Cornelissen a corrector in the Latin school at Dodrecht was exiled for possession of Den Spiegel der Gerechtigkeit.[1] The bitter attack by Casper Grevinchoven published in 1604 is the last important contemporary word on the matter,[2] although Hoornbeck and Arnold mention two men of Familistic doctrine in the year 1614[3], this being the final mention of the Family of Love on the Continent. Just a few decades after the death of Henry Nicholas in 1570[4] the Familists were almost entirely an unknown sect in the Low countries.

The age of the prophets had finished before the passing of Henry Nicholas and the movement was in decline. That religious fervor which had arisen with the Reformation and burned white hot for awhile had by the last quarter of the 16th century generally cooled.

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1. Nippold, F., op. cit., pp. 387-388.
2. Grevinchoven, Casper, Ontdeckinge van de monstreuse Dwalingen des libertynsschen vergodeden Vrygheestes Hendrie Nicholaesoon eerst Vader van het huys der liefden. 1604.
3. Hoornbeck, J., Summa Controversiarum (1658), p. 396. Arnold, G., Kirchen und Ketzer Historia, Vol. I, p.873, No. 36. These men possessed the works of Franck and other mystics also and were not of a Familist society.
4. Rogers, John, The Displaying of an Horrible Sect, Rogers reports in 1578 that English Familists claimed that Henry Nicholas was still alive, "he cannot be less than 78 years olde."

Men were no longer looking for new leaders to follow and the numerous small parties largely gave way to the well established groups whose tenets were clearly crystalized. The earlier radicals had mostly died and the Mennonites gathered up into a well-defined order those not satisfied with Roman catholicism or the reform parties. The very days which marked the end of Familism on the Continent, however, marked a new birth of the movement in England where its doctrine was to have considerable relevance during the ensuing century.

CHAPTER IV

The Entrance of the Family of Love into England and the Expansion of that Society until the early Reign of James I.

CHAPTER IV

Familism came to England when the two strong factions were the Roman and Anti-Roman parties; it ran its course through the Elizabethan Age of transition and survived to be caught in the struggle between the church and the Puritan parties beginning in the reign of James I and reaching its consummation in the Civil War.[1] The mystical society left a deep imprint on England in the years between 1555 and 1660 at first as a small and struggling party whose aims were completely misunderstood, and then as an underground stream largely independent, in its influence, from an organized society.

The House of Love, or rather the Family of Love as it was rechristened in England, made its entrance to the island kingdom via those well worn channels of trade, established in the 13th century, which had become increasingly active in the England of the commercially-conscious Tudors.[2] Merchants from the Netherlands had settled in the larger cities of south-eastern England where they enjoyed privileges enabling them to carry on

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1. Carpenter, W. B., History of the Church of England, p. 235. Marsden, J. B., The Early Puritans, p. 247 ff. Creighton, M., The Age of Elizabeth, p. 46-50.
2. Motely, J. L., The Rise of the Dutch Republic, p. 20.

their profitable trade.[1] The several purges and persecutions in the Low countries swelled the flow of refugees who took up permanent residence in England until they numbered at the very least, 50,000.[2] The severe persecution of Anabaptists under Charles V and after, and the religio-political altercations in the time of Philip II resulted in a continual stream of Dutchmen entering into England until 1574. Philip in the time of Alba's reign of terror, in 1566 to be exact, "made complaints to the Queen" that many of his subjects "had fled over hither and were harboured by her."[3] Philip's agents had undoubtedly told him, among other things, of the Dutch and French (Walloon) churches in London, the membership of the former reaching 4,000 with three pastors under the supervision of John à Lasco. The Crown had treated these "strangers" well even assigning to them an Augustinian Convent for their use as a church.[4]

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1. Strype, J., The Life and Acts of Archbishop Grindal, p. 124. Strype in describing the search for strangers and the royal demand that each belong to an authorized church notes that "known merchants" who "intend not continually to remain here " were given dispensation from the decrees.
2. This number has been variously estimated at figures ranging from 30,000 to 200, 000. See Cadoux, C.J., Philip of Spain and the Netherlands, p. 84. Stiansen, Peder, "Problems in Baptist History," in The Chronicle, Vol. XIII, 1950, p. 155.
3. Strype, Op. Cit., p. 111. See also appendix No. 15. Cf. Hessels, J. H., Epistulae et Tractus (4 Vol) This collection shows how wide spread the Dutch were in England, naming churches in many towns: London, Colchester, Ipswich, Norwich, Thetford, Hamstead, Yarmouth etc.
4. Burns, J. S., The History of Foreign Refugees, Cf. J.H. Hessels, Op. Cit., Both these sources give extensive original material on the Dutch in England.

Not all the Dutch immigrants were of the Reformed inclination but rather it is generally agreed that an impressive number were of the left-wing, for early reform in the coasts of the North and Baltic Seas were composed of those whom Sebastian Francke recognized as the "third party" of the Reformation.[1] They were Anabaptists and Free Spirits who appreciated the fact that they would have an increased measure of safety in England since the authorities of that kingdom were not primarily interested in rooting out heresies unless they became conspicious by a breach of the peace. Thus the immigrant was accepted at face value and no one questioned them minutely as to the articles of their belief though it was required expecially in London that they be connected with a parish church.

Nor were the Dutch alone of importance in the matter of Familism's entry into England for the residents of Antwerp and its sphere of influence must be noted.[2] This area of the Low countries provided many adherents to Henry Nicholas' doctrine as they had in the years before to "The Men of Understanding," the "Beghards and Beguines," and the "Libertines," and the "Brethren of the

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1. Dosker, H. E., The Dutch Anabaptists, p. 284 and p. 45.
2. Fleming, J. A., Flemish Influence in Britain, Vol. I, p.99 ff.

Free Spirit."[1] The Duchess of Parma wrote to Philip II in 1567 that when the Duke of Alba approached Antwerp some 100,000 people left the area with money and goods, and that more were leaving every day.[2] These were Walloons who went in shiploads to England finding new homes in Canterbury, Norwich, Southampton, Sandwich and Colchester. Again at the sack of Antwerp in 1585 "one third part of the merchants and workmen who worked and dealt in silks --- settled in England --."[3] It is readily seen that these refugees "Formed an unquestionable leaven in the life of the church and state of the late 16th and early 17th centuries."[4]

The situation in England gave ready opportunity for the advance of Familism imported by refugees for,

> "the English Reformation in the first half of this century was not in any sense a popular movement. England was not even predominantly Protestant --"

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1. Both Rembert, Die Wiedertäufer in Julich, pp. 165-167 and Dollinger, Beiträge zur Sektengeschichte des Mittelalters, Bk. II, pp. 664-668, show active mystical and pantheistic sects in Antwerp in 1520 and following. Among their beliefs, "We live in the age of the Holy Spirit after the supremacy of the Father and the Son comes that of the Third Person, the Holy Spirit -- The H.S. is our understanding." See Newman, A.H., op. cit., Vol. II, pp. 188-189.
2. Burns, J. S., op. cit., p. 4.
3. Ibid., p. 9.
4. Dosker, H. E., "Recent sources of Information on the Anabaptists in the Netherlands," in American Society of Church History, Vol. II, Second Series, 1917. Barclay, R., op. cit., p. 416.

> "under Edward VI. Outside London and the two Universities the Reformation made very little headway, except in Kent and Essex, where, under alien influences, it progressed at such a violent pace that the death of Edward VI left the whole country seething with Anabaptists, Arians, Marcionists, Davigeorgians, heretics and sectaries of every description.[1]

Considering the large number of heterogeneous elements, unloosed in England it is surprising that there were not more outbreaks of extremism in the 16th century,[2] however a glance at Whiting's ninety-page compilation of sects which arose in the first half of the next century makes it pellucidly clear that underground these heresies had continued.[3] Among this great number of sects came the Familists, who were quite used to propagating their doctrine secretly, bringing with them their books a good number of which have found their way into important English collections.[4] The Familists did not object at all to worshipping as required in state churches and could accept with equanimity any Roman Catholic or Anglican creed or ceremony since these were but external symbols of underlying truth. Henry Nicholas at Embden, Christopher Plantin

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1. Smyth, C. H., Cranmer and the Reformation Under Edward VI, p. 3. Cf. Thomas Crosby, A History of the English Baptists, pp. 63-69. Moore, A., History of the Reformation p. 288.
2. Smithson, R. J., The Anabaptists, pp. 192-204 gives a brief catalogue of the outbreaks of Anabaptism and sources.
3. Whiting, C. E., Studies in English Puritanism, pp.233-322. Cf. Barclay, R., The Inner Life of the Religious Society of the Commonwealth.
4. See Bibliography for the number and location of these works.

at Antwerp felt it not at all inconsistent to be practicing Roman Catholics[1] and at the same time be secretly teaching Familism, for the House of Love was the fulfillment of all religion.

This Roman Catholic origin and the references of H.N. to the Romanist sacramental system led to frequently repeated accusation in England that they were supporting the Papists or that they were part of a Jesuit plot.[2] Strype tells of one Familist who was so charged.

> "They allowed of going to mass, for when -- told -- that they were suspected to be superstitious papists, and that their administration, called the service of love, was published to the end to maintain all superstition and abuse in the Roman religion: he answered that in truth, so far as he could perceive, the author of these books (H.N.) in the ministration of love did neither maintain nor allow of any manner of superstition frequented in the Roman or Papish Church: but indeed he seemed to open and disclose the first ground of the same religion, and the signification of everything (i.e. by favourable allegories) as well their sacraments as ceremonies."[3]

This source admits that in some places Familists would go to mass and partake of services of the Roman Church "yet he acknowledged them no otherwise but as sacraments, ceremonies, signs, images, figures, or

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1. Moore, Aubrey L., History of the Reformation, p. 287. Moore relates Familism to Quietism in the Roman Church.
2. Jessop. E., A Discovery, pp. 90-91.
3. Strype, J., Annals, II, i, p. 561.

shadows of good and holy things" and as for English Familists "they utterly detest all superstitious papistry,"[1] The account here does not say but strongly intimates that this was precisely the attitude of the Family of Love to all churches for they were to supersede them all and bring to light that which was hidden in their services.

It was this dubious behaviour which led English critics to dub them arch-hypocrites.[2] Pagitt after making them out as "one of the most erroneous and dangerous sects that ever was," goes on to say that:

> "The Family of Love are so called, because they will admitt none common among them; their love is so great that they may join with any Congregation, and live under obedience to any Magistrate, be he never so ungodly; and therefore to curry favour with all, they have some opinions agreeable with all in some things."[3]

Little exact information is available on the impact of David Joris' fantastic doctrine on England though it is known that he travelled from Strassbourg to Seeland with the express purpose of travelling to England but

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1. Jessop, E., A Discovery of the Errors of English Anabaptists, pp. 90-91.
2. Loc. cit. "They will outwardly submit to any kind of religion, and to any idolatrous service whatsoever, pretending it is not that can sin but the soul.---They will profess to agree in all points with the church of England, as also with the church of Rome, if they should be examined by them: only this, they will not (lightly) deny their master H.N., nor speak evil of him in his writings, if they should be put to it, and there is no other way than this to discover them."
3. Pagitt, E., Heresiography, p. 91.

he turned back upon meeting three Anabaptists who had fled for their lives.[1]

There is frequent mention of Davidjorists and Davidgeorgians, it is true, but these would appear to be mere mouthings of the Continental writers like Bullinger who classified the various heretics.[2] In 1568 Musculus in his Common Places of Christian Religion wrote of that "most develische and cursed heresie of David George, which doth teach his followers the nakedness of Adam and Eve--and promiseth unto them that do obey him true felicity."[3] The English heresiographers deal in much the same way with "Davidgeorgianism" as do all writers down to Henry More who devotes four pages of his Enthusiasmus Triumpatus to the subject stating that the "Father of our Modern Nicolaitans" got his doctrine from David George.[4] Again he writes of "those two meal-mouthed prophets that court the world to follow them by so many hysterical good-morrows," making the Gospel" but one long-winded Fable, and themselves the only inspired and infallible Lights of the world, because they fancy they have the

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1. Krohn, B.N., Geschichte Melchior Hofmann (1758), pp. 320-322. Cf. Barclay, R., op. cit., p. 14 N.
2. Bullinger, H., Teghens de Wederdoopers (Ed).Embden 1569.
3. Musculus, Wolfgang, Common Places of Christian Religion, Translated by John Man (1568), p. 533.
4. More, Henry, A Collection of Several Philosophical Writings, (1662), p. 27. More's source was Davidis Georgii, Holandi haeresiarch vita et doctrina (Basel 1559).

right of it."[1] Bailley also speaks of the "Georgians" remarking that "among us the Familists are their naturall brood."[2] It is most likely that the majority of the followers of David Joris had been absorbed into other groups, chiefly the Familists and Mennonites, after the flight of Joris to Basel in 1543. The writings of Joris were never translated into English and though most probably some emigrants were tainted by his teaching there is little visible evidence of it.[3]

With the Familists the story is quite different for as the movement grew into full fruition between 1540 and 1560 it began to spread in a small scale to England taking root among the Dutch and from them it spread among the indigenous inhabitants. The ranks of the Familists must have been swelled considerably when the great numbers who fled before the cruelty of Alba made their way to England's eastern counties from Amsterdam and Antwerp. The

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1. More, Henry, Theological Works, p. 106. Cf. Halleywell, H., An Account of Familism (1673), p. 8. "It was not long after David George had disseminated and spread abroad his pernicious errors, but they were greedily sucked in and embraced by Henry Nicholas. Davis, John, Apocalypsis, p.78. Pagitt, E., Heresiography. More recent writers have without reason followed this line. Cf. Hunt, J., Religious Thought in England, Vol. I, p. 237 ff. Whiting, Studies in English Puritanism, p. 285.

2. Bailley, R., Anabaptism, p. 102. "Familists have learned from H.N., and he from David George." Cf. Also p. 99.

3. Some of Joris' writings found their way to England including his Wonderbuch. See British Museum Catalogue. N. Charinaeus (D.Sep. 1564) and M. Micronеus both preached publicly against David George and H.N. before 1563, but they give no specific instance of the occurence of either sect. See Knewstub, J., A Confutation, p. 87 B and 89 B.

fact that it was early in the seventh decade of the 16th century that Familism "came to be noticed," bears this out.

The spinster Queen Elizabeth was of a naturally suspicious nature, which disposition caused her to scrutinize strangers within her realm, and more particularly since these strangers were from lands that had hatched various seditious incidents like the Münster fiasco.[1] "There were," writes Strype, "so many of these Strangers in London, even upon the first coming of the Queen to the Crown,"that in her second year (1560)" she was feign to issue out a proclamation for the Discovery of them and a command to Transport themselves out of her Dominions."[2] It seems that only economic considerations, a matter in which she was like her grandfather Henry VII, prevented her from driving all non-English from her borders.

Bound then by economic motives, Elizabeth satisfied herself with a "search for strangers."[3] In 1561 the government demanded an accounting of membership of

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1. Black, J. B., The Reign of Elizabeth, 1558-1603, p.166-167. Cf. Knappen, M.M., Tudor Puritanism, p. 372. Knappen feels that "The Anabaptists were more important as bogeymen than as a real political or religious force."
2. Strype, J., The Life and Acts of Archbishop Grindal, p. 122. See Domestic State Papers 1560, Vol. XIII, No. 35-36 for the proclamation against Anabaptists.
3. The Articles of enquiry are in the Landsdown Mss.,VolX, No. 46. The third question was "whether they be settlers forwarde, or favorers of any naughtie religion or sect?"

the Dutch church and received from Johannes Utenhovius a list arranged alphabetically specifying their trade and occupation.[1] Nor was this the end of the matter for "some years after (1566), another search was made, "and," Strype continues, "in this year, 1568, a third."[2] Archbishop Grindal who had alerted the Queen to the dangers took measures himself,

> "to guard the peace of the church and the Truth of Religion from Foreigners (as well as Homeborn) who (were) infected with Anabaptistical and other odd Opinions--and had their secret Conventicles here. By which Means many English people, in London especially, had been corrupted in their principles."[3]

The primary strategy of the action by Queen and Archbishop was to force all the strangers into a place where their activities religiously and politically could be controlled. This dual control was prompted by the English conception of Münster as a strange mixture of religious and political elements. Grindal's further wish in the matter was that strangers,

> "which adjoyne not themselves to the French or Dutch church in London, or else understanding our Language, do not orderly report to the Parish --"

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1. Domestic State Papers, (1547-1580), XVII, No. 33. June 22, 1561.
2. Strype, J., ibid., p. 111.
3. Ibid., p. 122. Grindal drew up "Articles of Enquiry into the Reasons of their coming into England, and concerning their opinions."

> "Church where they dwell; shall be commanded to depart the Realm within twentie Days next after warning given to them by the Archbishop or Mayor."[1]

The will of the church and state in this matter was expedited by a repeated inventory of strangers in which name, trade, present occupation, length of time in England and place or church membership was recorded.

Under close scrutiny of authorities several small Anabaptist gatherings were surprised and the worshippers exiled, imprisoned, burned or forced to recantation.[2] Yet it seems that Familism, a more introverted and quietistic movement, continued to gain in numbers and took "definite shape in the form of -- a party";[3] and yet avoided pinpoint detection.

Successive waves of immigrants from the Low countries brought with them Familism but how did the society take root and where did it become evident? In the time of Cranmer a notice came up of a strange sect in England which was specifically mentioned in a letter to the Archbishop from the council which asks him "to examine a sect newly sprung up in Kent." Strype, noticing their emphasis

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1. Ibid., p. 124. Cf. Domestic State Papers (1547-1580), XXIV, No. 24, p. 205. Sept. 8,1562. Grindal requests a new catalogue of the communicants of the French & Dutch churches.
2. Stow, John, The Annals or General History of England, 2nd Ed. (1615), p. 606 and p. 678. Moore, A.L. op. cit.,p.288.
3. Bax, B., Op. cit., p. 338. Bax is in error in identifying Familists as Anabaptists, but his observation that they were the first left-wing continental group to operate in England as an organized party is of import.

on identification with God, remarked, "It may be they were of the Family of Love or David George's sect who made himself sometimes Christ and sometimes the Holy Ghost."[1] They were generally taken to be Anabaptists as is seen in a letter from Northumberland to William Cecil in which he "Wishes the King would appoint Mr. Knox to the bishopric of Rochester, he would be a whetstone to the Archbishop of Canterbury and a confounder of the Anabaptists lately sprung up in Kent."[2] Latimer also has been thought to have made a reference to the Familists in a sermon preached before Edward VI on April 19th, 1549 as he said, "There be new spirits start up now of late, that say, after we have received the Spirit we cannot sin."[3] It is within the realm of possibility that these passages may allude to the followers of H.N. but they could just as easily have been devotees of some other sect of Spiritulisten, not at all rare at the time. It is not likely that there were gatherings of David Joris' followers though the influence of those who had followed him in earlier days may have been noticeable in these groups.

The earliest traceable evidence of Familism in England occurs in 1555 which is quite remarkable since

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1. Strype, J., The Memorials of Thomas Cranmer, ii, p.410. Thomas, A. C., The Family of Love, p. 18.
2. Domestic State Papers (1547-1580), Vol. XV, No. 35, Oct. 28, 1552, p. 46.
3. Sermons of Bishop Latimer (Parker Society Ed.), p. 229.

it is just fifteen years after Henry Nicholas launched his society at Embden. The testimony to this date comes from John Fox who in his Book of Martyrs gives the report of Henry Crinell of Willingham in the County of Cambridge regarding his contact with Familism.

> "About the 3rd year of Q. Mary's reign in 1555, at Michaelmas or not much after, I Henry Crinell of etc. came to the town of Colchester where I happened in to a common Inn. The cause of my repair thither at that time was, that I was desirous to provide that my conscience should not be entangled with Papish pitch: and being then there, I met with divers of mine acquaintance, as also with strangers---.
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> There we found at our coming thither one Christopher Vitels, a joigner, who so far as I could at that time learn held many strange opinions, and also taught divers points of doctrine scarce sound, and to me before unheard of. The which Joigner (as he then privily dissembled so since he hath been noted openly for his cunning wit and curious phantasies) being as it seemed weary of his occupation, left his craft of joigning, and took unto him a new trade of life: so that of a simple scholar he became a great and learned Schoolmaster of the doctrine of a man who lived, as he said, beyond the seas, an holy life and an upright conversation. This man he praised so very much, and reported many things of his angelic behaviour, whom afterwards I understood to be one Henry Nicholas a mercer of Delph in Holland."[1]

The encounter in Colchester was particularly remembered because Vitells became a much spoken of figure, his name appearing in every translation of H.N.'s works, but this was typical of that which was taking place in

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1. Fox, J., Book of Martyrs, (First Ed) p. 606, Cf. Strype, J., Annals, Vol. II, ii, p. 268.

the Eastern counties. Strype notes that as the "Service of Love" increased there were among them "weavers, basket-makers, bottle-makers and musicians who --- running and frisking from place to place, --- stayed not anywhere long, save they light upon some simple husbandman---."[1] By this means there was a "rapid growth of the movement and a steady progress of its principles."[2]

The city of London was not free from the society of the "Good-willing" and it was for this reason that two ministers of the Dutch Church, Martin Micronius and Nicholas Charinaeus (D. 1563), arose to denounce the "skulking monster" which was increasing by holding quiet conventicles. They considered in their polemical tracts that H.N. was a descendant of David Joris; Micronius naming the Familists "those evyll chickens, which are hatched of that evyll egge."[3] Thomas Fuller notes that their preaching did not obliterate H.N.'s doctrine, however, for "it seems their antidotes pierced not so deep as his poison."[4]

The literature related to Familists in Hessel's

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1. Strype, J., Annals, Vol. II, i, p. 487. Cf. Vol. II, ii, p. 285.
2. Jones, R. M., Mysticism and Democracy, p. 126.
3. Micronius, Martyn, A Confutation of the Doctrine of D.G. and H.N., the father of the Familie of Love, p. 87 B, in Knewstub, J., A Confutation of Monstrous and Horrible Heresies Taught by H.N., (London: 1579). Nicholas Charinaeus' tract by the same name is on p. 89 B.
4. Fuller, Thom., Church History of Britain, XVI Cent, Bk. IX, p. 112.

collection is not extensive but there are sufficient references in the letters to show that it was a live issue particularly among the Dutch. Since it was not the purpose of these "Church" letters to deal with heresy it is significant that the Familists are mentioned at all. In one letter Peter Baro relates to Guillaime De Laune that a William Clarke had accused him of joining the Family of Love since he had stated in his book De Fide "That faith is enjoyned by law."[1] In another letter Corolus Utenhovius declares in a shocked tone, "I do not understand what you write about Hamstede. If he belonged to the Family of Love I should have nothing to say, but I can hardly believe it."[2] The name of the Familists like that of the Anabaptists, was used as a handy means of classifying any Dutchman who came under suspicion.

The ministers of the Dutch Church had reason to be alert for that easy intimacy which always exists between strangers in a foreign land made the acceptance of doctrine couched in familar terms not difficult. It is significant that when John Rogers began in 1578 seeking

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1. Hessels, J. H., Epistulae et Tractus, Vol. 3, Part 1, Letter 183, Lines 6 & 7. See also No. 104, No. 1 note, No. 2700.
2. Ibid., Vol. 3, Partl, Letter 67, Line 4. On this cf. Domestic State Papers, XXIII, No. 58, July 31, 1562. Articles of recantation to be made by Hadrian Hamstead, Minister of the German church in London.

material to combat the "drowsy dreams of a doting Dutchman" he went to the Dutch church and there found "divers ancient persons and of good credite -- who have been acquainted with the same H.N. and have dwelt together in one citie, and in one streete, being neere neighbours and familiar friends, who have declared and testified the certaintie of his behavious and demeanor."[1] Many others who had known and followed H.N. were not as willing to share what they knew with polemicists as they were with those more favorably minded.

As early as 1561 Familists were being apprehended by authorities as they met for worship and the study of Henry Nicholas' writings. John Rogers has preserved in his work what he calls a "confession" of two members of the Family given before Sir William Moore a Justice of Surrey on May 28, 1561. It is too lengthy to present here but the digest of Rufus Jones gives substantially what is found in it and in a more readable form.

> "They are all unlearned, save some who can read English and are made bishops, elders, and deacons, who call them to one of the disciples' houses, thirty in number assemble to hear the Scriptures expounded. They have goods in common, new members are received with a kiss, all have meat, drink, and lodging found by the owner of--"

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1. Rogers, J., op. cit., (London 1578)

"the house where they meet. They knock, saying, 'Here is a Brother or Sister in Christ.' The congregation does not speak until admitted so to do. They go to church, but object to the Litany that says 'Lord have mercy upon us miserable sinners,' as if they could never be amended. They may not say 'God speed, God morrow, or God even.' They did prohibit bearing of weapons, but at length allowed the bearing of staves. When a question is demanded of any, they stay a great while ere they answer, and commonly their word shall be 'Surely' or 'So.' When their wives are in childbirth they must use the help of none other but one of their own sect. If any die, the wife or husband that overliveth must marry again with one of their congregation or else the offence is great. The marriage is made by the brethren, who sometimes bring them together who live over a hundred miles asunder, as Thomas Chaundler of Woneherst, Surrey, who sent for a wife from the Isle of Ely by two of the congregation. These had never met before, and in a year they, upon a disliking, did divorce themselves asunder before certain of the congregation. No man is to be baptized before the age of thirty. Until then he is an infant. Heaven and hell are present in this world among us. They are bound to give alms only to their own sect, bound to relieve him that decayeth. All men not of their congregation or revolted from them are as dead. Bishops and ministers should not remain still in one place but should wander from country to country. They hold there was a world before Adam's time. No man should be put to death for his opinions, and they therefore condemn Cranmer and Ridley for burning Joane of Kent. They expound Scripture according to their own minds, comparing one place with another.

They bragge verie muche of their owne sincere lives, justifying themselves, saying, 'marke how purelie we live.' If they have anything to do touching their temporal things they must do it by advice, viz. ask Counsell of the Lord through one of their bishops or elders. They give their alms by putting under a hat upon a table what they are disposed to give, and the money is secretly distributed by the Bishops or Elders."[1]

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1. Jones, R. M., op. cit., pp. 441, 442.

The "confession" which is really no confession at all gives reason to think that it is an embroidered account designed for public consumption.

Among the many from the Continent suspected of being connected with the Familists was Justus Velsius (Vels or Welsens). Velsius was born in the Hague and graduated in medicine from Louvain in 1542 and early showed the unorthodox tendencies which led to his expulsion from Louvain in 1554 and later from Strassbourg and London. Strype mentions his presence in London in January of 1563 and quotes from Welsius' work Christiani Hominis Norma,[1] (The Rule of a Christian Man etc). The first question in this catechistically arranged work is this, "What is a Christian? which is answered, "One who by participation and grace is rendered, and to be rendered, that which Christ was, and is of himself and by nature."[2] This Dutchman accused the minister of the London Dutch church of "introducing he knew not what monsters of heresies, and withdrawing from the people the true doctrine of regeneration, and bringing in certain false doctrines in their room."[3]

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1. Hessels, J.H., op. cit., Vol. III, Part 2, Letter 79, p. 27-28. Grindal had read and commented on this work.
2. Strype, J., Life and Acts of Archbishop Grindal, p. 135. "Quisnam est Christianus? Qui quod Christus per se et natura exitit, et est, id participatione atque gratia est redditus, et reddendus."
3. Strype, J., Annals Vol. I, ii, p. 9. Welsius described this in a letter preserved in the Austin-Friars Library now in the Guildhall, London.

He further attacked their doctrine in a published challenge by writing that "they resist the truth, denying by the spirit of Antichrist the force of the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh, who therefore appeared, that he might demolish the works of the Devil --- to wit, original sin,"[1] This coming of Christ puts man in a position that "he might receive the true coin of God, impressing upon him the image of the true and heavenly man."[2] It is very doubtful that Velsius had joined the Family of Love for he was far too open in his methods of spreading his mysticism being anything but one of the quiet in the land. His attacks on Peter De Leon and Nicholas Charinaeus, the nature of his letters to the Secretary and the Queen, and his prophecy to the French Ambassador all show him of a different spirit.[3] It is true, however, that what he preached regarding perfectionism would have been acceptable to the "Good-willing" and he was undoubtedly out of that same broad base of semi-pantheistical mysticism which was common in Holland in the 15th and 16th centuries.

Not until after 1570 was it widely recognized that the Family of Love was active in English society but the

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1. Ibid., p. 10-11.
2. Loc. cit.
3. See Strype, J., Life and Acts of Edward Grindal, Appendix p. 15. "Bishop Grindal's animadversions upon Justus Velsius his Scheme of Christian Religion, or his Rule whereby Christians should examine themselves."

name and supposed nature of the sectaries were soon raised in a general hue and cry. "About this time (1575," writes Strype, "or somewhat before, a sect by the name of the Family of Love began to be taken notice of. It was derived from Holland; where one H.N. was founder of it."[1] For a time Familists were seen hiding everywhere. In the parish of Bolsham in Cambridgeshire a parson, Robert Sharp and other persons of good reputation were brought before Dr. Perne on the charge of being Familists for "they used to meet holydays after supper and there they read the scriptures, and sing psalms -- instead of the common custom on holydays of carding and dicing and spending the time in alehouses."[2] David Thickpenny, a curate at Brightelmstone, was suspended by the Bishop of Chichester in 1576 on suspicion of Familism, a charge which was laid aside by Grindal on the man's promise to hold to the 39 Articles and to preach two sermons against the sect.[3] The latter discipline presupposes material available of a polemical nature. Thickpenny continued causing trouble, it seems, and Grindal promised to deal with him personally.[4]

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1. Strype, J., Annals, Vol. II, ii, p. 556.
2. Loc. cit. Strype dates this event in December 1574. This story can be taken also as a commentary on the superior morals and behaviour of the Familists.
3. Remains of Archbishop Grindal, pp. 359-360.
4. Strype, J., Life and Acts of Edward Grindal, pp. 293-296.

By 1579 a systematic search was under way to expose Familism and the Council wrote to the bishops concerned, instructing them to suppress the heresies. The Bishop of Norwich, Freak, wrote in 1579 that he had been "diligent in searching after them, endeavoring by punishments as well as by gentler methods to reclaim them."[1] The Bishop imprisoned a considerable number who followed the Family of Love and maintained that he had found among the suspects clergy with livings.

The Familists employed once again their literary medium to spread their propaganda as they had on the Continent and it may be that the plan was laid by H.N. before his death in 1570. The guiding figure, however, was Christopher Vitells (D. 1579) who as it is declared on the frontpieces, translated the works of H.N. "out of Base-Almayne." Vitells, a native of Delft, came to England sometime before 1550 and soon found himself in difficulty, for in the reign of Queen Mary he was charged with Arianism and imprisoned after 1555 at Wood St. London.[2] He regained his freedom on the succession of Elizabeth by recanting publicly at St. Paul's Cross.[3] When he became

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1. Strype, J., Annals, Vol. II, i, p. 584. The report of Henry Crinell show that he may have retained these Arian ideas for some time. Strype, op. cit., Vol. II, ii, p.268. Fox, op. cit., p. 606.
2. Ibid., ii, pp. 284-286. Cf. Barclay, R., op.cit., p. 25 N.
3. Pagitt, E., Heresiography (1661), p. 109.

a convert of H.N. is not known but he was apparently a devotee of that free floating society which specialized in those religions of the spirit with a mystical esoteric appeal. By the time of the Colchester incident at Michelmas in 1555 he was a follower, admirer and, indeed, an active disciple of that man of "holy life," "upright conversation," "angelic behaviour" who lived across the sea, i.e., H.N. He may well have met H.N. during the course of the latter's visit which Fuller says he made to England a t the end of the reign of Edward VI.[1] That he was charged with Arianism in the persecution under Mary Tudor (1553-1558) could mean that authorities were unable to diagnose his heresy but it could likewise indicate that Familism in England was not particular about theological details.

Vitells as a Familist elder toured East Anglia using his quite considerable powers of persuasion and and gained a good hearing at Cambridge, Wellingham in Cambridgeshire, Strethall in Essex, Colchester and many other places,where, writes John Rogers, he "infected many people with his poisonous doctrine, so much so that it is difficult to root it out, for even if they recant

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1. Fuller, T., op. cit., XVI Cent., Bk. IX, p. 112.

publicly, yet they return to their old opinions."[1] "Many have been snared by him," Rogers goes on," and not a few ministers have been entangled. He completely abandoned his trade as joyner, and though not a learned man, translated into English the bulky works of Henry Nicholas as well as several by the Familist elders Tobias, Elidad and Fidelitas.[2] This considerable literary endeavor was accomplished in the early 1570's and by 1574 the writings of H.N. (in English) began to appear in England.[3] These included: The Prophetie of the Spirit of Love, A Publishing of the Peace, Evangelium Regni, Proverbs of H.N., Dicta H.N., The First Exhortation, Epistola XI H.N., and The First Epistle of H.N. On the titlepage of each it was openly declared that H.N. was the author, that they were translated by Christopher Vitells, and that they taught the doctrine of the House of Love.

Nor was this the end of Familist publications for in 1575 and 1579 other works of H.N. and his elders were imported from the Continent. The regulations

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1. Rogers, J., op. cit., Rogers gives Vitells credit for the success of the Society in England.
2. Smith, C. F., "Christopher Vitell," in Dictionary of National Biography. R. M. Jones remarks:"This rude and unlearned joyner," however,"was sufficiently learned to translate H.N.'s difficult books into his adopted tongue." op. cit., p. 442.
3. Strype, J., Annals, Vol. II, ii, p. 148. The British Museum dates its complete Editions of the Epistles in English at 1562? and 1575.

for the control of the press which had grown up under Elizabeth made it impossible to print them in London for every book published required a license which had to be obtained from one of the two Archbishops or the Bishop of London. But "If illicit books and pamphlets could not safely be printed at home, they could be put to press in Holland and smuggled into England."[1] Strype remarks that the Epistles of H.N. were printed in Dutch in 1577 and a number of them brought to England and indicates that English editions followed immediately.[2] The twenty Epistles were printed in a number of combinations and editions and are adjudged to have had a wide reading. In 1578 the works were so widely known that John Rogers could identify thirteen which he knew to be in circulation.

"Bookes of H.N. which I have seene.
1. The first Epistle of H.N.
2. The first and second exhortation of H.N.
3. A Dialogue betweene the father and the sonne.
4. The Prophecie of the spirit of love.
5. The Publishing of peace upon the earth.
6. The declaration of the Masse.
7. Their Evangelium Regni.
8. The True and Spiritual Tabernacle.
9. The Newe and Heavenly Jerusalem.
10. A Confession of their faith newly made.
11. Sundrie Epistles of H.N."[3]

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1. Haller, Wm., The Rise of Puritanism, p. 232, Cf. p. 230A.
2. Strype, J., op. cit., p. 149.
3. Rogers, J, op. cit., (not paginated), p. 14 after Preface. No. 6 was probably a work by Antony Mortart. (See Ames Typographical Antiquities, p. 1643). No. 4 is part of The First Exhortation.

Rogers also said that the Glasse of Righteousness and the Introduction to the Glasse of Righteousness were in circulation but he had not seen them nor the A Booke called the holie Lamb."[1]

The translations of Nicholas' books "had a large circle of readers, and each took what he liked and left the rest."[2] The circulation of the writings followed the method of the time as described by Froude in another instance as he tells of "poor cobblers, weavers, carpenters, trade apprentices, and humble artizans" who longing for knowledge "might have been seen at night stealing along the lanes and alleys of London, carrying with them some precious load of books which it was death to possess" gladly risking their lives "for brief tenure of so dear a treasure."[3] These works were the source of the popular mysticism of the day and passing from hand to hand spread ideas which were to have a common vogue. "Before Jacob Boehme's writings were translated into English the Family of Love was the most important source of popular mysticism."[4] Marsden has gone so far as to say, "They were the fathers of that mystic strain which Jacob Behmen

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1. A New Balade or Song of the Lambes Feast. Strype, J., Annals, Vol. II, ii, p. 149 says that Proverbs and Documental Sentences were also distributed.
2. Jones, R. M., Mysticism and Democracy, p. 130.
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4. Jones, R. M., Op. cit., p. 131.

(Boehme) completed at the beginning of the last century."[1]

The life of the " holy man" across the sea became known in England through a biography entitled Mirabilia Opera Dei, Certaine Wonderfulle Works of God which happened to H.N., written by the elder Tobias. It was this particular effort of the Familists which jarred the opposition to action. To have England flooded with Familist literature was serious but to have the "mock-prophet" held up as a holy hero in a Gospel-like story moved the authorities to take organized steps to stamp out the heresy.

The Familists, still eager to press their cause, issued in 1574 a sixty-seven-page tract entitled An Apology for the Service of the Family of Love, and during the course of the following year a ten-page pamphlet entitled A Brief Rehersall of the Beleef of the Goodwilling in England. Both of these were republished by Giles Calvert in London 80 years later. This latter document was presented to Parliament in 1575 by Familists in company with a number of their books. The author who addressed it "unto all Good-willing which love God and his righteousness, salvation and peace," claimed first

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1. Marsden, J. B., The History of the Early Puritans, p. 138.

of all that they were a misunderstood people.[1]

> "Forasmuch as we are bruited and defamed with many manner of false reports and lyes, by certain malicious and slanderous persons that never yet communed with us of any such thing as they criminate and charge us withal, to the great defacing and hindering of us, and our good name and fame among such to whom we rest as yet unknown, for that they might thereby bring us into contempt and obloquie, and so make us detestable and monstrous before the eys of the common people."[2]

The confession proper under the heading "Deus Charitas Est," declares that they hold the Apostles Creed to be the heart of their belief and that they are orthodox in every way, though there is an obvious attempt in this apology to read the ideas of Familism into the Creed. The personal Familist confession which follows reveals the fundamental ethic of the movement. In the body of this ten-page doctrinal statement they are actually saying that faith is not enough for the heart of Christianity is love.

> "Considering the great love of God toward us and all mankind, in that he hath created the man like unto his own --"

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1. The Familist's works were printed on the Continent on down into the Stuart period. In 1604 Familists offered to procure for James I "so many books as we can out of Germany (where they be printed)." "A Petition of Familists to King James," reproduced entirely in Rutherford, S., A Survey of the Spiritual Antichrist, p. 350.
2. A Brief Rehersall of the Beleef of the Goodwilling in England, p. 1.

"image, and also set him in the fullness of life: and how that he hath moreover (when we became his enemies through the transgressing of his word, and children of death) yet farther extended his love toward us, and sent his only Son Jesus Christ into this World, which hath to our atonement suffered the death of the Crosse, which we ourselves are guilty in: when we now consider all this great love extended on us, so are we moved to love him again, standing even so Religati, or bound again (and so Religious) to love the same God of life with all our heart, soul and might, and our neighbors as ourselves. And for that cause to the end that we might uprightly show forth the same, both in deed and truth we read the holy Scriptures of the Prophets and Apostles of Christ, and all other books which exhort us unto such an upright life, and love of God and our neighbor, not using any other Ceremonies, Laws, Statutes nor Sacraments of Baptism and Supper of the Lord then such as are ministered in the Church of England. And to that end, obey we also our Sovereign Lady the Queen and the Magistrates ---; And that of God's Behalf and even for our conscience and the peace's cause: paying all tribute unto these said Magistrates, living obediently and Subject like even as it is meet and right under their laws: and also dealing with all men uprightly, faithfully and charitably (even like as we ourselves would gladly be dealt withall at their hands) keeping likewise peace with all men, so far as is possible for us: and this we hold to be the fulfilling both of the Law and of the Prophets, as likewise the Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, (as is said) contained in the Old and New Testament and our Conscience beareth us record, that all such singleminded ones ought to be defended by the Governors, from all injustice and tyranical oppression.

This same is finally the content of our Belief, and the ground of our Religion--" [1]

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1. A Brief Rehersall of the Beleef of the Goodwilling in England. pp. 7-10

> "briefly declared and, we acknowledge and confess concerning the same, even from the bottom of our hearts. And such as also required for everyone, through the gracious word of Life in the Service of the Love of Jesus Christ: and not else what."[1]

In this plea for tolerance the social ethic of love which Henry Nicholas had tried to express as a part of his system of thought is brought to focus in very down-to-earth language. This new emphasis was to become increasingly significant since it put in concrete positive terms the aspirations of many who were oppressed or who felt that Christianity should have a practical expression in society. The writings of Henry Nicholas came more and more to be read in the light of this Christian sociological stress thus making the society of Familists a seed-bed for teaching which came to full fruition in Diggers, Levellers and related movements. The inner light, perfectionistic theme was continued, manifesting itself by other avenues such as in the Seeker and Ranter ranks.

The sincerity which shines through The Brief Rehersall was wasted on the authorities though this is largely a true statement of Familist doctrine and practice. One thing which they had not said and which the state-church authorities realized was that while the "good-

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1. A Brief Rehersall of the Beleef of the Goodwilling in England. pp. 7-10.

willing" had no objections to continuing worship within the Church of England they hoped to transcend it and eventually replace all churches, by peaceful means, with the Service of the Love of Jesus Christ.

It was not long after this, and perhaps as a result of it, that a number of Familists were seized. Pagitt writes: "The 12th of June 1575 at Paul's Crosse five persons, English-men of the sect of the Family of Love, who there confessed themselves utterly to detest as well the Author of that Sect H.N. as all his damnable errors and heresies."[1] That they were English proves that they had adherents among others than the Dutch.

The increasing boldness of the mystical sect galvanized the spokesmen of orthodoxy to reply though it is wondered why they waited so long to do so. Perhaps the best known and most widely used of all attacks on Familism was John Roger's polemical work The Displaying of an Horrible Secte of grosse and wicked Heretiques naming themselves the Familie of Love (146 pp) published in 1578. This diatribe which "fairly screams"[2] against

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1. Pagitt, E., Heresiography (1645 ed), p. 91. See also Domestic State Papers (1547-1580), Vol. CIII, No. 25, p.496. There was a confession of faith and an appeal to the Queen's mercy by "five Dutchmen condemned for Anabaptism," on April 8th, 1575.
2. Jones, R. M. Studies in Mystical Religion, p. 540.

the Familists, makes use of the writings of Henry Nicholas, and includes a "confession of Certain Articles" of Familist belief as already mentioned in this chapter. Roger's work was a best seller being republished several times, including a selection of letters "written by the Family to John Rogers" along with the author's confutation of them.[1] These letters are some indication of the persistent activity of that elusive society and of their confidence in their cause as well as their honest desire to be recognized as pure in religion, morals and motives. Christopher Vitell immediately took up the gauntlet of challenge and answered Roger's in a tract Testimonies of Sion of the great stone of foundation lay'd therein of Judgement and Righteousness (1578) to which Rogers replied in his usual manner in a piece entitled An answere unto a wicked and infamous libel made by Christopher Vitell, one of the pretended Familie of Love (1578-1579).[2] In both his writings John Rogers did the Family of Love a great service for devastating though his attacks seemed they gave excellent publicity to the movement as well as reprinting lengthy selections from Familist writings so that many of the best points of the society shine through his dark ragings.

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1. These letters and answers were published separately. Letters of the Familie to John Rogers with their Answers. (1579).
2. These works are preserved in the Library of Christ Church, Oxford, Bishop Atterbury Collection E522, E525.

Two other writers took up the cudgel against the Family of Love in the year 1579.[1] William Wilkinson, a student in divinity at Cambridge, produced an attack the longer title of which is given here as typical of these polemics.

> "A Confutation of certaine articles delivered (by H.N.) unto the Familye of Love, with the exposition of Theophilus, a supposed Elder in the sayd Familye--- Herewith are prefixed by I. Young Bishop of Rochester, certaine notes collected out of their Gospell, and aunswered by the Familists. By the Author a description of the tyme, places, authors and manner of spreading the same: of their lives and wrestyng of Scriptures: with notes in the end how to know an Heretique (out of Mr. Bullinger's booke agaynst the Anabaptists. Hereticall affirmations and ungodly expositions of Scriptures by H.N. out of the documentall sentences.)."

Wilkinson takes the articles and the exposition of them by a certain elder of the Family,Theophilus, and attacks them successively, giving in each case the complete text of the otherwise unknown Familist writing. The Bishop of Ely, to whom the work is dedicated, was apparently concerned, for in his diocese, at the Isle of Ely and elsewhere, the group was rapidly on the increase. The author says that the occasion of his writing was the reading of certain books of H.N. and his conferring with certain of the Family at Ely. These Familists requested that he

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1. Cf. Strype, J., Annals, Vol. II, ii, pp. 300-302.

compile his doubts as to their method of writing, unusualness of phrase, allegories, and unheard of divinity that they might see it, and this he had done sending the result to the Family of Love. It was the reply to this by Theophilus that Wilkinson deals with in his work after reproducing the original fourteen articles summing up his criticisms. The book closes with advice as to how an Anabaptist (and especially a Familist)[1] may be identified following various authors but particularly Bullinger.

John Knewstub (1544-1642),[2] later one of the representatives of the Puritan party at the Hampton-court conference, wrote a verbal barrage against the Society under the pointed title A Confutation of Certaine Monstrous and Horrible Heresies taught by H.N. (1579). Appended to this were the confutations by Microneus and Charinaeus ministers of the Dutch Church in London, and "The Judgement of a godly learned man," signed W.C. in which Familism is called "the heape of heresies, which some yeares past coming out of Dutchland arrived in England."[3]

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1. Burrage, C. H., The Early English Dissenters, Vol. I, p. 57. These counterblasts against Familism and the publishing of their confessions with criticism is the parallel to the Anabaptist situation. On this latter Burrage writes, "By the publication of Confession of Faith with articles opposing the Anabaptists as well as of works such as these just mentioned, more than by any other means it would seem, Anabaptism at first became known to English people."
2. Mullinger, J.B., "John Knewstub," in D.N.B. See also Baker, History of St. John's College (ed. Mayor). Neal, D., History of the Puritans (ed. 1733) Vol. II.
3. See appendixes to Knewstub, J., op. cit., pp. 80 ff.

Knewstub himself was far from complimentary for he found that "the errours of the sect bee so many, so foule and so filthy as would force the very penne in passing to stay and stop her nose." Knewstub also translated a long portion of the Latin version of H.N.'s Evangelium Regni into English[1] although anotherEnglish translation from Base Almayne by Vittell was in circulation. Knewstub had earlier preached publicly at Paul's Crosse against Henry Nicholas in 1576 probably at the recantation of some of the group.[2] Two contemporary cuts show this preaching at "Paul's Crosse" to have been a popular event.[3] Knewstub's suggestion for "curing the county of Familism" he gives in his dedication to the Earl of Warwick. His plan is simply to follow Deut. 14 where it is taught "that if anie shall secretly intice unto a strange religion --- they stand charged not only to reveale it, but also that their hands shall be first upon them, to put them to death." As loyal Englishmen and Christians we should, he writes, not only uncover Familists "but our selves to be the chief doers in the death and execution of them."[4]

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1. This edition is in the Lambeth Palace Library.
2. Knewstub, J., "A Sermon preached at Paule's Crosse the Fryday before Easter, commonly called good Fryday, in the yeer of our Lorde 1576." Appended to A Confutation.
3. Shakespeare's England, Vol. I, pp. 64 and 68.
4. Knewstub, J., op. cit., "Dedicatorie."

The bitter diatribes of Rogers, Wilkinson and Knewstub were a cue for Elizabeth and Archbishop Grindal to act and so on October 3rd, 1580 the Queen issued at Hampton Court "A Proclamation against the Sectaries of the Family of Love,"[1] which was "proclaimed at London on the nineteenth diae of the same month."[2] The proclamation opens by observing that "there are certain persons which do secretly in corners, make privie assemblies of divers simple unlearned people, and after they have craftily and hypocritically allured them to esteem them to be more holy and perfect men than others are, they do teach them damnable heresies." Their teaching is in mystical terms described here as "absurd and fanatical" and as "a monstrous new kind of speech never found in the Scriptures, nor in the ancient Father or Writer of Christ's church." Attention is paid to "heretical and seditious books first made in the Dutch tongue, and lately translated into English, and printed beyond the seas and secretly brought over into the Realm." The adherents of this sect are to be "severely punished" but great attention is given to apprehending and destroying the books of H.N. possession

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1. Sparrow, A., A Collection of Articles, Injunctions, Canons, etc. "Given at Our Manour of Richmond the third of Oct., in the two and twentieth year of our Reign." Cf. Wilkins Concilia, IV, p. 297, also in Liturgical Tracts, Lumley, London, 1848. Mardsen in Early Puritans (2nd ed) says, "It would be difficult to find within so a compass, in any state paper, so much abuse." p. 140.
2. Holinshed, Chronicle (Ed. 1808) Vol. IV, p. 432. Cf. Camdeni Annales (Ed. 1639), p. 318.

of which was the chief method of identifying a Familist. The elusiveness of the sect was a problem for authorities for "they may before any Magistrate Ecclesiastical or Temporal --- by oath or otherwise deny any thing for their advantage, so as though many of them are well known to be teachers and spreaders abroad of these dangerous and damnable sects, yet by their own confession they cannot be condemned ---."[1] Anyone publishing, transporting or possessing the writings of H.N. are to be imprisoned.[2]

The abjuration prepared by the Privy Council to be placed in the hands of Familists shows how absolutely different was the operation of two types of minds. The Council took very literally the allegorical language of Familist works and thus declared:

> "Whosoever teacheth, that the dead which are fallen asleep in the Lord, rise up in this day of his judgement, and appear unto us in Godly glory which shall henceforth live in us everlastingly with Christ, and reign upon the earth, is a detestable heretic. Whosoever teacheth that to be born of the Virgin Mary out of the seed of David, after the flesh, is to be expounded of the pure doctrine out of the seed of love, is a detestable heretic. Whosoever teacheth, that Jesus Christ is come unto us according to his promise to the end that all they which love God and his righteousness, and Christ and perfect being, might presently enter into true rest, which God had prepared --"

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1. Sparrow, A., Op. cit., p. 140.
2. Knappen, M.M., Tudor Puritans, p. 372. Cf. Welwood, J., Memorials of the English Affairs (1709), p. 68.

"from the beginning for his elect and inherit everlasting life, is a detestable heretic."[1]

The analogies of the judgement, incarnation and heavenly rest employed by the Familists to explain their doctrine were not at all understood by those whom H.N. had called "Schriftgehlertin," the scripture learned. The council and clergy could not conceive of judgement in terms of an immanent God who broke into the course of history inaugurating a new age of love by the Holy Spirit. For them thinking of true doctrine as the seed of love begotten of the Holy Spirit even as Jesus was Virgin-born of Mary, was obnoxious as was any idea of perfection in terms of a heavenly rest or everlasting life in the present age.

One of the most comprehensive theological examinations of Familism is found in Thomas Roger's (D. 1616) exposition of the 39 articles.[2] Rogers, who took his M.A. at Oxford in 1576, felt that he should in conjunction with his commentary on the articles thoroughly expose any heresy related to each of the theological tenets. His early edition named The English Creede con-

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1. Underhill, E.B., Tracts on Liberty of Conscience, p.386. Cardwell, Documentary Annals, Vol. I,pp. 392, 396. Wilkin's Concilia, IV, pp. 296-297. Rutherford, S., Op. cit., (London 1648), p. 354. Fuller, Thom. Op. cit., XVI Cent., Bk. IV, p. 113. Fuller says that ten members of the Privy Council placed the abjuration in the hands of each known Familist.
2. Shaw, W. A., "Thomas Rogers," in D.N.B.

senting with the True, Ancient, Catholique and Apostolique Church, came out in two parts dated 1585 and 1587 respectively. In 1607 the subject matter was recast and published as The Faith, Doctrine, and Religion professed and protected in the Realm of England and Dominions of the same, expressed in Thirty-nine Articles.[1] Rogers makes considerable use of the writings of Henry Nicholas referring to the Evangelium Regni, Prophecie of the Spirit of Love, A Clear Instruction, (The Fourth Epistle of H.N.), The Spiritual Land of Peace, Documentall Sentences, The First Epistle of H.N., The Proverbs of H.N.[2] The testimony of Thomas Rogers is somewhat weakened since on occasions he leans heavily on John Roger's polemic The Displaying and William Wilkinson's A Confutation, but it is nevertheless a valuable witness to the fact that in 1585 and in 1607 Familism loomed up as one of the best known and most feared of the deviating factions in English religious life.[3] It reveals also the success of

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1. This work ran to many editions. Cambridge, 1607, 1691, London 1621, 1629, 1637, 1658, 1661. The Parker Society Edition 1854 edited by J.J.S. Perowne contains useful notes. Perowne has painstakingly checked every reference in Roger's work and where possible quotes them.
2. These are the titles used by Rogers. The exact titles can be seen in the bibliography.
3. Rogers also makes use of an unknown work entitled, A Pattern of the Present Time, which contains "Leon Ramsey's Confession," dated 1589. See pp. 246 and 284.

the Familist strategy of infiltrating into English thought through use of the printing press. By this means Familist thought was becoming both directly and indirectly part of the warp and woof of a religiously minded society the effects of which are adequately apparent from 1620 on into the Commonwealth period. The editions of Roger's expositions continuing until the end of the 17th century kept Familism before the public eye long after the Society had lost its dynamic and its membership had been assimilated into organizations better suited to the times.

The bitter attacks on the Familists from the Crown and Archbishop indicate a fear of this Society. The strong action most likely sprang in part from fear of another Münster, "the Moscow of that day,"[1] or it may have been a diversionary action to strengthen the Church of England, but it seems more likely that the authorities considered Familism a genuine danger. John Rogers maintained that in 1578 there were as many as a thousand followers in England,[2] an estimate which Underhill[3] considers a minimizing of the Familist's strength and which Burrage[4] sees as an exaggerated figure. It would seem from the frequent mentions of Familists, the amount of literature

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1. Smyth, C. H., op. cit., p. 35.
2. Rogers, J., op. cit.
3. Underhill, E. B., op. cit., pp. 358 ff.
4. Burrage, C. H., op. cit., Vol. I, p. 212.

on the subject and the later development that they were considerable in number and growing rapidly about 1580. The anonymous Cambridge author of A Supplication -- found derogatory (1606) remarks that "it is well known how that twenty-five years ago the number of them was great, and dispersed in divers parts," He particularly names Surrey, Sussex, Middlesex, Barkshire, Hampshire, Essex, Isle of Ely, Cambridgeshire, Suffolk, Norfolk, in the Northeast, and finally in most shires of this realm. He continues,

> "In those days they did most abound and were grown to such a number, as the displayer of the sect delivered how his heart did rue to speak that which one of the same society did avouch to him for truth, not a few ministers of the simple sort, have with H.N. his fancies entangled ---."[1]

Rutherford writes that there were Familists even in high places. "It is not like but Q. Elizabeth heard of these (Familist) books and saw them, since many of her and K. James his court favored them."[2] In another place he notes that "Divers of the court ofQueen Elizabeth and of K. James, and some nobles were Familists, I would that these who now rule all, by violence and force, were not

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1. A Supplication of the Family of Love examined and found derogatory (1606), p. 28. Cf. Domestic State Papers, 1572, CXX, No. 22, p. 575. "Petition of the Dutch strangers inhabiting Halstead, in Essex, to Sir Francis Walsyngham. That 40 families of strangers may be permitted to inhabit and dwell in Halstead, and quietly follow their trade."
2. Rutherford, S., op. cit., p. 347 Note H.,Cf. with the Quakers later. Whiting, C. E., op. cit., p. 229.

of that abominable way."[1] These escaped punishment since "the prelates, that respected ever the persons of men, would not publicly accuse them by name, because they were eminent men, as they are now, and because they were also friends of Bishops, and enemies to non-conformists then called Puritans."[2] Etherington, looking back forty years, notes that the Familists could say,

> "It is not M. Randall and we only that teach and entertain this doctrine of H.N. there have been and are, great doctors of divinity, so called, yea and some great peers, and persons of quality and estate in this land, as elsewhere, that have taught and entertained the same with great affection and high applause."[3]

From this it seems an element of the aristocracy and royalty had taken to dabbling in mystical writings. These dilettantes like many modern "pinks" considered themselves above the law while encouraging divisive elements among the people. From this source may well have come some of the ideas current in left-wing Puritans of the higher ranks.

A Cambridge man in 1606 while dissecting the Familists Supplication to James I, also notes the group are everywhere "nor are the chiefest places of the realm free

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1. Ibid., p. 349, Note t.
2. Ibid., p. 353.
3. Etherington, J., op. cit., p. 10. Etherington relates a discussion with a certain Lord who was a Familist.

from these men."[1] All this rather seems to go against Burrage's claim that "Before 1600 the Family of Love can have attracted few converts in England, and even until 1620 and later it must have been slow progress."[2] True there was no landslide of converts but certainly a steady progress as the continual literary sniping indicates.[3]

The situation was not at all unsuitable in the years between 1580 and the delivery of their apology to King James (1604) for the growth of the movement. Bishop Woolton at Exeter found that he was forced to deal with the Family of Love which, he says, had spread to his diocese from East Anglia. Among those "afflicted" was one of his clergy who was encouraging the spread of the Society. The charges against his doctrine includes mention of his belief that the Book of Genesis should be interpreted allegorically, and his claim that the Church of England was as imperfect as the Church of Rome and thus not a higher stage in the progressive reformation leading to perfection. This clergyman appealed to Lord Burleigh

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1. A Supplication of the Family of Love Examined and found derogatory, p. 28.
2. Burrage, C. H., op. cit., p. 212.
3. Cf. Bax, B., op. cit., p. 359. "In spite of everything, the sect seems to have made continuous progress towards the end of Elizabeth's reigh, and the action of the Privy Council in 1579 in deciding to hinder the further advance--does not seem to have resulted in anything important."

and Bishop Woolton, who had imprisoned the unfortunate man, replied to an inquiry from the council asking that the sentence stand because "that Randall hath many complices and that hurtful sect, the Family of Love, beginneth to creep in this country, of which hurtful company I have brought twenty to open recantation in this Cathedral Church."[1]

Woolton intimates that there were others known to be Familists which he must deal with.

The Isle of Ely was perennially vexed by various sects and the followers of H.N. were not absent but are mentioned in a number of instances. On May 24th, 1583 seven ministers from this locality wrote to the council about the problem of unattended flocks being led astray since many parishes near Ely are "infected with the familie of love."[2] According to such reports vacant parishes and parishes shepherded by poorly educated ministers often were led to follow Familism attractively taught by the enthusiastic tradesmen-teachers who were the sect's colporteurs. In 1592 the gentry of Suffolk wrote to the Council saying that "The state of the church -- grows

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1. Landsdowne Mss. 38/15. Rowse, A.L., The England of Elizabeth, p. 409.
2. Peel, A., The Seconde Parte of a Register, pp. 228-230.

grows every day more sick, and those whom it most concerns have been so careless that the hope of its recovery is almost desperate." They go on by asking their contact in London to "plead with the council to do something to bring about uniformity for the clergy are condemned by all--." They demand order and uniformity for "Order is the rule of the Spirit of God."[1] The confusion had given opportunity for heresy but the council must, writes the Suffolk gentry, "not allow the papists their treacharies, subtilties and heresies, nor the Family of Love, an egg of the same nest, nor the Anabaptists nor Brownists --- but abhor and punish all these."[2]

Through the last two decades of the century the Family operated in that same quiet way and experienced a moderate growth. Apart from private gatherings and study groups they were inconspicious in the community for they did not object to the established church and unlike the Anabaptists made full use of its sacramental services including in most cases the baptism of their children. A contemporary observer noted that where sacraments "were by the laws of the land allowed" that the Family of love followed H.N.'s teaching to "obey their rulers and their

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1. Domestic State Papers, 1592, Sept., CCXLIII, No. 25. pp. 275-276.
2. Loc. Cit.

laws, and for obedience sake not to rebel in any case, that they rather should go to church where the same (sacraments) were administered."[1]

The apology sent by the Familists to King James I in 1604 takes the King's comparison of the Good-willing with the Puritans as the subject of its opening remarks. James in Basilican Doron, written for Prince Henry, gives the name Puritan to those whom he identifies as a "vile sect among the Anabaptists called the Family of Love,"[2] but the Family object and "do utterly disclaime and detest all said absurd and self-conceited opinions and disobedient and erroneous sorts of the Anabaptists, Brown, Penry, Puritans, and all other proud minded sects and heresies whatsoever, protesting upon paine of our lives, that we are not consenting nor agreeing with any such brainesicke preachers."[3] James, like Elizabeth despised

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1. Strype, J., Annals, Vol. II, i, p. 561.
2. King James I, Basilicon Doron (1603) Preface paragraph 6. "First then, as to the name of Puritans, I am not ignorant, that the style thereof doth properly belong only to that vile sect among the Anabaptists called the Familie of Love, because they think themselves only pure and in a manner without sin, the only true church and the only worthy to be participants of the Sacraments, and all the rest of the world to be an abomination in the sight of God. Of this special sect I principally mean when I speak of Puritans." Cf. Ormerod, O., The Picture of a Puritan. A Relation of the opinions qualities and practices of the Anabaptists in Germanie and of the Puritans in England. (Same in four score things). (1605).
3. A Petition of the Familists to the Kings most Excellent Majesty James the First, (1604) in Rutherford, S. Op. Cit., pp. 343-344.

the Puritans[1] and had taken opportunity to compare them to another group which he had considered much worse and thus it is a rather pitiful fact that the Family dis-associate themselves so pointedly from the Puritans as though to improve their own lot. The petition states that the Puritans had been great enemies of the Good-willing for the past 25 years and now the Familists turn to call them "those of the heady humours -- who are much more zealous, religious and precise in the tything of mint, annis and cummin, and in the preferring of such like pherisaicall and self chosen outward traditions and grounds, or hypocriticall righteousnesse, then in the performing of judgement, mercy and faith, and such like true and inward righteousnesse which God doth most chiefly require and regard ---."[2]

They maintain before the king that "they have behaved in all orderlinesse and peacablenesse" and have not

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1. Creighton, M., The Age of Elizabeth, p. 125 & p. 142. "Elizabeth made this plain to Dr. Humphreys at Oxford as he led an academic procession into the Queen's presence. She offered her hand and said 'That loose gown, doctor, becomes you mighty well: I wonder your notions should be so narrow." Cf. Shakespears England, Vol. I, p. 58; Shakespeare, Wm., Twelfth Night, Vol. II, iii, pp.153-156; Carpenter, W.B., op. cit., p. 228.
2. A Petition ---, in Rutherford, S., op. cit., p. 345. This is prophetic of the Quaker-Puritan controversy. See Nuttall, G., The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Practice, p. 13.

swerved "from the established Religion in this land either in service, ceremonies, Sermons or Sacraments," neither have they "publickly spoken or inveighed either by word or writing against our late Sovereign Princesse government."[1] They admit having read the books of H.N. and say that in them they were taught "dutiful obedience toward God and Magistrates, and to live a Godly and honest life, and to love God above all things and our neighbors as ourselves, agreeing therein with all the holy Scriptures as wee understand them."[2] James is recommended to read the works of H.N. for he shows in them,

> "the unpartial service of love --- to the end that all people (when they heare or read his writings, and do thereby perceive their sinnes, and estranginges from God and Christ) might endeavour them to bring forth the due fruits of repentance, which is reformation and newnesse of life, according as all the holy Scriptures doth likewise require the same of everyone. And that they might in that sort become saved through Jesus Christ, the only Saviour of all the world."[3]

In spite of this high standard of life they are, as is H.N., falsely accused of all sorts of "Damnable errors and filthy liberty of the flesh,"[4] and that unjustly.

The petition offers to bring from Germany "where they be printed" a number of H.N.'s works and if he desired an elder who knew him to expound the "unusuall

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1. Ibid.,pp. 345-346.
2. Ibid., p. 346.
3. Ibid., pp. 346-347.
4. Loc. cit.

words, phrase or matter that may --- seem --- darke and doubtful."[1] If after this James is able to convince them of error among their doctrines they promise to amend their belief.[2]

That this petition was actually delivered into the hands of King James is doubted by Samuel Rutherford but without much reason. Fuller in agreement with most authorities thought that James had actually examined it but was wary of drawing conclusions as to the result for he wrote:

> "I finde not what effect this petition produced; whether it was slighted, and the petitioners looked upon as inconsiderable, or beheld as a few frantick folk out of their wits, which consideration alone often melted their adversaries anger into pity unto them."[3]

No record of royal action is found in the State Papers, but it was not allowed to go unchallenged for once again a Cambridge man writing anonymously attacked the petition in 1606 in A Supplication of the Family of --- examined and found derogatory, (65 pp), as did Rutherford who reproduces in entirety the petition and thoroughly criticizes it in heavily laden margins.[4]

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1. Ibid., p. 350.
2. Ibid., pp. 351-352.
3. Fuller, Thom., op. cit., Bk. X, p. 30. Fuller quotes at length from the petition.
4. Rutherford, S., op. cit., pp. 343-354.

The steady growth of the Family went on in the early Stuart period. One writer after telling of their wide influence in the last quarter of the preceeding century says, "Since that they are diminshed, I hear not, but them to be greatly increased through rueful conivances I have arguments to think; but that their increase may be hindered, I hope authority will take order."[1] Thomas is correct in being sceptical when the anonymous tract says, "the number of them is great, and most of them very rich," but this does not detract from the fact of both numerical increase and more extensive dissemination of Familist ideas. Little is found in the way of government notices, it is true, but "The many illusions to their belief leads to the opinion that there must have been a number of members."[2]

The Elizabethan stage which so freely lampooned every social quirk of the righteous and unrighteous alike took notice of the Familists. Thomas Middleton armed with a Rabelaisian mind and a caustic wit wove the streetcornered humor about the Family of Love into bedroom farce replete with slapstick comedy and shady double-meaning phrases.[3] The play The Family of Love, "acted

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1. A Supplication ---., p. 28.
2. Thomas, A. C., Op. Cit., p. 22.
3. Archer, Wm. and Lawrence, W.J., "The Playhouse," in Shakespears England, Vol. II, p. 283 ff. See index for numerous references to Thom. Middleton.

by the children of his Maiesties Revells," relates the nefarious activities of Lipsalve and Gudgeon "two gallants that only persue city lechery" and of their relations with "a brother of the Family," Dryfat a merchant, and Mistress Purge," an elder in the Family. The thread which holds the play together is the reported Familist custom of announcing themselves at a meeting by knocking and saying "here is a brother or a sister."[1] The drama designed to appeal to the ribold sensibilities of the Elizabethan capital ran from 1604 to 1607 coming into print the following year as licensed by Sir George Buck on October 12th, 1607. The preface remarks that the play had "passed the censure of the Stage with a general applause, now I leave it to be tried by the acute judgement of the famous fixed wits of the citie."[2]

How many jokes at the expense of the "Good-willing" this work inspired one cannot begin to guess but it undoubtedly confirmed the uninformed in their prejudice against the Familists. At the same time a charge of immorality coming from Thomas Middleton was not taken with great seriousness since he found the same behaviour in every segment of society.[3]

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1. Rogers, J., op. cit., "and when they came to the house of meeting, they knocke at the doore saying here is a Brother in Christ, or a Sister in Christ." (Sig. H,iiii).

2. Middleton, Thom, ibid., "Preface."

3. Wright, L.B., Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England, p. 305. Middleton wrote plays "on the dishonesty of tradesmen's wives, the knavery of doctors and apothecaries, the lechery of gallants, the hypocracy and narrowness of the Puritans, and the unpleasantness of citizens generally."

Familists were the butt of many jokes in current literature and are mentioned in The Lady of Pleasure by Sherley (Act I, Pt. 1), in the Works of Beamont and Fletcher (Vol. XIV, p. 145), in The Alchemist of Ben Janson (Works ed Giff. IV, p. 187), and in the drama A Quiet Life another of Middleton's plays (Works IV, p. 437).[1] The method of treatment in each of these instances, however, is more a measure of the public mind than an insight into the sect under scrutiny.

Despite the scurrilous treatment which the Familists received on every hand, that esoteric indefinable appeal which every mystic sect has, continued "to draw those inclined to this type of faith."[2] Small numbers continued to accept the invitation of the First Epistle of H.N. directed to the spiritually thirsty to,

> "com now all hether, to the livinge Waters which flow-fourth out of the Fountayne of Love. Com and drinke of the same livinge Waters of the Love and with those same quench and refreash your thirsty Soules."[3]

The continued drawing power of Familism occasioned another unfavorable treatment of it, that of Henry Ainsworth (1571-1622) entitled An Epistle sent unto two daughters of Warwick from H.N. -- with a refutation.

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1. Notes by A. Dyce in Middleton's Works, Vol. II, pp.103-106. See also E. Brydges, Restitute, Vol. IV, p. 140 ff which quotes freely from H.N.'s Comoedia a work in a poetic form.
2. Marsden, J.B., op. cit., pp. 138-139.
3. The First Epistle of H.N., Chapter III, No. 22.

Ainsworth takes the epistle of Nicholas and in the usual manner replies to it section by section, reproducing the entire letter which would otherwise have been almost totally unknown then and now. Ainsworth finds Familism a "religion for athiests and carnal hypocrites" more blasphemous than anything written by "Mohamet." H.N., says Ainsworth, tries to obscure the meaning of his doctrine so that he can always have as a last defense the claim that he is not understood. In the course of his attack Ainsworth, despite his hard words, makes Nicholas' position on external services and the spirit life very plain. Ceremonies are external signs "set forth by God and his ministers to direct people to the inward life of Christ in the Spirit." These services of the church do not make a man a Christian and if any man "think that he is a Christian before the Spirit of Christ is born in him (he is) a theif and a murderer" for any public confession "must stand in greater force than to be confessed with the mouth in a ceremonial service which is a baptizing with water or some other elementish confession." Ainsworth's summation of Familist "impieties" gives considerable insight into their doctrine.

Ainsworth's examination of Familism marks the end of an era of that Society's existence in England. From this time on the references to the Family of Love,

and there are a considerable number, take a more impersonal form; the reader of these cannot but feel a difference in spirit. The earlier polemical pieces were written in a defense against an insidious fifth column of mystical religion actively engaged in propagating its doctrine on every hand, but by the end of the reign of James I and during the Commonwealth anti-Familist writers are not combatting a secret society but a more difficult to isolate enemy existing primarily in the realm of idea.

CHAPTER V

Familist Doctrine in English Thought in the Period from James I to the end of the Commonwealth.

CHAPTER V

In transition to the discussion of the later bloom of Familist doctrine in England it is necessary to discuss the relationship of the Family of Love to those other parties which stood outside of the State Church or dissented from its practices.

The Familists were frequently confounded with other sects which pleased neither them nor the other elements involved. When James I in 1604 grouped Familists and Puritans together it stung the latter so deeply that Rutherford felt it worthwhile to reply some forty-four years later writing that "King James was misinformed in that , for Familists and the godly unjustly called Puritans, are as contrary as light and darknesse."[1] The Familists were not content with James' classification of them either, refusing to be linked with such "proud minded sects and heresies whatsoever."[2] The Familists likewise disdain separatists like Browne and Penry as well as the Anabaptists whom they "utterly disclaime and detest" because of their "absurd and self-conceited opinions."[3] The Anabaptists, who were the

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1. Rutherford, S., A Survey of the Spiritual Antichrist, p.343.
2. "A Petition of the Familists to King James," in Rutherford, S., Op. Cit., p. 344.
3. Loc. Cit.

supposed progenitors of Familism, while firmly denying all their continental connections, likewise were careful to maintain that they had no past or present relationship with the Family of Love or its founder Henry Nicholas. English Baptists were as anxious to dissociate themselves from Familism as Menno Simons had been to sever all connections with the Münsterites and "Davidgeorgians." It was with this in mind that the early Baptists made a declaration of their position in A Discovery of the Abominable Delusions of those who call themselves the Family of Love.[1] Helwys further confirmed this opinion as he wrote "But if it would suffice to bring my body to that they call their church, and require of me no worship, I will go when they will, only not when their false worship is performed. For I abhor the cursed doctrine of the familists herein."[2] This Baptist author goes on to declare unequivocally that he will have nothing to do with "that fantastical sect" for he and his associates "passe by the most ungodly and unwise Familists."[3]

There is no doubt that Anabaptists and Familists had little in common with one another. That Familism

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1. Cf. Underhill, E.B., Tracts on Liberty of Conscience, p. 385.,"It is evident that the Familists had nothing in common with the Baptists with whom they were often unfairly associated by their opponents." See Whiting, C.E.,Op.Cit.,p.284.
2. Helwys, Thomas, "Persecution for Religion Judg'd and Condemn'd." in Tracts on Liberty, p. 113. Cf. pp.147,164,165.
3. Ibid., p. 165.

in its transplanted state perhaps attracted certain Anabaptists into its ranks does not alter this fact. The Anabaptists in contrast to Familists were literalists who held very closely to the written word of Scripture as they understood it and were critical of any departure from this. There is also an emphasis on the ordinance of Baptism and the place of the Lord's Supper which would not be found in the Society of the Familists who ultimately deny the value of any ceremony or sacrament. The Baptists had an understanding of the church as the visible body of believers under pastors and deacons in local autonomous groups while the Familists were a society with a strange hierarchy and no real concept of the church as such. There is a point of agreement in their mutual discontent with the established church that allowed an unregenerate church membership but they differ even here, however, for the Baptist emphasis was on faith as the medium of regeneration and the binding element of fellowship while among the Familists love was the dynamic which would accomplish these ends.

The Familists were likewise confused with that strange sect the Adamites who from time to time made their appearance in history.[1] There is no real evidence

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1. Whiting, C.E., Studies in English Puritanism, pp. 284, 288; The Ranters may have been involved in this identification.

however, that the Adamites were ever in England although some extremists on the fringes of the Society may have by their actions given the impression that they were akin to that sect. It is much more likely that common gossip and such propaganda as the play, The Familie of Love together with a description of Adamites in the heresiographies gave this opinion. Underhill, Pagitt, R. L'Estrange, Petitt and the other connoiseurs of heresy, however, distinguish between Familist and Adamite.[1]

On at least one occasion the Family of Love is considered the same party as the Seekers. Thomas Helwys, the General Baptist, makes their doctrine equal when he classifies in one breath the "unwise Familists and scattered flock, that say he (Christ) is in the desert, that is, no where to be found in the profession of the gospell according to the ordinances."[2] On another occasion he speaks of their common view of baptism[3] and in replying to their error uses the name Familist alone.[4]

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1. Underhill, T., Hell Broke Loose, 1660; Pagitt, E., Heresiography, 1636,1661, pp. 81 & 91; L'Estrange, R., A Further Discovery of the Plot, 1680; Petitt, Visions of Reformation, 1683; Davis, J., Apocalypsis, p. 78, "The Postboy," 1706, pp. 427-428.
2. "An Advertisament or admonition unto the Congregations" (1611), p. 51 quoted from Burrage, op. cit., Vol.I,p.215. Burrage said that "Scattered flock" was a name given to the seekers prior to 1620.
3. "Persecution for Religion Judg'd and Condemn'd," p.164 as reproduced in Tracts on Liberty of Conscience edited by E. B. Underhill.
4. Ibid., p. 165.

It is entirely conceivable that at this point the Seekers were related to the Family of Love and may have originated from them but they developed into a separate party by 1620.[1] William Penn notes certain "tender" people who "came forth" in "the last age" just before the rise of the Society of Friends and he names them Seekers or the Family of Love as though there was no clear cut distinction between them.[2] Some of the Seekers had similar beliefs to the Familists but there was such a diversity of opinion among the Seekers themselves that it would be extremely unlikely that many of them arose out of the Family of Love. The classification of various Seeker elements in The Great Plot for Restoring Popery[3] speaks of those who believed in the existence of a true church but considered themselves above authority and those who held that the company of true believers had outgrown all externals.[4] John Jackson distinguishes Seekers of three persuasions; those against all ordinances, those who do not see sufficient ground for the present practice

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1. Cf. Burrage, op. cit, Vol. I, p. 214, "Somewhat closely allied to the Familists, but apparently distinct, though perhaps originally derived from them, were the English Seekers." Burrage more definitely relates the Seekers to the Legatine Arians.
2. Penn, Wm., "Preface," p. V, to A Journal of George Fox.
3. London, 1663.
4. Whitney, C.E., op. cit.,

of ordinances and those who are above or beyond all ordinances.[1]

It may well be that those divisions of the Seekers who felt that they had attained a spiritual state which raised them above need for ordinances or who felt that all true believers had outgrown ordinances were so persuaded by Familist teaching either from individuals or the reading of H.N.'s books.

The Familists were identified in The Ranters Bible (1650) as a sect of the Ranters despite the fact that Familism had been active in England for fifty years before Ranterism was heard of.[2] The Familists of Love, Shelomethites, Clements, Athians, Nicolaitanes, Marcionites, and Seleucian Donatists all of which would have been difficult to find in England in 1650[3], are named in the above as subdivisions of the Ranters. There seems to be, however, a relationship between the people called Ranters and Familist doctrine, for in that wide base of religious agitation the "high flown" Christology and perfectionist soteriology deposited in English thinking by Familism could easily enough have been combined with Ranterism as

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1. "A Doubt Resolved or Satisfaction for Seekers," 1655, pp. 15 ff.
2. Barclay, R., The Inner Life etc., p. 414. "The Ranters appeared in England under that name, not earlier than 1640-1641.
3. Whiting, C.E., op. cit., p. 273.

it often was in the springs from which Henry Nicholas first drew it. It is this mystical melting pot now denominated Familist-Ranterism which served as a school for men like James Nayler and others of similar stamp.[1]

To relate the Familist Society as discussed in this chapter with the Ranters, however, is a mistake for though Familist opinions were present in Ranter thinking, there was no organized subdivision of the extremists which could be termed the Familists of Love.[2] The contemporary writers who so speak of them are groping in the dark trying to bound these ephemeral sects which in reality had no solid existence as found among the early Baptists and Quakers. It is quite probable that no Familist society, as known in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I, existed by the time the Ranters came to public attention.

Among all of these parties and types of religion there was, despite the claims of their leaders that they were totally isolated from one another, a considerable turnover of membership. It was quite common for an in-

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1. Nuttall, G. F., James Nayler: A Fresh Approach, esp. p. 3. Dr. Nuttall includes in this milieu the Behmenists as led by Dr. Pordage. Cf. Bax, B., op. cit., p. 368.
2. Barclay, R., Anarchy of the Ranters makes the Ranters a "moderate" descendant of the Münster Anabaptist party in England. The younger Robert Barclay spoke of the Brethren of the Free Spirit as coming from Holland, The Inner Life etc., pp. 414 ff.

dependently minded sectary of unstable personality to run the gamut of sects, societies and parties without any difficulty. John Salmon, author of Heights in Depths and Depths in Heights, went from the Church of England, to Presbyterianism, to Independency, to Baptist and finding himself still dissatisfied he founded a variety of religion all his own.[1] It is not wondered that English sectaries were more than once charged with not being particular about tenets of belief even to the point where it was said that they had no specific convictions whatsoever.[2] Robert Baillie of Glasgow found the English sectaries worse than the Dutch for though the latter were divided they had a zeal for what they believed but "not so the English" for,

> "Among the English Sectaries there appears no zeal at all for anything they call truth: a man now among them may run through the whole circle or errors, from Independence to Anti-paedobaptism, from hence to Arminianism, from this to Antinomianism, thereafter to the Seekers, thence to the Antitrinitarians, the Familists, the Atheists or whether he will, and and no church censure at all be executed against him, nor any of his fellows abstain from his company as an excommunicated Heretick, but if he make a profession of piety not withstanding of all his opinions he shall be entertained as a Saint."[3]

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1. Barclay, R., The Inner Life, etc., p. 429.
2. Baillie, R., Anabaptism, (1647), p. 96. "many -- are become Seekers denying all churches, all officers, all ordinances." Cf. p. 109. Nuttall, G., op. cit., p. 13.
3. Ibid., p. 104.

Just as among the Puritans those who "had the root of the matter" were acceptable among the elect so among the common people of the various parties, mystical and otherwise, there was a cult of holy living which readily accepted those who showed the fruits of Christianity in their daily lives and who spoke the cant of "spiritual" religion. This cult ran across all boundries of individual differences and the transfer from one party to another demanded little change of life or allegiance for the emphasis was on "inner-experience" with Christ. Thus while Baillie has overpainted this picture, somewhat, and perhaps his illustrations were not entirely well chosen he has pointed out a significant fact. This was an age in which England was full of persons who were adrift from any established anchorage; they were "earnest seekers for the truth" who were "in their earnestness multiplying strange doctrines and setting up different sects to emphasize the various aspects of truth which appealed to each one."[1] In the time of the Civil War and after with the laxity of control and the introduction of that dangerous blessing freedom religious individualism expressed itself very openly. Marsden writes:

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1. Emmot, E.B., A Short History of Quakerism, p. 74. Edwards, T. in Gangraena notes 199 sects. See also Whiting, C.E., Op. cit., pp. 233 and 234-321.

> "The distractions of the times now suspended the restraints of church discipline; opinions monstrous and prodigious started up every day, and were broached with impunity in public and in private, and multitudes were led astray. The number of new sects, religious and political, with which England swarmed appears almost incredible. The sober puritans were confounded. The state of England reminded them of the fabulous description of the sands of Libya, where scorching suns produce new monsters every year."[1]

Turning now to the age of Familism's second bloom in England it is noticed that there was up to 1660 a tremendous outpouring of devotional literature in England and a new emphasis on individual interpretation of the Scriptures.[2] The publication of the Authorized Version of the Bible in 1611 encouraged both of these trends in personal religion. There was also in London, now a metropolis of over half a million population, an outbreak of "tub oratory," the merchants and moneyed classes which formed the backbone of Presbyterianism despising the upstart mechanics who "took upon themselves male and female alike to preach."[3] The first half of the 17th century also "witnessed a growth of mysticism" and a belief in direct spiritual guidance."[4] Many who held these views

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1. Marsden, J.B., The Later Puritans, p. 223.
2. Davies, G., The Early Stuarts, pp. 192-193.
3. Edwards, T., Gangraena, Part I, p. 82.
4. Moorman, J.R.H., A History of the Church of England, p.247. Cf. Jones, R.M., op. cit., pp. 482 ff. Marsden, J.B., op. cit., pp. 234 ff.

"shrouding themselves at first under the names of Independents and Separatists."[1] As time went on, however, those secretly inclined toward mystical religion began to gather themselves into small parties which were quite insignificant and which "would probably have remained detached and largely unknown to one another had not George Fox rallied them by his vitality, courage and inspiration."[2] These small parties were influenced by Continental thought on spiritual religion through writings translated early in the century and passed from hand to hand in manuscript form until printed during the commonwealth. The writings of Henry Nicholas, however, had been circulated in book form since about 1574 and had been continually imported from Holland to meet the demands for mystical literature.

It was by "heretical channels" and "subterranean tributaries" that religion centering on the Holy Spirit was introduced into England for prior to Baxter and Owen there was "little explicit orthodox teaching about the doctrine of the Holy Spirit."[3] Baxter and other Puritans tell of the emptiness of preaching during the days of their youth denouncing "the profane trash which was

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1. Whiting, C.E., op. cit., p. 233. Cf. Underhill, T., op. cit., 1660.
2. Moorman, J.R.H., op. cit., p. 248.
3. Nuttall, G., op. cit., p. 15.

heard in the Church of England pulpits"[1] in the first third of the 17th century. This spiritual drought followed by the unpopular Laudian Régime with its irritating materialistic externalism incubated in London conventicals the seed that came to full growth in the almost explosive expansion of freedom in the Commonwealth. These conditions gave scope to the developing Familistic ideology seeping into many areas of English society. It was in these revolutionary days that Familism brought before public attention and "gave wide vogue to many doctrines and practices generally supposed to have originated with the Quakers" for at its best the teaching of Henry Nicholas was "the exponent of a very lofty type of mystical religion."[2] There is no question but that the Family of Love through its propaganda had as much to do with the formation of the mystical atmosphere abroad as any other single fact including the writings of Jacob Boehme.[3] It seems likely that the writings of the Family of Love had prepared an element of English religious thinkers for the acceptance of Boehme's writings[4] and that they were used side by side in the

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1. Carpenter, W.B., History of the Church of England, p. 264. Cf. Russel, E., The History of Quakerism, p.13. "The English pulpit was at a low ebb during the period." (1620 and after)
2. Jones, R.M., op. cit., p. 428.
3. Ibid., p. 494.
4. Marsden, J.B., The Early Puritans, p. 138.

studies of lovers of mystical lore. That there was much in H.N.'s books which was obscure and even ridiculous is easy to see and yet these works were an important part of the reserve of literary material employed in forming left-wing Puritanism as well as individual thought. From this reserve the works of Henry Nicholas were drawn, each man taking what he desired for his own use and leaving what he saw as worthless. An example of this is provided in the explanatory note which Theodore Jennings the printer inserts on the title pages of Terra Pacis which he imprinted for Samuel Satterthwaite.

> "Although I dissent in some things as dark and doubtful to me, yet spiritual Knowledge, Justification, Sanctification, and the new Creature, Light, Life, Love, Righteousness, inward Peace, Joy in the Holy Spirit, Union, Communion, and fellowship with the Father, with his Son Jesus Christ, and with all that live in Holiness, Light and Life, flowing to all men in an upright and peaceable, pure, and godly conversation, perservering in love, which is all in all, being the principal subject and spiritual part of this Treatise set forth in parables, together with Self-denial, taking up the cross, entering in at the straight gate, and walking in the narrow way that leadeth into life, discovering the broad way, and those that walk in it, with danger and cure; that God alone in love may be exalted in that day. Now that Truth may freely pass, and that Error may be discovered, reproved, corrected and the guilty (if possible) be convinced and reformed: Therefore I say to this Epistle and the ensuing Treatise."[1]
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> --June the 6th 1649, Imprimature

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1. Terra Pacis, London: 1649.

There were many others like Jennings who dissented in some things but who found the Familist writings a source of spiritual satisfaction and encouraging devotional reading. The contemporary humanistic stress on the right of each man to interpret the Scripture for himself made very acceptable the ten or twenty proof texts employed on each page of H.N.'s books. Nor was this selective style of reading new for it undoubtedly had been employed by those in high places of the realm who in the time of Elizabeth and James had imbibed Familist ideas yet never mixed in the societies largely made up of artisans.

Most casual investigators have taken the numerous references to the Familists in this period as proof of the activities of an organized society as found in the period prior to 1610, but closer examinations indicate not so much a growing party as a pervasive influence. There are, it is true, appearances of Familist type "communalities" but the "Good-willing-ones" as known in Elizabethan England had vanished and Familism had become instead an influence, or a way of thought, or an approach to the essence of Christianity. Thus Benjamin Bourne in The Description and Confutation of the Mystical Antichrist (1646) writes not against the Family of Love but "against many Antichristian Familistical doctrines which are

frequently preached and printed in England."[1] "Familist" had become an appellation readily applied to all who gave precedence to the inner work of the Holy Spirit over the outer Word; or who preached of "a ladder of perfection;" or whose Christology and conception of Sonship was "high flown." Those who so applied "Familist" are witnesses to the active dynamic of Henry Nicholas' doctrine even though they were not always correct in their diagnosis.

In this period then there is a breakdown of the Family of Love because of its unacceptable crudities in organization and its claims concerning the prophetic ministry of its founder. This very collapse of the Society proper and its subsequent disappearance was not a hindrance but a help to the spread of Familist leaven in England. The course of events after 1620 supports this view.

Among the last clear witnesses to the existence of the Family of Love was Edmond Jessop, one of the many religious peripatetics who late in the reign of James I were shopping about London for "some new thing." In about 1520, while still an Anabaptist, Jessop was

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1. London, 1646. Frontpiece, Rutherford, S, Op. Cit. Rutherford noticed Familist "doctrine" in Saltmarsh, Dell, etc. Even Etherington's A Brief Discovery only relates Randall to Familist doctrines and not to a society.

attracted to Familism by preaching he heard in conventicles and became for a time a member of the Family of Love but he soon found their doctrine too "high" for his liking. Breaking off his connection with them and with the Anabaptists he had previously followed he published an exposé, much like a modern "ex-communist," of that which he had learned in confidential meetings. His charges against the Familists show surprisingly little originality for one so much "in the know" but one paragraph is of special interest.

> "These horrible blasphemies, with divers others, doth this H.N. and his Family teach to be the everlasting Gospel, which the Angell is said to preach in Revelation 14:6 and himself to be the Angell, yea and the Archangell, which is said to sound the great and last trump, Revelation 11:15. They professe greater love to the Church of Rome, and to her idolatries and superstitions, then they do to any church else---except themselves. They wickedly abuse these words of Christ, I must walke to day, and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected: and say, that by to day is meant the time of Jesus Christ and his Apostles: and by to morrow, all the time of the religion of the Church of Rome: and by the third day, this their day of H.N. and his Family, wherein they will have Christ to be perfected."[1]

Aside from the fact that Jessop in his discussion of Anabaptists notes that some kind of Familistical group was meeting in 1620 and propagating mystical religion,

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1. Jessop, E., A Discovery of the Errors of the English Anabaptists, 1623, pp. 90-91. Cf. Moore, H. Theological Works, pp. 176, 238.

there is something else to be noted. This Society, he said, had named their teaching the "everlasting Gospel" deriving the name from Revelation 14:6. This in itself would mean nothing had he not related it to a progressive three-age concept of history making the second age the period under the Roman Catholic Church. These ideas bear a striking similarity to the Joachimite teaching which had permeated medieval Europe.[1]

In the same decade a bitter struggle arose between John Etherington, a boxmaker, and Stephen Denison, vicar of St. Catharine Cree, which continued for twenty-five years.[2] Denison brought Etherington before the authorities on the charge of being a Familist, which the latter stoutly denied presenting as evidence a book which he wrote against the Anabaptists but his protestations were unavailing and he was sentenced to three years in prison. The heresiographer Pagitt says he recanted[3] but Etherington insisted that he only denied that which he had never preached. Recant or not he stood at St. Paul's Cross for three hours on February 11th, 1627 and listened silently as his arch-enemy Stephen Denison preached a recantation sermon entitled, "The White Wolfe -- Wherein

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1. This subject will be returned to in the following chapters.
2. Whiting, C.E., Op. cit., p. 289.
3. Pagitt, E., Heresiography, pp. 108-109, Cf. p. 127.

faction is unmasked especially the Hethertonian Factions."[1] Etherington was specifically charged with persuading members of Denison's parish to follow the "white wolfe" of mystical religion, with the distributing of "linsey woolsey books," and with being an unlawful teacher of conventicles. The boxmaker turned preacher admitted that he had taught in conventicles but he argued in defense that while Caeser could appoint public places of worship he could not deny private worship. Denison was led to bring accusation against Etherington since the latter had publicly declared that the Church of England was not a true church, that ordination did not make a true minister, and that the sacraments conferred no grace.[2] This would not have made Etherington a Familist but it seems that his associates and the books which he distributed were of a semi-pantheistic mystical nature. The conventicles in which he taught no doubt had many Familistically inclined individuals attending and the books of H.N. were passed from hand to hand among this element. That Etherington himself was ever a member of the Society of Familists is doubtful.

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1. London, 1627.
2. Jones, R.M., Studies in Mystical Religion, p. 446.

From his cell in 1627 Etherington replied to Denison with The Defense of John Etherington against Stephen Denison and his Witness in which he accused his adversary of immorality and Calvinism; in his opinion two equally grave sins. He followed this with another attack entitled The Deeds of Dr. Denison a little more Manifest,[1] adding fuel to the fire. After his release from prison Etherington continued to teach that external ceremonies do not bring salvation and that "no baptism has any virtue except a baptism in a thousand tears."[2]

Those who take the evidence to mean that Etherington had been a Familist in 1623 make much of his change of character between that time and 1645 when he issued the tract A Brief Discovery of the Blasphemous Doctrine Of Familism. At first reading of A Brief Discovery one is left with the uneasy feeling that it is, despite some derisive remarks, a subtle piece of Familist propaganda, but a second reading convinces one that he was only interested in further defending himself from earlier charges. The title page indicates that the immediate occasion of A Brief Discovery was that the doctrine of

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1. Both of these were reprinted. The Defense in 1641 and The Deeds of Dr. Denison in 1642.
2. Etherington as quoted in Denison's The White Wolfe.

H.N. was "now very boldly taught by one Mr. Randall, and sundry others in and about the citie of London, whom multitudes of people follow, and which Doctrine may embrace."[1] Named with Randall are Dr. Everet, one Shaw, Dr. Gill and Dr. Pordage, as preachers of Familism. "Everet" is John Everard, who translated many mystical writings and who in 1636 was charged indifferently with Familism, Antinomianism and Anabaptism[2] Dr. Pordage was a student-teacher of the writings of Boehme and founded a theosophical society which came to be known as the Philadelphians.[3] None of these men were Familists except in the broadest sense of the term, indicating that they held ideas in common with those of Henry Nicholas.

Overleaf from the titlepage Etherington gives "The summe or maine points of the Doctrine of H.N."

> 1. That Christ is already come in his glory from the right hand of God to judge the quick and the dead.
>
> 2. That the great and last Trumpet now soundeth and they that sleep in Christ are raised from the dead; the sting of death, which is sin, taken away, and death swallowed up in victory.
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> 3. That holinesse, or the annointing of the Holy Ghost, and the Sabbath is Christ; and the sin which they call the contrary annointing, and child of the Devill, is the Antichrist.

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1. Etherington, J., A Brief Discovery--, Title page.
2. Vian, Alsager, "John Everard," in D.N.B., Jones, R.M., Spiritual Reformers.
3. Whiting, C.E., Op. Cit., p. 298. Cf. Deering, Charles, Nottinghamia vetus et nova (1751), pp. 47-49.

> 4. That all the promises of God, and whatsoever is written and foretold in the Scripture, concerning the everlasting Kingdom of Christ, and his Saints, becometh now in this present day of H.N.'s Family, fulfilled.
>
> 5. That the seat or throne of judgement whereon Christ sitteth, is the communiality of the Family of Love, whereof H.N. is the oldest Father. And he and they are Godded with God; and God manned with them.
>
> 6. That the way and manner of judging is by the new Evangelie of H.N. The Parabolic sayings and mystical sentences which he hath written and published, and the Elders or perfect holy ones of the Family, hold forth to the world.

Etherington is saying in essence that this is what Randall is teaching though he does not speak of H.N. or Familism, yet when Etherington gives four specific points of that preacher's doctrine they are such as could be found in several of the mystical systems with which Randall was acquainted. When the preacher in the Spittal yard said that, "A man baptized with the Holy Ghost, knew all things even as God knew all things,"[1] he was not giving an exclusively Familist idea, nor was he when he said that "every creature in the first estate of creation, was God, because they were made by the Word of God."[2] The fact that there were great meetings "in a house within the Spittle-yard without Bishops gate, neer London,"[3] does not prove an active Familist

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1. A Brief Discovery--, p. 2.
2. Ibid., p. 4.
3. Ibid., pp. 1 and 10.

Society though it may well have been that Etherington had learned from the inside that Randall had an interest in the writings of Henry Nicholas for a man of his views undoubtedly had read them. It would however, have taken more deeply philosophical works to satisfy a mind like Randall's but he may well have recommended H.N.'s works to initiates of inner light theology.[1]

The "Laudian Regime" (1633-1645) made a real contribution to the growth of inner light theology in England for it was insistent enough to arouse deep-seated resentment and yet not severe enough to crush it. Laud's method was "to proceed from the external to the internal" believing "that habits of outward reverence would lead insensibly to inward reverence of soul."[2] The bitter struggle and resultant religious chaos gave opportunity for the germinating seed of Familist and Boehmenist thought to spring to life.

Thus on the eve of the Civil War the various small separatist parties, mystical sects and individual radicals took advantage of the "cold war" already in progress and began to agitate for their own ends. The numerous tracts against these elements provide in their

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1. London was filled with such "Familistical Edification." Similar to Randall was one John Eaton who in 1642 published Honey-Combe of Free Justification. See Haller, Wm. Tracts on Liberty, Vol. I, p. 43.
2. Patterson, M.W., A History of the Church of England, p.337.

names a glimpse into the spirit of the time. In 1641 there appeared "A Swarme of Sectaries and Schismatiques, wherein is discovered the strange preaching (or prating) of Coblers; Tinkers -- and Chymney Sweepers," "A Discovery of 29 sects here in London," "Religious Enemies. With a brief and ingenious Relation, as by Anabaptists, Brownists, Papists, Familiarists, Athèists, Foolists, sawcily presumed to tosse Religion in a Blanquet," "New Preachers, new Greene the feltmaker, Spencer the horse-rubber, Quartmere the brewers clarke," "A Tale in a Tub; or, a Tub lecture, as it was delivered by My-heele Mend-soale, an inspired Brownist." In this same year Familism received the same vitriolic criticism as the other innovations in religion.

Among the attacks on the Family of Love few are so fantastic as that supposedly delivered by a Mrs. Susanna Snow in 1641.[1] "A Description of the Sect called the Family of Love," is the story of a young woman who "had not long gladdened the Hearts of her parents with virtuous and dutiful Behaviour when the Devil, arch Enemy to Mankind sought to subvert and eradicate this

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1. "A Description of the Sect called the Family of Love: with their common place of Residence. Being discovered by one Mrs. Susanna Snow, of Perford near Chertsey, in the County of Surrey." London, 1641. Harleian Miscellany Vol. III, p. 54 ff.

well planted Virtue---." The young woman hears of the Familists at Bagshot six miles from her home and bluffs her way into their society remaining with them a week. She discovers that their saints are Ovid, Priapus and their God is Cupid and that their public discussions are obscene. After observing their Prayers, Preaching, Christenings and Buryings, she is seduced by the leader, and then returns home in a state of insanity. Her parents in despair send for the godly Mr. Ybder of Oxford who speaks to her and prays for her,

> "but then she began to be very troublesome and --- called for some Wine, for she was very thirsty she said; Wine was brought to her in a Venice-glass; she looked very wildely --- and then threw the glass to the ground, with these Words 'That it was as impossible for her to be saved as for the Glass to rebound into her Hand unbroken, which contrary to the expectation of all this Glass did; --- and thus by the Mercy of God was this Gentlewoman delivered."

The story does not have the ring of sincere truth but is rather the story of an unbalanced mind, embroidered by local gossip, and told by an author who had little regard for fact. The tale may have as its foundation an actual meeting of a society of London Ranters, or some other group, in Birchwood, Surrey, but if either the doctrine or the behaviour of the Party in the story is at all true they were not Familists. Whatever the facts the author has little positive information for the

investigator of Familism though t he pamphlet marks the incorrect opinion of contemporary wits and sceptics that the Family was more addicted to carnal than spiritual love.

Samuel Rutherford in 1648 turned from his usual saintly role to attack those whom he called "the Familists of our time." The title of his book reveals the direction taken by its contents; A Survey of the Spritual Antichristian Doctrine of John Saltmarsh, and Will Del, the present Preachers of the Army now in England, and of Robert Town, Tob. Cresp, H. Denne, Eaton and Others. The purpose of the author is to relate the left-wing Puritans to the teachings of Henry Nicholas and it must be admitted that there is a similarity. Rutherford does not treat the Familists as a party but, taking passages from the various writings of H.N., extracts his teaching and compares it to Saltmarsh, Del and the others. "M.Del and H. Nicholas the Familist," wrote Rutherford, "sympathize in the same Grammer, and it's to be feared in the same doctrine touching God manifested in the flesh."[1] Rutherford never points to an existing Family of Love but repeatedly compares doctrinal points from his various opponents with quotations chiefly from Henry Nicholas though other 16th century sources are employed.

Thomas Fuller the historian in 1665 did not feel

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1. A Survey --. p. 57.

that there was an extant sect of Familists and raises the question as to what has happened to them.

> "Some will say 'where are these Familists now-a-days? Are they utterly extinct or are they lost in the heap of other sects, or are they concealed under a new name? The last is most probable. This Family which shut their doors before keeps open house now. Yea, Family is too narrow a name for them for they are grown so numerous."[1]

By this "new name" he goes on to make clear that he meant the "children of light," the Quakers, who by this period were very active. That the Quakers were not infrequently thought of as the successors of the Familists is seen in the criticism of Henry Hallywell of Sussex author of An Account of Familism as it is revived and propagated by the Quakers (1673). This author says that while old Familism is dead it has been resucitated in a worse form. Charles Leslie likewise speaks of Familists as forerunners of the Quakers but hints that small elements of the old Familists may still be active among the heretics.[2] William Penn in his preface to George Fox's Journal sees Familists as part of the series of steps that led from the Reformation to Quakerism,[3] and as such they have been superseded: they were of "the last age."

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1. Fuller, T. Church History, XVII Cent., Bk. X, p. 14.
2. Leslie, Charles, Theological Works, Vol. VI, pp.312,315.
3. Reformation, Puritanism, Seekers and Familists, Quakers, "The last age did set some steps toward it." Penn. Wm., in Preface to A Journal of George Fox (Leeds,1836 ed), pp. VI-X.

Henry More (1614-1687),[1] the Cambridge Platonist, in his letters to the Countess Conway,[2] and in his collected theological and philosophical writings, at first seems to be dealing with Familism as though it were a very live issue.

> "What indearing Evidence or Argument, has this Mercer of Amsterdam given you of true Compassion and Love to Mankind, that you should vaunt him?--Tell me therefore, O ye conceitedly enspired, whose phancies have blown you above Gospel-dispensations--- why do you lay aside Christ---and chuse for your Guide a mere Allegorical Whiffler,an Idol-Puppet dressed up in words and phrases filched out of Scripture?"[3]

More turns his attack to the founding of the Family of Love, calling it "the gross Imposture of that old Enthusiast of Amsterdam," who teaches love but,

> "who giving no evidence of any such love --- only tumbles out a Rhapsody of swelling Words, distorted Allegories, and flight Allusions to the History of Scripture, intermingling them or sprinkling them ever and anon with the specious Name of Love --- would give out himself such a Master of this Mystery, as that Christianity must be superannuated, and all the devotional Homage due our Savious laid aside, all his Offices silenced, his Passion slighted, nay derided, his visible return to Judgement anticipated and eluded, his Resurrection and Ascension misbelieved, and the Promise of Eternal Life swallowed up in--"

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1. Overton, J.H., "Henry More," in D.N.B. More who spent his life at Cambridge was a mystic himself of a curious kind. Law called him "A Babylonish philosopher." Cf. Tulloch's Rational Theology; Powicke, F.J., The Cambridge Platonists, pp. 150-173.
2. Nicholson, M.H., Conway Letters.
3. More, Henry, Op. Cit., p. 258.

> "the present glorious Enjoyments and Enrichments of them that will give up their Soundness of Judgement and Reason to be led about with the May-games and Morrice-dances of that sweet Sect that have usurped to themselves the title of the Family of Love."[1]

All this might appear to deal with a sect active at the period but it is unlikely. The appeal is not directly to Familists to pepent but purely a rhetorical treatment as in his dealings with David George and his followers.[2] Henry More moved by the fact that his close friend Lady Conway had become friendly to the Quakers, turned his pleadings to her in letters, and his polemics against the Quakers in his writings. He is using Familism as a stick with which to beat the Quakers, genuinely convinced that the Good-willing are the seed from which the Quakers sprang. More resurrected "that grand Enthusiast of Amsterdam" only to expose Familism's "more deformed offspring Quakerism." His purpose is incrimination by association thus when he speaks in one paragraph of Familism as an "obscure and skulking Monster" he turns in the next to write:

> "I confess my so large Excursions and frequent Expostulations with Familists and Quakers, are not very ornamental to my discourse --- But I do not repent of these my pains since so fundamental a -- "

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1. More, H., Op. Cit., p. 257.
2. More, H., A Collection of Philosophical Writings, "Enthusiasmus Triumphatus," pp. 24-28.

> "Discovery of the unsoundness and Madness of these Sects cannot, I think but be effectual for preventing their spreading hereafter."[1]

If there is an issue to be faced it is not Familism as a movement but Familism as an idea. This is seen in the contrast between More's incisive and documental treatment of Quakerism as a dynamic group, and his vague and historical dealing with Familism as a museum piece. Quakerism was an organized force while Familism was a difficult to isolate leaven in society. More gives a valuable witness to the action of that leaven as he quotes from The Glasse of Righetousness, The Introduction to the Glasse of Righteousness, The Prophesie of the Spirit of Love, Exhortation of H.N., Evangelium Regni, Revelatio Dei, The Seven Deadly Sins, The Epistles of H.N., Mirabilia Opera Dei and The Spiritual Land of Peace. He does not mention the earlier Cambridge polemicists but from his references it is seen he has used them.

There is in one of More's letters a paragraph which well may give the clue to what happened to most of the Familist remnant in the 1650's.

> "I was told by one, when I went up to London last, who was acquainted with the Familists, and in a manner received ---"

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1. Ibid., Theological Works, (Ed. 1708). Preface p. IV. More deals with Familism directly on pp. 171-188 and pp. 258-260.

> "into their sect, that those very Familists, that he was acquainted withall, to the number of about twenty, was downright Quakers as soone as that forme appeared."[1]

Even considering that More was seeking to find any possible material to blacken the Quaker name, this is valuable information for it uncovers a scene otherwise impossible to reconstruct. It shows the remnants of a Familist Society at the time of the rise of Quakerism, hints at their seeking for higher level of their type of worship, and pictures them recognizing without hesitation the fulfillment of what Henry Nicholas had been groping in the dark to find. This would seem to support the argument that the defective organization, the weakness of over-mysticism, and the various obscurities of Familism were overcome by George Fox so that "all that was essential" in the Familist message "was being proclaimed by the Quakers under a wiser leadership and in a wider spirit of human brotherhood."[2]

Other mentions of Familism indicate that they were not readily forgotten. Simon Ford in an Assize sermon at Reading on February 28, 1653 noticed the presence of Familism in that town along with a great

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1. Conway Letters, p. 418. More to Lady Conway, Jan. 10, 1670.
2. Emmott, E. B., A Short History of Quakerism, p. 75.

numer of other "heresies."[1] In 1658 George Fox met with a group of Ranters at Leek and was unopposed except by a woman presumably of the Family of Love.[2] More, writing to Lady Conway, notes that he has met a "Bishop's son of Scotland" who says "he has lived this many yeeres near a town that abounded with Familists."[3] The reference in John Evelyn's Diary dated June 16th, 1687, must be examined more closely.

> "But this is not so remarkable as an addresse of the week before, (as I was assur'd by one present) of some of the Family of Love: His majesty ask'd them what this worship consisted in, and how many their party might consist of; they told him their custom was to reade the Scripture and then to preach, but did not give any further account onely said that for the rest they were a sort of refin'd Quakers, but their number very small, not consisting as they say'd, of above threescore in all, and those chiefly belonging to the Isle of Ely."[4]

This party may well have been a genuine survival of the early societies of Familists which swarmed in the Ely area from 1570 on. It was these "stubborn heretics" which had aroused the ire of several Cambridge University polemicists whose efforts had only entrenched them even

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1. Pennney, E., A Journal of George Fox, (1911), Vol.I,p.430.
2. Braithwaite, W..C., The Beginnings of Quakerism, p.392.
3. Conway Letters, July 14, 1671, pp. 341-342.
4. Diary of John Evelyn, June 16, 1687. Also quoted in Thomas, C.A., The Family of Love, p. 25; Jones, R.M., A Study of Mystical Religion, p. 447., Journal of the Friends Historical Society, Vol. I, No. 2, May 1904.

deeper. It is curious that they should describe themselves as "a sort of refin'd Quaker" thus relating themselves to that group in the realm of idea. If they are remnant of the Family of Love they give a hint at their simple method of worship, reading of the Bible with a preaching commentary, the method of a society and not a church.

It may have been that they were only what they claimed to be, "a sort of refin'd Quaker," for it was only "one present" who gave the assurance that they were of the Family of Love. It might have been that the witness noticed an unusual emphasis on love in their meeting (a Quaker emphasis) and concluded that they were of the Family of Love. They may even have alluded to themselves as a family which was not unknown among the Quakers and led the observer thus to this assumption.[1] A case of this appears in a letter of July 23, 1656 written by William Caton after meeting Fox. "When I am with our beloved, in the enjoyment of him, I enjoy thee and the rest of the family of love, of which he is the head, yet hath become servant of all."[2] Such a usage would have conveyed the impression of Evelyn's source only one idea: that this was the Family of Love. A third

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1. The Behmenists under Dr. Pordage also were called a Family.
2. Swarthmore Collection i,313. See Braithwaite, W.C. The Beginnings of Quakerism, p. 238.

possible interpretation of this diary entry would make this "party" a point of contact between Familists and Quakers. The "refin'd Quakers" would then be modified Familists who like those of London, as related by More, early became Quakers perhaps during one of Fox's visits in the area, but retained certain peculiarities which merited them the adjective "refin'd."[1]

Even in the next century references to Familism still are found. Jeremiah Collier is among those who hold that Familism did not readily disappear from the life of England. "His (H.N.'s) opinions died not with him, but exist at this day in new modifications."[2] Charles Leslie in the 1721 edition of his Theological Works, finds Familist influence present in their literature. "For the Books of these forenam'd Sectaries are many of them still in being, and the Quakers do like and approve of their doctrine."[3] As late as 1755 Samuel Johnson has an entry "Familist" in his Dictionary of the English Language, in which the unfavorable opinion of the heresiographers is still repeated.

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1. Cf. Neal, History of the Puritans, Vol. I, p. 227. Neal speaks of the Familists as "something akin to the Quakers among ourselves."
2. Collier, Jeremiah, Ecclesiastical History of Great Britain, (1708-1714) Vol. VI, p. 69 n.
3. Leslie, C., Theological Works, p. 609.

Samuel Johnson's illustrative use of "Familist" raises again the question of the morals of this society. "Though the familists, libertines, and anabaptists, stand in opposition to papists; yet the great fowler of souls catcheth them all with the same foul birdlime of impure lusts." This is typical of the charges of immorality pressed against the House of Love, the very name of which gave opportunity for the risque remarks of pundits and prelates alike,[1] and yet from the beginning of the Society its invitation to membership carried the note of repentance. "Come also now hether, all yee Men-sinners and Women-sinners in how many Sinnes or Wickednesses so-ever yee have walked and issued: com and turne you from all your Abominations or Iniquities: and shew-fourth upright Confessing of your Sinnes and upright Repentance for the same er-ever the Wrath of the Lord com upon you."[2] Marsden while noting that the "grave insinuation (of immorality) is utterly without support" goes on to remark that the charges were revived generally "by ignorant persons of careless if not licentious minds."

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1. Nippold, F., set the pace for a very unfair treatment of Familists, declaring them to be Antinomian, and accepting uncritically earlier sources. Barclay comments that Nippold "Does not furnish us with evidence sufficient to show that this (Antinomianism) was the practical effect of their teaching. Barclay, R., Inner Life of the Religious Society of the Commonwealth, p. 28.
2. The First Epistle, III, No. 7.

This has been true "whenever a Christian communion has insisted upon that doctrine of that divine love which God by his Spirit diffuses in the soul, and of that mutual and warm affection which believers owe to one another."[1] The testimony of Henry Nicholas as to his own religious aspirations runs quite contrary to that of the elders of the Dutch Church in London.[2] His purpose was to convince the "Communiality of Love", of the need for righteousness in personality and deed as well as positionally.

> "I held my own human nature straight unto all virtue and righteous dealings to do the Lord's will in all my doings. I passed under the obedience of love with my human nature to the intent to obtain the virtuous disposition of love and to be incorporated to the same with soul and body, and with all the senses and thoughts of my human nature, and so the Lord received me into the Grace of His Love and gave me inheritance with Christ and His saints in His heavenly riches, and revealed His last will unto me."[3]

It has often been assumed that the Familists and Naaktloopers were closely associated but they are unrelated despite the efforts of unfriendly critics to prove from Nicholas' expressions about "the naked clearness" and "the naked truth" overt immoral actions. This

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1. Marsden, J.B., History of the Early Puritans, p. 139. Rooses, Mas, Christopher Plantin, p. 65 concurs in this opinion.
2. Rogers, J., op. cit., These charges of bigamy as noted in Chapters III and IV are without foundation.
3. An Introduction to the Holy Understanding of the Glasse of Righetousnesse, Chapter XII.

is scarcely enough evidence to link the House of Love with those radicals who ran through the streets unclad claiming that they were the naked truth, the image of God. Dosker is incorrect as he follows Wagener in saying, "they were Anabaptists of the following of the House of Love of Hendrik Niklaes," and "they were manifestly disciples of Niklaes."[1] Unless Dosker had in mind the clique of David Joris this was "manifestly" impossible for the events referred to took place in 1535 while Nicholas did not found his society until 1540. Nor does this sound like the method of the Familists who consistently spread their doctrine by personal contact and literary propaganda. They not only avoided any public demonstration, but even refrained from the common practice of public preaching.

The innuendo of Brandt, "That Family was suspected of being more addicted to carnal than spiritual Love;"[2] of Fuller, "The Family of Love (or Lust rather);"[3] of Middleton, Jonson, Pagitt, Ross, Hallywell,[4] and others consistently fail to offer any evidence which could be

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1. Dosker, H.E., The Dutch Anabaptists, p. 88 ff. Dosker gives as his source Jan Wagener's Vaderlansche Historie (21 volumes), Vol. V, pp. 90-91. Dosker attributes Mennonite puritanism to a reaction against "the erroristic teachings of Hendrick Niklaes." p. 214.
2. Brandt, G.,History of the Reformation in the Low Countries, p. 106.
3. Fuller, T., op. cit., (ed. 1655), Bk. X, p. 29, Cf. p.32. "The lives of these Familists are as sensuall as reported, no purity at all belonged unto them." See also Bk., IV,p. 113, "The practices of these Familists were worse than their opinions."
4. Hallywell, H., op. cit., pp. 109-111.

construed as proof of Familist misbehaviour.[1] Even the pleasantness of the Familists did not please their persecutors. "They appeared always cheerful and in a happy state," wrote Mosheim, "which offended the more gloomy mystics and produced heavy charges against them. Yet nothing appeared in their moral conduct to justify these criminations."[2] Strype as a fair observer doubts "Whether this sect of the service of love were of such profligate principles,"[3] but he does suggest that "libertines (of whom these crimes were too true) shrouded themselves under those of this denomination."[4] It is most probable that some few "loose livers" gave the whole movement a reputation which the high morality of the society could not overcome.

Quite to the contrary of the gossip of the day, whether the sophisticated humor of the silken parlour or the raucous joke in the aleshop, the Family of Love consistently held to a morality far above the common level. This tended to make them conspicuous in a society which had not felt the transforming impact of the Gospel ethic of love, for while the English Reformation wrought tremendous changes, it seems to have made little difference to the morals of Elizabethan and post-Elizabethan England.

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1. The account of Susanna Snow previously mentioned does not ring true.
2. Mosheim, J.L., Ecclesiastical History, p. 698, N.3. (Murdock). Cf. Arnold, G., Kirchen und Ketzer Historie, p. 873. Penney, N., op. cit., Vol. I, p. 382, "The charges of gross immorality usually brought against them are now considered unfounded."
3. Strype, J., Annals, Vol. II, i, p. 559. Cf. Marsden, J., op. cit., p. 139.
4. Loc. cit.

That which is novel is always resented in society particularly when it combines the elements of secrecy with open criticism of the "Status Quo." This secrecy and the name "Family of Love," easily added up to immorality in the mind of the hostile observer.

Considering the contemporary accounts it is strange to hear Benjamine Bourne complain that it was his best parishoners and not the scoundrels who drifted into the ranks of the "Good-willing." Bourne in describing his losses to the "Mystical Antichrist the Familists," writes that:

> "Many of them (were) such as formerly were to be beloved and delighted in; Give me leave to speak according to men, were ye not once as reall for Christ as you are now for Antichrist? Yea, I will be one witnesse what close communion you had with God, and how many times you have to the refreshing of many drooping spirits made large acknowledgement of God's love and favour toward you in Christ."[1]

This gives a real insight into the nature of those inclined toward Familist doctrine at the beginning of the Commonwealth and it seems they were following very carefully the admonitions of Henry Nicholas that they should seek a high state of personal righteousness.

The very foundation of the House of Love on the Continent was the product of Nicholas' observation that

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1. Bourne, B., A Description--, (1646), "To the Reader."



Overcoming the Seven Deadly Sins
A Figure of the True and Spiritual Tabernacle

the common morality did not reach the standard ascribed to the Christian by the New Testament and the witness of Henry Nicholas are shot-through with a plea for practical righteousness.[1]

In A Figure of the True and Spiritual Tabernacle, H.N. requests that there should be an end of "envy or division, contention or discord, high-mindedness or pride, craftyness, cruelty, arrogancy, disorderlyness,"[2] and in Terra Pacis he described the true members of the Family as those who

> "commit not any adultry for they are all honest and chaste of life, clean and pure of heart. -- They do not desire or lust for anything that is against the Law or Ordinance of the Lord, so are they likewise faithful therein."[3]

The First Epistle and The First Exhortation give considerable space to the problems of morality and demonstrate beyond all shadow of doubt that while Nicholas taught the possibility of perfection for those who strive up the ladder of "The Eight Vertues" he did not teach a pantheistic antinomianism. Those along the various rungs of the ladder sin and are exhorted frequently to avoid falling into evil ways:

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1. H.N. on the Beatitudes, "Beatitude on Cleaness of Heart," Comments by R. M. Jones, Studies in Mystical Religion, p.435.
2. A Figure of the True and Spiritual Tabernacle (1655).
3. Terra Pacis (1649), Chapter 19, No. 4 p. 145, Chapter 36, No. 6, p. 128.

> "Suffer not your selves to be vanquished by the wicked nor seduced by any contrary spirits -- but in Patience vanquish the Evil with the Good." "To the end that yee may becom justified or purged from all your Sinnes and receaved to fellow members of the Badge of Christ, into the holye Communalitie of Love."[1]

With this negative admonition there appears also a positive requiring in view of the sufferings of Christ for the sin of man.

> "For that cause, my beloved infants in the Love, forsake not, in any wise, the crosse of Christ --- nor yet heap you up to yourselves, one sin upon another: but take up your Crosse, follow after Christ--: become implanted to him, baptized in his Death, washed with his Blood, and so purged to the forgiving of your sins."[2]

These are not isolated passages but descriptive of the often reiterated admonitions of Henry Nicholas to repent of sin, to strive for purity of life, and to advance progressively in sanctification until perfection is attained. The best of such exhortatory sentences are reminiscent of the sermons of Tauler and the Theologia Germanica.

The "Petition of Familists to King James" contrasts the accusations which declared them "to be a people so infected and stained with all manner of

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1. First Exhortation of H.N., Chapter XX No. 9, p. 153. The First Epistle of H.N., Chapter III, No. 2.
2. Ibid., Chapter XX, No. 21, p. 157.

detestable wickedness and errors" with their purpose to "bring forth the fruits of repentance, which is reformation and newnesse of life according as all the holy Scriptures, doth likewise require the same of every one. And that they might in that sort become saved through Jesus Christ, the only Saviour of all the world."[1] To this passage Samuel Rutherford rather unfairly appends this footnote: "The foulest of the bookes of H.N. containing the mystery of Familism and fleshly loosenesse, are only to be seen by the wise and experienced Elders who can digest them."[2] The Familists found themselves unable to lift themselves beyond suspicion even with the passing of time and it is probable that by Rutherford's time there were few who cared to try.

There can be little doubt of the high moral standing of Henry Nicholas and the Familists in keeping with their avowed purpose

> "that all people, when they hear, read, and do perceive their sins estranging from God and Christ, might bring forth fruits of repentance and newness of life, according as the Holy Scriptures require of every one, and that they might <u>in that sort</u> became saved through Jesus Christ, the only Saviour of the world."[3]

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1. "A Petition," in Rutherford, S., <u>A Survey</u> --, p. 347.
2. <u>Loc. Cit.</u>
3. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 348.

The genius which preserved the witness of Familism to inner-light theology lay in their literary strategy. It was this which had given the initial impetus to the movement in the Low countries and which in Elizabethan England had made it a force to be reckoned with. In the reign of James I Germany was still acting as a supplier of H.N.'s books as is seen in the offer of the Family in their petition to James I to obtain a selection of books for him from "where they be printed," i.e., Germany.[1] In the troubled days of the Commonwealth there was still sufficient dynamic in the movement to renew their modus operandi and for the first time the works of Nicholas were printed and sold openly in England.

How the books of H.N. came to be reprinted is a matter of conjecture for no account emerges which relates the story and no principle figures are clearly connected with the effort. The booksellers and publishers, Giles Calvert, Samuel Satterthwaite, George Whitington and John Allen, tell us nothing. One figure does rise up from the rest as a possible instigator of the republishing and that is Giles Randall who had long been active in the disseminating of left-wing literature. Haller has noted that,

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1. "A Petition of the Familists to King James I," in Rutherford, S., A Survey, p. 350.

> "There can be little doubt that Everard, seconded by Randall and other disciples, was an important agent in putting into circulation in the decade before 1640 the type of mystical enthusiasm which was to flourish so abundantly and so much more extravagantly a little later."[1]

In the actual work of publishing Randall was more active than Everard whose example he followed in the translating of mystical writings. Randall had a strong sense of social ethic and it was probably he who in 1637 was called before the Star Chamber for preaching against "ship money" which he declared to be "a way of taking burdens off rich men's shoulders and laying them on the necks of poor men."[2] Again in 1643 Giles Randall was before the Star Chamber for preaching that vague heresy which was indefinitely labelled familism, anabaptism and antinomianism by which was meant variance from the hard core Calvinism of the center segment of Puritanism or from the strict ceremonial code of Laudian Anglicanism. This resulted in his being expelled from his charge in 1644[3] but he did not stop preaching since "for some years he preached peaceably at the Spittle, to as great a multitude of people as follows any Sectary about the

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1. Haller, Wm., The Rise of Puritanism, p. 208. Cf. Jones, R.M., Spiritual Reformers, p. 258.
2. Calender of State Papers, Domestic, Charles I, 1637.
3. Journal of Commons, August 9, 1644, pp. 584-585.

City."[1] In court he had been charged with preaching in St. Martin Orgar's church, London that the Christian need not follow the law as the natural rule of life and that "a child of God can live as sinless a life as Christ's was."[2] Randall himself makes a statement to the same effect in his preface to the Bright Star as he writes: "These are ever learning and never come to the knowledge of the truth, who say, that perfection is not attainable in this life."[3] Samuel Rutherford saw in Randall's allegorical hermeneutics a sure indication of his theological stand. Randall taught, wrote Rutherford,

> "That Christ's parables, from Sowing, a Draw-net, Leaven, etc. did prove, that to expound the Scriptures by Allegories was lawfull, and all things of this life, as Seed, the Way-Side, a Rocke, the Sea, a Net, Leaven etc. were Sacraments of Christ, and he cited, Do this in Remembrance of me; and that a spirituall minde, in all the things of nature, and of this life, might see the mysteries of the Gospel. This man who preached most abominable Familisme, is suffered in, and about London publikely, twice on the Lord's day, to draw hundreds of godly people after him."[4]

Randall in 1646 published an English edition of The Vision of God[5] by Nicholas of Cusa and in 1648 a

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1. Baillie, R., Anabaptism, p. 102. Baillie follows Etherington in giving a summation of his doctrine.
2. Gataker, Thomas, God's Eye on His Israel (1645), Preface.
3. Randall, G., Bright Star, Preface. Quoted in Rutherford, S., A Survey, Part I, p. 143. Cf. Edwards, T., op. cit., Part III, p. 25.
4. Rutherford, S., A Survey, Part II, pp. 162-163.
5. De visione Dei appeared entitled The Single Eye, or A Vision of God wherein is unfolded the Mystery of the Divine Presence. It is John Everard's translation.

new edition of Theologia Germanica[1] The third work, A Bright Starre done in 1546, was also the work of a Roman Catholic medieval mystic and like that of Nicholas of Cusa came from a monastery. This little book is a translation of the work of an English Capuchin Friar entitled The Third Part of the Rule of Perfection dealing with the third and highest step of mystical experience "the Life Supereminent." These steps are taught also in the Theologia Germanica and in the contemporary work Sparkles of Glory by John Saltmarsh but more significantly yet in several works of Henry Nicholas reprinted at this time.[2] All three of these works published by Randall deprecate the spirituality of the religious leaders of England and call for deepening of experience among those "poore soules after many yeares travelling being found in the same place and going at the same pace."[3] Like Henry Nicholas he adopts that terminology of the Middle Ages "the Sabbath Rest of the Soul" to signify the perfection that is to be reached.

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1. This was a new translation by Randall from Castellio's Latin edition (1557) and not Everard's earlier "manuscript" translation.
2. All the works of Henry Nicholas are full of perfectionist teaching but that theme is developed especially in The Eight Vertues or Godlynesses, Terra Pacis, The First Exhortation of H.N. and the Evangelium Regni.
3. A Bright Starre translated by Randall, G., "Preface to the Reader." See R.M. Jones excellent summation, Spiritual Reformers, pp. 259-261.

It may well have been Randall who urged the reprinting of the books of Henry Nicholas for they are entirely consistent with the spiritual temperature of the works he edited and prefaced, and entirely compatible with that allegorical-mystical book Divinity and Philosophy Dissected (1644) which Randall quite possibly wrote.[1] The works he edited all adopt concepts of perfectionism, use allegorical interpretations of the Scripture freely, and decry the religion of the letter which supplants the Word. Further they are all firmly rooted in Roman Catholicism as are the works of Henry Nicholas but yet transcend that system in looking to that "perfect clear light that reveals to man the truth."[2] Giles Randall, so intimately related to this body of literature critical of external religion and enthusiastic over inner-light theology and perfectionism, could easily have been the one who implimented the reprinting of Henry Nicholas' works.

Of Samuel Satterthwaite who sold books of the Familists at "the Sign of the Sun on Garlick Hill" from 1642-1649,[3] little is known, nor is there information readily available about George Whittington proprietor of a book shop "at the Blue Anchor, neer the Royall

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1. Jones, R.M., Spiritual Reformers, pp. 261-263.
2. Divinity and Philosophy Dissected, p. 17.
3. Plommer, H.R., A Dictionary of Booksellers and Printers, 1641-1667. Arranged alphabetically.

Title-page and frontispiece of Revelatio Dei

Now is the Iudgement of this World, now ſhall the Prince of this World be caſt out. *Iohn. 12*



Now is come ſalvation, and ſtrength and the Kingdome of our God, and the power of his Chriſt.

Apoca: 12

REVELATIO DEI.

THE REVELATION OF GOD, and his *Great Propheſie*, Which God now (in the laſt day) Hath ſhewed unto His *ELECT.*

Set forth by *H N.* and by him peruſed anew, and more diſtinctly declared.

Tranſlated out of Baſe-Almaine.



G. 15. 61 (sel e)

Hen. Nicholas

O all ye people that dwel on earth, look now to it, that the ſame come not over you, which is ſpoken of in the Prophets; behold ye diſpiſers, and wonder, and periſh: for I do a work in your times, which ye ſhal not believe, when any one ſhal tel it unto you. *Habac. 1. Act. 13.*

London, Printed for *Giles Calvert*, at the ſign of the *Black-Spred-Eagle*, at the Weſt-end of *Pauls*. 1649.

Exchange in Corn-hill 1649," nor of John Allen whose shop stood at "the Rising-Sun in the New Buildings in Pauls Church-yard, between the two North-Doors." Theodore Jennings, the printer is likewise an unknown figure. Giles Calvert, the chief producer of H.N.'s books, is much better known. Calvert, (1615-1663) located at the "Black-Spread-Eagle, St. Pauls Churchyard," sold many left-wing books such as the Fifth Monarchy works by Arise Evans, writings of William Erbury,[1] Ranter tracts by L. Claxton, Leveller pieces of John Lilburnes, and Gerrard Winstanley's Digger literature.[2] He was popular in high places during the Commonwealth and in 1653 received appointment as an official printer for the Council of State which gave him great freedom in publishing what he wished.[3] Miss A. E. Terry lists over 600 works which bear the imprint of Calvert over one-third of which are Quaker works. He published also the writings of John Saltmarsh and William Dell, as well as three of Jacob Boehme's volumes.[4] Between 1649 and 1656 he arranged for

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1. Brown, L, Baptists and Fifth Monarchy Men, p. 223.
2. "Giles Calvert's Publishing Career," in Journal of Friends Historical Society, Vol. XXXV, 1938, p. 47. Cf. Ames, Typographical Antiquities (Ed. Dibdin).
3. Terry, A.E, "Giles Calvert's Publishing Career." An unpublished article found at the Library of the Society of Friends in London and Columbia University, N.Y. The article in the Journal of Friends Historical Society is a brief condensation of this. (1938), p. 47.
4. Jones, R.M., Studies in Mystical Religion, pp. 494-495.

the printing and sale of seven writings of Henry Nicholas: The Prophecy of the Spirit of Love, The Revelation of God, An Introduction to the Looking Glass of Righteousness, The Joyful Message of the Kingdom, Spiritual Tabernacle, The First Exhortation of H.N. to his Children and An Apology for the Service of Love. The sustained interest in these works led Calvert after the first issue in 1649 (without his name in the frontpiece) to commence openly the purveying of Familist books for the next six years. The reading public which Calvert supplied found these specially selected books of Nicholas entirely suitable to their taste.[1] Miss Terry finds it quite significant that Calvert, a publisher of Quaker works, should also have done Familist works. "The appearance of these ten from Calvert's bookshop at a time when he was publishing so many Quaker books is evidence that the earliest Friends read both Boehme and Nicholas."[2] There seems little doubt that this was true during the Commonwealth as it was later in regard to Quaker sympathizers like Lady Conway and Mrs. Foxcroft.[3]

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1. Cf. Theodore Jennings "Preface" to Terra Pacis already quoted in this chapter.
2. Journal of the Friends Historical Society, XXXV, 1938, p. 47.
3. This will be discussed more fully in the following chapter.

The great variety of sects which arose in Commonwealth times included some "bearing pretty fantastical names."[1] Pagitt like Strype was struck by the number of "Familys" among them; such as Catalian Familists, Familists Cap's Order, Familists of the Mountain, Familists of the Valley, Grindeltonians and the Scattered Flock.[2] "All of these," wrote Strype,"seemed to be no other than some subdivisions and slips of the family of love."[3]This author finds that these were real parties and not just "paper heresies" produced by some imaginative author for he extracted their names from documents which gave the names of members and "the places where they dwelt." Unfortunately Strype does not relay this information nor the location of the papers, but does say that they were "the confessions of some of them brought before the commissioners ecclesiastical."[4] It seems more than likely that the idea of a "Family" came from the Family of Love and that Henry Nicholas' books provided the inspiration for some of their doctrine at least. They are, however, not "Familist Societies" organized in the early manner nor is it likely that they knew much of what the House of Love had stood for either in the Low countries

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1. Strype, J., Annals, Vol. II, ii, p. 562.
2. Pagitt, E., Heresiography, pp. 81 ff, pp. 115-116. Ross, A., Pansebia, p. 365.
3. Strype, J., Op. Cit., Vol. II, ii, p. 562 Cf. p. 564. "These, and the like, were spawn and improvements of this family of love."
4. Ibid., p. 564.

or Elizabethan England. The author of the Annals found some of the leaders of these sects to be ministers such as "John Etchard, minister of Dursham in Suffolk" and John Eaton.

Strype also found a letter in the Paper Office at Whitehall endorsed "Pseudoapostolic" which he discovered to be full of Familist doctrine since it taught sinless perfection. The letter, which he quotes in detail,[1] does contain some type of eradication theory but it is not conclusive that the author was a preacher of Henry Nicholas' tenets. It is significant, however, that Strype related the widespread mystical teaching to that leaven working in English thought.

The Grindletonians, of all sects, most closely approximate Familist doctrine. Roger Brierley may well have come across the works of Henry Nicholas and derived from them some of his peculiar religious emphasis. As in the Familists[2] love was the supreme virtue in man and the attribute of God around which their thinking centered. The message of Brierley concerned the "demonstration of the Holy Ghost to the broken heart of man of the un-

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1. Strype, J., Annals, Vol. II, ii, p.563. It must be remembered that Strype thought 'Rules of Perfection' and 'Theologia Germanica' were both by Henry Nicholas.
2. Braithwaite, C.W., Beginnings of Quakerism, p. 24.

changeable love, against which sin, death and Satan cannot prevail."[1] God's unchangeable love, he taught, was able to overcome all evil and to cast out of the heart of man all fear and torment. According to Pagitt, Grindeltonians held that the Scriptures are to be tried by the Spirit who dwells in them and that God dwells in men who yield to him and so fills them that lust can no more exist there.[2]

Two things can be said of this sect. First, Brierley's great stress on the Love of God did not necessarily come from the Familists for it was to be found in Boehme and other mystical writers which Everard and Randall had popularized. But the same emphasis was in Familist works and if Brierley was in the custom of surreptitiously reading mystical authors he would certainly read the common Familist books. Second, there is no doubt that people "connected the Grindletonians with the Familists."[3] Underhill says they were like the Family of Love and that there were many of them in Yorkshire during the reigns of Elizabeth and James I.[4]

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1. Whiting, C. E., op. cit., p. 290.
2. Pagitt, E., op. cit., pp. 114-116. See also Stephen Denison's The White Wolfe --, p. 39.
3. Whiting, C. E., op. cit., p. 290.
4. Underhill, T., Hell Broke Loose, (1660). As quoted in Whiting, C. E., op. cit., p. 291.

Most clearly pantheistic of all the sects were the Essentialists who "had their opinion from one Mrs. Dunbar, a Scotch woman," denying that sin existed at all, for " God doth all, in what kind soever it be."[1] One of their number a tailor named Lackley, is reported to have frequently said "Sin? What sin, man? There is no man sinneth at all."[2] Such claims point back to LeFarges shop in Paris when the Libertines from Antwerp discoursed in the presence of Calvin.[3] It was probably not of Familist origin but most likely of a pantheistic Libertine rootage, not unknown in England.[4]

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1. Strype, J., Annals, Vol. II, ii, p. 563.
2. Loc. Cit.
3. D'Aubigne, M., Op. Cit., Vol. VI, p. 357.
4. Whiting, C.E., Op. Cit., pp. 170, 173.

CHAPTER VI

The Relationship of Familist Doctrine to the Circumference Parties involved in English Religious and Social Reform During the Commonwealth.

CHAPTER VI

Far more important than the tiny sects which may or may not have sprung from Familism is the influence of that Society on the left-wing elements in English Christian thought. It has long been wondered how inner-light theology, the concepts of perfectionism, the social dynamic of love, and the progressive theory of history, entered into the thought of this period. A number of writers without demonstrating any linkage have declared for an Anabaptist background but no successful efforts have been carried through to prove this theory. Nuttall remarks that "Spiritualisten abroad, such as Schwenkfeld, Denck, Frank and Coornhert, preceded Puritanism and in some cases anticipated radical Puritan convictions, but any direct influence is far to seek."[1] Noting the prevalence of the writings of Henry Nicholas and of his followers the question naturally arises as to their influence in this matter of "spiritual" religion.

First it is to be recognized that there was an open door for some kind of teaching in personal religion and the Holy Spirit for there had been a dearth of explicit

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1. Nuttall, G., The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience, p. 15.

preaching on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit so that "what influences there were must have come largely by heretical channels, subterranean tributaries of the hidden stream here so suddenly breaking forth into the light of day."[1] Important among these "tributaries" which flowed underground was Familism. It is known that after 1555 there was a constant dissemination of Familist books in England culminating in a reprinting and distribution of their works after 1640, and that by publishers who also produced radical Puritan and Quaker books. The intense polemical warfare ingrained Familist ideas deeply into English thinking.

Turning back for a moment it is seen that there were several channels bringing mystical religion into England. Dean Colet as a youth, had gone to Italy and sat at the feet of Marsiglio Ficino and Pico Della Mirandola in the Florentine Academy where the efforts of Christian Humanism were bringing to light neo-platonic teaching.[2] Ficino translated not only the Dialogues of Plato into Latin but also the writings of Plotinus, and Pseudo-Dionysius. Colet, More, Linacre, Grocyn and others were profoundly influenced by these works and the

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1. Loc. Cit.
2. Seebohm, The Oxford Reformers. See index and appendix.

Latin editions of neo-platonic mysticism were well known in their universities and in London,[1] limited, however to a small intellectual segment of society.

Another import of mysticism was The Divine Consideration[2] of Juan de Valdés who though basically a Lutheran gave great precedence to the operation of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life. His emphasis was on direct experience; so much so that he drew criticism immediately from George Herbert who was asked by the translator Nicholas Ferrar, to put in marginal comments. Herbert offers praise for the work in a patronizing way since the author had been sunk in Romanism, but regrets Valdès' "slighting of Scripture and his use of the Word of God for inward revelation." He was generally taken for a mystic subject to "private enthusiasms and revelation."[3] Samuel Rutherford was less kind as he declared The Divine Consideration to be a poisonous source of "Familisme, Antinomianism, and Enthusiasme" for it "rejecteth the Scriptures, magnifieth inspirations, vilifieth good works, heighteneth the dead faith etc."[4]

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1. Jones, R.M., makes mention also of Bernardino Ochino (1487-1564) and Peter Martyr (1500-1562) as men who preached a doctrine of inward religion in England.
2. Le Cento et diece divine consideratione (1550). English translation, Oxford, 1638. Cf. Newman, A.H., A Manual of Church History, Vol. II, p. 292.
3. Jones, R.M., Spiritual Reformers of the 16th and 17th Centuries, p. 237.
4. Rutherford, S., A Survey of Spiritual Antichrist(1648), p. 164.

Haller, seeking a basis for social revolution, notes that many "Separatists came under the influence of Dutch Sects and thus, through them, no doubt, of the earlier continental mystics."[1] This expressed itself through "the various Puritan minorities" but also led to the appearance in England after 1600 of the writings of Continental mystics and enthusiasts of the Middle Ages.

That marvelous little book the Theologia Germanica likewise made its way into England in this age. The German editions of Luther after 1518 were little known in England, but the Latin translation of John Theophilus (Sebastian Castellio) done in 1557 was most probably known by English scholars.[2] It is with the labors of John Everard (1575-1650),[3] however, that this work became known in England for by 1528 his English translation in manuscript was being passed from hand to hand. It is Giles Randall who tells that because of ecclesiastical opposition the book went

> "up and down this city in Manuscript at deer rates, from hand to hand-- in clandestine, and private manner -- never daring to crowd into the Presse, fearing the ruff usage of those then in authority."[4]

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1. Haller, Wm., The Rise of Puritanism, p. 206.
2. Loc. cit.
3. Ibid., p. 207. Cf. Jones, R.M., Ibid., p. 243 and 256. One of these manuscripts can be seen in the Cambridge Univ. Library. The quotation is from Giles Randall's "Introduction" to his 1648 edition of the Theologia Germanica.

John Strype interestingly enough noticed regarding "the Theologe Germane" that "there were of them in Latin Mss. and one Fisher, a barbar, wrote them out, and sold them, after --- they were translated into English."[1]

Nor is this the end of John Everard's labors as a transmitter of Continental mysticism for he translated also Sebastian Franck's The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, The Vision of God by Nicholas of Cusa, as well as selections from Johannes Denck, John Tauler, Hermes Trismegistus, Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite and others. All of these were either published separately or with his sermons, Some Gospel Treasures Opened (1653).

All of this type of literature was assumed by most authorities to have some relationship to Familism and Everard was called before the High Commission in 1639, "accused indifferently of familism, antinomianism, and anabaptism,"[2] and fined £1,000. The confusion of the authorities can be understood for there is something of a common climate of religion pervading all of these works even though a line of separation could be drawn between the neo-platonic, evangelical Germanic, and the Reformation

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1. Strype, J., Annals, p. 564. Strype however mistakes this volume and the Rules of Perfection (A Bright Starre,) London 1646, for works by Henry Nicholas.
2. Vian, Alsager, "John Everard," in D.N.B.

liberal groups. To the sacramentally minded Anglicans anything outside the well defined boundaries of altar and prayer-book was either Atheism, Anabaptism or Familism while for the hard Calvinistic core of Puritanism anything mystical was Familist. The writings of H.N. were not arranged as organized theological treatises and as such were not only casually compared with other mystical writings and hence the confusion. Since the authoritative scholars dealt with these writings as "Theologia Dogmatica" and not as "Theologia Spiritualis" similarities were not far to seek.

Looking at the scene generally one becomes aware that there were three active mystical groups in England. Best known are the Platonists of Cambridge like Henry More who made use of the neo-platonic works which entered into England beginning in 1620 though some came before. These men were on a high intellectual level and their philosophy had little appeal for the majority of people. Then there were also those who followed closely the writings of Jacob Boehme and similar mystics and of these some were quietistic remaining moderate in their theology while others, like the Behemists and Philadelphians went into theosophical societies. The third mystical influence was Familism whose mysticism was moderate and whose teachings

had a wide appeal to the "dissatisfied" among whom it stirred eschatological hopes, aroused a vague utopian idealism, awakened a Christian social consciousness, and developed an open disgust with all external religion. For those who were becoming impatient with intricate theological controversies the message of Familism took on new meaning and the more so as the Society itself shrank into insignificance. There was a genuine appeal in the demand for holy living that was the result of union with God and a social ethic rooted in love for God and man.

Looming large in the teaching of Henry Nicholas, disguised though it was by much expendable paraphernalia, lay the basic idea of the love of God to man and the need for men as recipients of divine love to express that same love to each other in their social contacts. Having been cleansed at the "fountain of Love" men were to dwell in "One holye house of the Love and in One lovelie communalitie of Peace whereof the Love of Jesus Christ is the head."[1] Those who are of this "communalitie" must not bear grudges "but lay-downe all the same under the love be reconciled one with another in the Love -- and suffer or beare-patience with the Infirme or Weake."[2] They

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1. The First Epistle of H.N., Chapter III, No. 12.
2. Ibid., Chapter III, No. 13.

are not to injure anyone nor "reject nor deface" but "healp-upp each-other in the Love."[1] Thus there was to begin "the reign of the Spirit of Love" when men were to be "in actual possession of that righteousness which in other ages was spoken of but not realized."[2]

This concept transported to England and given scope for novel development and adaptation had vital effect on those who saw a social or economic application for the first and greatest commandment and the second commandment which is like unto it. The question which the boy Henry Nicholas asked of his father and confessor, "Where is this righteousness which the church received from Christ?" was to be asked again in days of impending social revolution. Against the background of the severe ceremonial Laudian régime[3] on the one hand, and unbending letter bound Puritanism on the other hand, the message of the writings of Henry Nicholas came to have a new meaning and among those who discovered it was Gerrard Winstanley.

The digger leader may have known a little of Thomas More's Utopia, with its communistic program hidden in allegorical trappings, but he was influenced to a greater degree by continental ideals "which came to England

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1. Ibid., Chapter III, No. 14.
2. Hunt, J., Religious Thought in England, Vol. I, p. 237.
3. Tawney, R. H., Religion and the Rise of Capitalism, pp. 211-212. Cf. G. P. Gooch, English Democratic Ideas in the 17th Century, p. 180.

with the Familists."[1] Winstanley, a deeply spiritual man, was "nurtured in the thoughts and teachings of Jacob Boehme and that strange man Henrik Nicklaes of the group known as the Family of Love."[2] From Boehme he got his deep mystical expressionisms while from Nicholas he received the seed thoughts which burgeoned forth into a social program. Like both his spiritual fathers he was content to remain quietistic for a period of time, satisfying himself by satirizing "man's inhumanity to man" in Essays drawn allegorically from the Scriptures. In 1648, however, his soul became troubled and he adopted a new policy. "My mind," he writes, "was not at rest because nothing was acted; and thoughts ran in men that words and writings were all nothing and must die; for action is the life of all, and if thou dost not act thou dost nothing."[3] That fundamental economic principle, "that the earth is a 'commom Treasury',"[4] he had derived from the Bible, but his Scriptural gleanings were formed into a system using hermeneutics "learned by Winstanley from the Familists."[5] The ideals which the Familists had

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1. Elmen, Paul, The Theological Basis of Digger Communism.
2. Heath, Carl, Social and Religious Heretics, p. 101.
3. Winstanley, Gerard, A Watchword in the City, (1649)
4. Wolfe, D. M., Milton in the Puritan Revolution, p. 314. See also Wolfe's collection Leveller Manifestoes.
5. Elmen, P. Op. cit., p. 211.

imported to England when naturalized became a powerful dynamic in society. The "good-willing" had looked back to the primitive church as an era when God broke into humanity and a new power, that of love, was released but this was not realized until the dawn of the age of the Spirit. They taught,then, not a restitution theory, but insisted that God who had progressively revealed Himself in history now in a unique way was expanding that revelation. Thus the static view of history was set aside and supplanted by a dynamic concept. The "Sorrows of St. Cyprian,"[1] which said "this is the final hour of a decaying society," found a new rival in the Joachimite hope as revised by Familism that this is the dawn of a glorious new age, an age of universal brotherhood where Love rules supreme as administered by the Holy Spirit of Love. By this idea latent within Familism, Winstanley was sparked into an endeavor to bring the New Jerusalem down from heaven to earth for "this is the day of judgement," and there was nothing to prevent a realization of eschatological promise immediately within history. The reader of Winstanley's writings receives the impression that he sensed the very air charged with impending divine action. To Winstanley it was not enough to call God "Righteousness,

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1. Tuveson, E.L., Millenium and Utopia, p. 22 ff.

Peace and Love" for "If you fear man so greatly that you dare not do righteously for fear of angering men, then slavish fear is your God."[1]

When the Diggers broke into the sod of St. George's Hill on Sunday morning April 1, 1649, they were insisting on the validity of an application of the Gospel of Christ in the social scene at that present hour. Winstanley was giving a wider interpretation to the problem which bothered Henry Nicholas; the activity of evil in society in view of the fact that the Redemption of mankind by Christ should blot out war, hatred, oppression, lust and that Love should reign supreme. Winstanley insisted that,

> "poverty and hunger are not isolated phenomena, but are related to the basic estrangement which sets man against his neighbor, and both against God. When the New Being is an activality, economic and political considerations have both found their common matrix."[2]

The Digger leader reconciled theory and practice by bringing both under Christ who dwells in man rendering thus invalid a distinction between the spiritual and the physical. There is then no secular, which is not part of the ecclesiastical, and nothing of Christianity which is not integrally applicable to the political and economic.

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1. Winstanley, G., The New Law of Righteousness, (1649).
2. Elmen, P., op. cit., p. 216. On the struggle of economic and religious motives see Elmen's excellent remarks. pp. 208-209.

Elmen has concluded that it is a mark of Winstanley's "great achievement" that he grasped with an intuitive certainty that the historical order and the divine order are within each other, and that the church, as Paul Tillich has said, "is always and everywhere theological and sociological at the same time."[1] It is entirely possible that Winstanley drew this from the reading of Henry Nicholas who was attempting also to break down the middle wall of partition between Christian theology and life.

How influential was the thinking of Winstanley on the Quakers? L.H. Berrens states positively that the Digger Movement was the originator of those views and doctrines which were "subsequently adopted almost in their entirety by the Society of Friends."[2] R. M. Jones says that they were products of "the peculiar social and spiritual condition" and that they independently arrived at similar views.[3] Considering the affinity of both for Jacob Boehme, Jones may well be right in regard to their common inner-light theology, but in the matter of social ethics and love Winstanley quite conceivably passed on that which he had first received from the

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1. Elmen, P., op. cit., p. 216.
2. Berrens, L. H., The Digger Movement, p. 67. Cf. Carl Heath, Social and Religious Heretics, p. 101 ff.
3. Jones, R. M., Studies in Mystical Religion, p. 494.

Familists.[1] This is not to say that Winstanley was at any time the member of a Familist Society, for in this day few if any such societies existed, but he definitely felt the persuasive influence of Familist thinking common in left-wing "round tables," and in the books they read. To ideas reaped from these sources Winstanley added much that was original and he constructed a moving expression of the social gospel.

It was customary in 1640 for respectable people to discover at the root of each novel idea a heresy with a sect to propagate it. Satan has broken loose, they said, breathing error into vulgar breasts. Strachey sees the spring of this in materialism, "the typical and inevitable characteristic of working class thought," which "pushed its way up for a moment through the gap made in the ranks of the priviledged classes of England by the Civil War."[2] This materialism as a motive force was certainly present but more dominant was the attempt to discover the significance of the Cosmic Christ and His saving work in the realm of the economic and sociological. From the welter of tub preachers, antinomian mystics and groping idealists emerged groups composed of those who

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1. Troeltsch, E., The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches, Vol. II, p. 712. Cf. Hudson, Winthrop, "Gerrard Winstanley and the Early Quakers," pp. 177 ff., in Church History, Vol. XII, 1943.
2. Strachey, J., The Theory and Practice of Socialism, p.298.

submerged themselves in a united action for the cause of liberty and equality! In these parties the emphasis on "love" appears with startling frequency, a concept which could be derived from the New Testament itself it is true, but which found its source in the translations of Castellio, Denck, Franck and especially in the more widely read Familist writings.

The converging lines of thought in this "manifestation" written from a London prison demonstrate the proximity of the Levellers' thinking to that of Henry Nicholas .

> "Whereas its said, we are Atheists and Antiscripturalists, we professe that we believe there is one eternall and omnipotent God, and Father and Preserver of all things in the world. To whose will and direction, written first in our hearts, and afterwards in his blessed Word, we ought to square our actions and conversation. And though we are not so strict upon the formall and ceremonial part of his service, the method, manner and personall injunction being not so clearly made out unto us --- yet the manifestation of God's love in Christ, it is clearly assented unto by us: and the practicall and most reall part of Religion is as readily submitted unto by us, as being, in our apprehensions, the most eminent and the most excellent in the world, and as proceeding from no other but that God, who is Goodnesse itself: and we humbly desire his Goodnesse daily more and more to conform our hearts to a willing and sincere obedience thereunto."[1]

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1. "A Manifestation from Lt. Col. John Lilburn, Mr. Wm. Walwyn, Mr. Thomas Prince and Mr. Richard Overton ---" (1649) in D. M. Wolfe, Leveller Manifestations, p. 393.

Love and not faith was the dynamic factor in their religion, externals are not of great importance and the word in heart stands over but not entirely apart from the written word of the Book. True religion, said these imprisoned idealists, consists not in adherence to a creed but in an actual demonstration in life of God's "Goodnesse daily more and more." This demand for practical righteousness and the other ideals seen in this manifesto springs at the reader from every page of Henry Nicholas' translated writings which it is remembered had been continuously imported into England from 1570 until after 1600 and reprinted during the Commonwealth.

Of more interest to this study than "Lilburn," the most noted of the Levellers, is William Walwyn who characterized himself as "one that do truely and heartily love all mankind, it being the unfeigned desire of my soul, that all men might be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth."[1] Walwyn attacked by Thomas Edwards in his Gangraena cries out in horror, as had Henry Nicholas, against strife, envy and divisions among Christians.

> "O that truth and this my plain dealing might beget or awaken conscience in you and provoke you to cast off the --"

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1. Walwyn, Wm., A Whisper in the Ear of Mr. Thomas Edwards, (1646), p. 2.

> "works of darkness, and to put on the armour of light, and henceforth to walk honestly, and not in strife and envying, but to walk in love as Christ hath loved: nor is it meet you should esteem yourself a Christian, until you find your soul possessed with the spirit of true Christian love, which doth no evil to his neighbor and therefore is the fulfilling of the law."[1]

Compare this with Henry Nicholas' statement in his First Epistle.

> "For-that-cause let no-man bost himself to be a christian that hath not in the upright faith received the true Tokens of Christianitie, that is that beareth or earneth not the Name of the Father and of the Sone and of the holy Ghost essentially and living in hym."[2]

Haller finds in Walwyn a direct influence of Henry Nicholas, though the latter was working at cross-purposes with himself since he tried to put the divine ethic of love to work "by the very modes of religion associated with the divisive social forces he wished to destroy."[3] Nicholas had ideas of social reform but "he could only conceive of a new society as a renewed church" and thus "he dwindles, lost in dreams of a new Jerusalem, to another sect in a corner."[4] Walwyn, however, found in Nicholas' "mystical doctrine of love a possible basis for

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1. Ibid., p. 8. Cf. An Antidote Against Master Edwards, (1646), p. 2. See Himbury, D.M., "The Religious Belief of the Levellers," in Baptist Quarterly, Vol. XV, No. 6, 1954, p. 271.
2. First Epistle, Chapt. VII, No. 32., p. 42.
3. Haller, Wm., Tracts on Liberty, Vol. I, p. 44.
4. Loc. cit.

a new society."[1] That later when his plans collapsed, he spoke derisively of the "German madde mans Divinity" and the presumption of those who are "Godded with God, and Christed with Christ" only confirms the earlier influence of Familism. Admittedly Walwyn had been profoundly influenced by Montaigne's Essays, especially "Of the Cannibals," and so had absorbed the scepticism of Rennaissance humanism, but this only resulted in Walwyn "trying in the spirit of Montaigne to learn what was useful in the dreams of the Familists."[2] The ideals of Henry Nicholas were defrocked of their religious garb by Walwyn and they emerged from his mind as social concepts. This is not to say that Walwyn was free of religious expression himself for he was a genuinely spiritual man and not an "agent provocateur" camouflaged behind "an elaborate theological facade."[3]

The Power of Love listed anonymously in the British Museum Catalogue was quite likely the work of William Walwyn and quite certainly of his "milieu." It pretends in its introductory passage to be the discourse of a Familist but on closer examination it is shown to be more than a mystical tract.

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1. Loc. cit.
2. Ibid., p. 118.
3. Elmen, P., "The Theological Basis of Digger Communism," p. 209.

> "For there is no respect of person with God and whosoever is posest with love, judgeth no longer as a man, but god-like, as a true Christian. What's here toward's? (sayes one) sure one of the Family of love: very well! Pray stand still and consider: what family are you of I pray? Are you of God's family? no doubt you are: why, God is love, and if you be one of God's children be not ashamed of your Father, nor his family: and bee assured that in his family, he regards neither fine clothes --- nor gold rings, nor stately houses, nor abundance of wealth, nor dignitaries, and titles of honour, nor any man's birth or calling, indeed he regards nothing among his children but love."[1]

The author proceeds to put before the public the tenets of Familism but in a form unrecognizable to the reader of Henry Nicholas' tracts. He has skimmed off the Christian social idealism and left the fantastic as an unwanted and useless residue but the work does reveal a genuine familiarity with Familist doctrine. The plea made with peculiar intensity, for the spirit of love, as the only ground for a flourishing and happy state "shows that among the sects the Family of Love particularly attracted him and influenced his thinking."[2] That Haller, a keen student of the Commonwealth social reformers should find a close correlation of thought between Walwyn and Nicholas is significant.

> "Niclaes writings are prolix and cloudy with mystical imagery, but not chaotic or --"

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1. Walwyn, Wm., The Power of Love, "To the Reader," i and ii.
2. Haller, Wm., op. cit., p. 43.

> "irrational. Within the man's often finely poetic rhapsody, there is a core of idealistic social criticism which should have been wholly congenial to one of Walwyn's temper. Niclaes has sympathy for the poor and oppressed. His independent and imaginative mind has kindled to the idealism of Christian faith. He is one of those that seek to redress the balance of this world by rescuing Christianity from the service of the conquerors, and by making its institutions accord with brotherhood and what he calls equity."[1]

Turning to the Power of Love itself the reader discovers many of the main points of Familism discussed. Man should respond to the love of God with deep personal devotion for viewing Divine love, says the author "your spirits should even burne within you, untill you found out some way to expresse your thankfulnesse for so great, so infinite love."[2] Scripture learning is not enough to make men Christian for many say,

> "We are full growne men in Christ, we have spent our time in long and painful studies; and have full knowledge---there is no place in Scripture too hard for us: shew us the mysteries we cannot reveal: the parables that we cannot clearly open: the prophecies that we cannot clearly open: the prophecies that we cannot interpret: a word or Syllable that we cannot fitly apply, etc."[3]

And yet the simple plain truth these men do not follow but become lost in a jungle of vain learning; love

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1. Ibid., p. 44.
2. Power of Love, p. 36.
3. Ibid., p. 9.

and not learning will reveal God in man. Love alone can work the transformation of life in salvation because, "God is love, and love makes man God-like"[1] and "Love will be as a new light in your understanding by which you will judge quite otherwise of all things than you formerly have done."[2] Above all the Love of God in Christ should move men to a very practical love and yet it does not always do so.

> "Consider our Saviour saith, He that hath this worlds goods and seeth his brother lack, how dwelleth the love of God in him. Judge then by this rule who then are of God's family; looke about you and you will finde in these woeful dayes thousands of miserable, distressed, starved, imprisoned Christians: see how pale and wan they looke: how coldly, raggedly, and unwholesomely they are clothed: live one week with them in their poor houses, lodge as they lodge, eate as they eate, and no oftener, and bee in the same passe to get that wretched food for a sickly wife, and hunger-starved children; (if you dare doe this for feare of death or deseases) then walk abroad, and observe the generall plenty of all necessaried, --- Neither will I limit you to observe the inconsiderate people of the world, but the whole body of religious people themselves, and in the very Churches and upon solemne dayes: view them well, and see whether they have not this worlds goods, their silkes, their beavers, their rings and other devises will testify they have; I and the wants and distresses of the poore will testify that the love of God they have not." 3

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1. Ibid., p. 36.
2. Ibid., p. 38.
3. Ibid., "To the Reader," pp. iv-v.

This last point was also made by Henry Nicholas but Walwyn rounds it out and makes an obvious contemporary application which was indeed revolutionary. Yet he was in a sense asking the question of Henry Nicholas "Where is the practical outworking of that righteousness which Christians claim to have received from Christ as the gift of God's love?" Walwyn and the Levellers were looking for perfectionism in history and were not content to await a heavenly reward and perfection alone. M. A. Gibb has said that they "watered down the eschatological teachings of Christianity,"[1] and this is true if by eschatology one means the heavenly hope alone but they had, like the Diggers, that realized eschatology which says the eternal has impinged on the temporal since the revelation of God in Christ.

One author states with definiteness that the "Doctrines of Henry Niklaes, who propounded the mystic conceptions of the Family of Love, never affected English Puritanism."[2] By this Pierce no doubt meant the central body of Puritanism and he is quite correct, but the Puritans were not always an organized party in which every member conformed to rules and doctrines. There was a

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1. Quoted in Himbury, D.M., Op. cit., p. 272.
2. Pierce, Wm., The Marplate Tracts, pp. 260-261 N.

left-wing element falling within the classification of Puritanism which found very acceptable a great deal of Familism and other mystical teaching.

When Samuel Rutherford on the titlepage of his Survey of the Spiritual Antichrist was setting out the "Familists" of his time, he named as chiefest among them John Saltmarsh (D. 1647).[1] As already noted he does not fix Saltmarsh as a member of the Family of Love but finds his doctrine to be Familist by frequent comparisons with Henry Nicholas' books. While Rutherford made the same error as his fellow Puritan Baxter in relegating everything that was mystical to the nether regions of "Familisme and Antinomianisme" he has struck upon an important fact for there can be no reasonable doubt that left-wing Puritanism made use of Familist literature. Rutherford, well acquainted with the headquarter preachers, knew the reading which stimulated the thinking of these men. Their enthusiasm Nuttall sees arising from their view of the Holy Spirit derived from unorthodox sources and this at a time when the developing "historic sense, happened to reach its acutest stage."[2] Great expectations

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1. "John Saltmarsh," in D.N.B. Fuller, T., Worthies of England (Ed. 1840) Vol. III, p. 435. Jones, R. M., Studies in Mystical Religion, pp. 483-487. Barclay, R., Inner Life etc, pp. 172,175. Brooks, Lives of the Puritans, Vol. III, p. 70 ff.
2. Nuttall, G., op. cit., p. 104.

were aroused in the minds of the more extreme Puritans.

> "It is customary for enthusiasts to find it bliss to be alive --- but among the radical Puritans 'halcyon days' seems to have been a catchword. We saw Brierely use it, so does Cradock; so does John Rogers, the Fifth Monarchist. Sibbes says of 'these latter times' that 'in the reformation of religion after our recovery out of Popery, there is a second spring of the gospel,' through 'the revelation of Christ by the Spirit, accompanying it."[1]

For Saltmarsh, Dell, Cradock, Sibbes and many others their age was "the age of the Spirit," a time fraught with divine significance, the spring of the final and highest revelation. Where did Saltmarsh and the radical Puritans draw these from? Theodore Sippell writes that it is easily seen that Saltmarsh drew his progressive concept of history from the revelations of Joachim of Fiore.[2] Nuttall notes,

> "It is probable that this issued simply from their own insistence on the centrality of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, combined with the current re-awakening of an historic sense. --- It is less likely that it depended on any rediscovery of earlier Joachite ideas, although the similarity of tone is sometimes striking."[3]

Nuttall rightly asks where Saltmarsh had read Joachim's progressive presentation of history and know-

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1. Loc. cit.
2. Sippell, T., Werdendes Quakertum, pp. 88 ff.
3. Nuttall, G., op. cit., p. 104.

ledge since there were no known translations of Joachimite writings in English and almost no evidence of a study of them. It is conceivable that one of the reprints of the Abbot of Flora's writings came to England but this remains to be shown.

Nuttall is undoubtedly right in seeing the conjunction of the new historical sense and the new awareness to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as a source of the progressive idea of history in Saltmarsh and Erbury but this is by no means the whole story. Those same springs which brought an awareness of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit also taught of progressive stages of revelation on a personal level and laid great stress upon the age of the Spirit. This was found in the Theologia Germanica[1], The Sermons of John Tauler,[2] and strongly intimated in Denck, Franck and other such mystics whose books were introduced to England by Everard and Randall, but more clearly in the writings of Henry Nicholas, possibly the most significant of the "heretical channels" and "subterranean tributaries" which suddenly surfaced in the Commonwealth era.

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1. Theologia Germanica (Ed. Winkworth) Chapt. XVI, p. 42 "Of the three stages by which a man is led upward ---"
2. Tauler, John, "How we are to ascend by stages," in Sermon XV in The Life and Sermons of John Tauler, pp. 299 ff. Cf. Sermon IX, p. 241, Sermon XXV, p. 383.

The radical Puritans were not above using writings with the initials H.N. in the frontpiece. The booksellers of London who handled Familist books along with left-wing Puritan books and tracts knew what their reading public desired and they kept their shelves stocked with Nicholas' works until after 1656. These works, Evangelium Regni, The Introduction to the Holy Understanding of the Glasse of Righteousness and the others, constantly speak of the dawning age, of the developing progressive dispensations, of the everlasting Gospel, and of "the last time." John Saltmarsh often strikes notes which seem to have found their inspiration in Henry Nicholas. Christ was for Saltmarsh the author of all truth from which he concludes that "the way to see Truth is by living in the power of Truth, by first obtaining Jesus Christ to live in us, and so to incarnate Him over again."[1] A man to really know the truth must be "Godded with God." In the same work there is a repeated "assertion of the progressive element in divine knowledge,"[2] a theme which he expands also in Sparkles of Glory (1647). In one passage entitled "The passage from lower Ministrations to higher," he writes,

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1. Saltmarsh, J., The Smoake in the Temple, Introduction. This idea is found also in Boehme, it is recognized.
2. Gorden, Alexander, "John Saltmarsh," in D.N.B. Gorden sees here also an anticipation of passages in George Fox's Journal. Cf. Weingarten, H., Die Revolutionskirchen en Englands, p. 97 on Joseph Salmon's expression of the "drei Weltperioden" in his Heights in Depths.

> "God hath appeared in all these former administrations to his people, and they have enjoyed him in these degrees, and distances, and approaches; and they remain still as figures, and as so many signs and planets in the first Creation and the second for Christians, in some measure and proportion to pass through ---.
>
> I have drawn out these ministrations in their particular orbs, and spheres, and circles, which I could have folded up in three only, of Law, Gospel and Spirit or of Letter, Graces and God, or of the first, second, and third heavens."[1]

It is significant that this analysis of history by Saltmarsh starts in a statement on personal spiritual growth and leads into a personal progressive application of perfectionism for he goes on to say, "I saw God something abounding and variously dispensing, and I followed him in that fulness and variety so far, as he hath lighted my candle."[2] Had it stopped on the personal level it could be seen to have come from Tauler, or Theologia Germanica, or Boehme alone, but the transporting of the theme into the dual realm of personal experience and historical revelation would seem to indicate an acquaintance with Henry Nicholas' most popular work Evangelium Regni. Chapter four of this work gives its outline in four points indicating that it will show the fall of man,

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1. Saltmarsh, J., Sparkles in Glory, p. 48.
2. Ibid., pp. 48-49. "The Christian passes through several ages etc." Cf. pp. 49-55.

the seeking Love of God, how God approached man "nearer in clearness through the process of tyme" and finally how that God "in this daye of his Love" gives the highest of his revelations to man.[1] Nicholas develops this progressive theme quite fully as he writes,

> "the Lawe of Moses (which is litteral and for the Sinnes cause wrought death) had ministered her Office, till the death of the Sinne, in the Death of Jesus Christ, then had the Lawe which in her Service, required Righteousness --- served out her office with the Diciples of Christ. --- With the Death or Ende of Sinne the true spirituall Lawe or heavenlie Ordinances which made them alive in Jesus Christ, came unto them wherethrough the fore-going Service of the Lawe, was fulfilled and ceassed with them."[2]

With Christ there was established "the true Light" for he was minister of the "very true and heavenlie Goods" but when he ascended he "multiplied himself through the Seede of the holie Gost."[3] Despite this second great offer of God in a new dispensation men turned aside and darknesse reigned as they turned back to figures and ceremonies. But now is the

> "Daye of Love and of the appearing of the Comming of Christ -- In which Daye God will now, with the Spirit of his mouth --"

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1. Evangelium Regni, p. 13. Cf. The True and Spiritual Tabernacle which shows H.N.'s conception of the highest revelation.
2. Ibid., p. 61.
3. Ibid., p. 61 B.

> "slaye the Antichrist --- and set up
> againe the daylie Offering: and judge
> the People with his Light and Righteous-
> ness."[1]

The Antichrist of religious systems and external ceremonies "hath exalted himself with his deadlie Service and false Light against all which is God,"[2] but in the impending age of the Spirit this will be made right. This time is near and men are exhorted to "consider the Tyme, O all yee people which love the Trueth of Jesus Christ."[3] The Evangelium Regni throughout develops this progressive revelation on the level of personal experience as Terra Pacis and The Eight Vertues.

Saltmarsh likewise taught that the third age, that of the Spirit, commenced after Christ's ascension and that men are no longer required to follow the teaching of the Gospel Age any more than they are required to keep the Law, for Christ had after his ascension established a ministry beyond that of his fleshly manifestation.

> "So it is in that first Gospel-
> administration of gifts and ordinances
> after Christ ascended, there were such
> pure operations of the Spirit, as in gifts,
> and some outward institutions and Church-
> administrations, but these were only the
> Ministration for that age, and the Temple,
> Priesthood, and Sacrafices for their age,
> and the flesh of Christ for its age or time;--"

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1. Evangelium Regni, p. 68.
2. Ibid., p. 65 B.
3. Preface p. i. Cf. Sparkles of Glory, pp. 133-134.

> "so as the falling away is no more, but the Lord gathering up, or taking in the outgoings, operations, or gifts of His Spirit in such a way of ministration, and till this was done, there was a withholding of the mystery of iniquity from being revealed."[1]

It is sin for the Christian to refuse to move out in the power of the Spirit forthat is being like the disciples who "when Christ was dead were embalming the body, and would preserve it with spices and ointments when the spirit and life was out of it."[2] Men are failing to recognize these dispensations in which God has revealed himself. The external law has passed away, the revelation in Immanuel was not the final word of God, now in this Day God reveals truth by the actual presence of Christ in the heart.

The frontpiece of Evangelium Regni refers to the new message of this last time as the "everlasting evangelie" and Jessop witnessed that the Familist message in the early 17th century retained that theme and taught a progressive concept of history as well.[3] Saltmarsh may have been thinking in this vein when he wrote,

> "The Gospel is everlasting (Rev. 14:6) for it is the tidings and Revelation of

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1. Saltmarsh, J., Sparkles of Glory, p. 52.
2. Ibid., p. 54.
3. Jessop, E., A Discovery of the Errors of English Anabaptists, pp. 90-91. Quoted on p. 214 of this study. Nuttall, P., op. cit., p. 104 quotes from M. Llwd, Gweithiau, Vol. I, p. 196. "Why do you come in the late afternoon and not in the morning with your news? Because it is toward the end of the world that the everlasting gospel is to be preached." Cf. Penney, E., A Journal of George Fox, Vol II, p. 27. See Nuttall's extended comments pp.108-110.

> "God, in love, grace, or mercy to his, or God manifested in flesh, or making his tabernacle with men.
>
> This Gospel, which is no other than the mystery of Salvation, revealed or declared in Spirit to men, is clothed in several administrations, as that of the Old Testament and the New, the Scriptures of both being the Revelation of heavenly things by earthly or created things, or by natural forms or expressions, so as the letter is a parable, figure, or allegory, by which spiritual things are spoken and brought forth amongst men;"[1]

To the spiritual excitement and sense of expectancy in the air the Evangelium Regni also had much to contribute to a man of Saltmarsh's personality. This is the day of which Isaiah spoke, "Beholde (sayth the Lord) I will do a new Thing; and it shall now appeare -- Againe: A Spirit or Winde shall blow fourth from my face."[2] This is the day when

> "Jerusalem's righteousness shall rise up --- as a shining light or Cleerness -- that the heathen may see thy Righteousness and all Kinges, thy Glorie." "This is the Day of thy Glory-fying and of thy Joyfulness -- and the Daye when Jerusalem becometh seene glistening." "This is the Daye of promise-- the Daye which the Lorde maketh." "For loe I bring-fourth now my Daye so cleer, as a Light of my Glorie to the lighting of the whole Worlde with Righteousness." [3]

On the matter of outward ceremonies and ordinances Saltmarsh is again close to Nicholas. The latter wrote

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1. Saltmarsh, J., op. cit., p. 171.
2. Evangelium Regni, p. 6 (Is. 43).
3. Ibid., pp. 7-8B.

that the external services of the Law and Gospel were "without the true Light, voide of Force, for men to com-ther-through to the perfection in Jesus Christ,"[1] for these have not "ben anymore furtherance unto them nor-yet brought the people neerer unto the true Beeing."[2] It is only by union with Christ that "wee beholde with naked Cleerness the most holie which God hath brought now in the last age."[3] Saltmarsh admits, as Nicholas does in many chapters of Evangelium Regni, that in the past ordinances were symbols of truth but in this new age they are useless. Sparkles of Glory has a section "A Discovery of outward Ordinances," stating that

> "No outward ordinance or ministration of the creature or of letter can convey or confer or bring in pure spiritual things, there is a great mistake in that, and they are but signs and shadows of spiritual things, and they are to the Spirit in the New Testament as the shadows of the Old were to the flesh of Christ, figures and perishing things and to be fulfilled in Spirit and in coming of Spirit."[4]

It is recognized that Saltmarsh was one who gathered what pleased the temper of his spirit from contemporary literature and that he blended this into his

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1. Evangelium Regni, p. 70.
2. Ibid., p. 70 B.
3. Ibid., p. 57.
4. Saltmarsh, J., Sparkles of Glory, pp. 157-158. Cf. p.173. To "Idolize those outward administrations" is sin, rather seek "spiritual manifestation of God."

own enthusiastic pattern of thought. He was indebted to sources of mystical religion made popular by Everard and Randall for his expression of anti-externalism but these only indirectly teach a progressive historical revelation by their unusual stress on the Spirit, their plea to replace the Gospel ordinances of past days with the pure truth which they symbolized. Saltmarsh appears to have drawn his more positive ideas of progressive historical ages, quite Joachimite in their form as Sippel and Weingarten have noticed, from the writings of Henry Nicholas.

All that has been said here can apply equally well to William Erbury (1604-1654) who gives an even clearer statement of three consecutive dispensations each superior to the other, the last being purely spiritual.[1]

> "God under the Law and to the Fathers before, was known, as the Father. In the Gospel God was known as the Son; or the knowledge of the Son was peculiar to the Gospel-dispensation. The third will be pure Spirit, when nothing but Spirit and power shall appear, when God shall be all in all:---.
>
> You know that the appearances of God, from the beginning, have been more and more spirituall ---. In the Gospel, the presence of the Lord, and his power, was--"

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1. Bickley, A. C., "William Erbury, " in D.N.B.

> "more spiritual in inward and eternal things; --- Therefore the third dispensation --- will be more spirituall yet; for though Christ was in the days of his flesh, yet he was not full come, till the Spirit was sent; therefore this second coming will be more in the Spirit yet;"[1]

An extensive study of the very wide field of radical Puritan writings needs yet to be made in the light of Familist influence.

Henry Pickworth would have liked very much to have been able to relate George Fox to the Familists in his book, A Short Account of the People Called Quakers (1716), but he was unable to do so. The "enthusiastic Dotages" of H.N. and the Familists, he writes, were "industriously promoted" in the time of the Civil War when a shepherd named Hinks became a proselyte of that teaching.[2] He goes on to cite evidence from George Keith[3] who "Assures us, That he was originally taught the Doctrines -- by one Hinks, a Ranter, whilst they kept sheep together."[4] This appears to have been common knowledge, Pickworth feels, noting that even Samuel Rutherford earlier was aware of it, but, he continues, Fox's "Followers --- of late seem shy and owning the

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1. Erbury, Wm., Testemonies, pp. 66, 248 as quoted in Nuttall, G., op. cit., p. 106.
2. Pickworth, Henry, A Short Account of the People Called Quakers, p. 55. Cf. Journal of Friends Hist. Soc.,32.1935, p.81.
3. Henry More brings George Keith's name up frequently in Conway Letters (See index).
4. Pickworth, H., ibid., p. 16.

said Nicholas to be their Grandfather as appears by Friend Besse's Shuflings to and again about him, in his late Defense of William Penn."[1]

This may well have been one of the linkages between the Quakers and that mystical teaching laminated with Familism which was "in the air" of the England in which George Fox (B. 1624) sought for religious reality. There were many like Hinks who possessed of a little knowledge became intoxicated with a humanistic sense of individual worth and freedom, a semi-pantheistic awareness of the presence of God, and the eschatological dynamic of an age of expectancy. Fox must have met more than one such individual and as a boy with "gravity and stayedness of mind and spirit"[2] seeking "pureness and righteousness"[3] he would have listened with care, especially since he "loved any that had a sense of good, or that did seek after the Lord."[4] His experiences with the Priests at Drayton, Mancetter, and Coventry, and his decision to stop listening even to separatist ministers[5], laid him open more to the pervasive influence of mystical religion which was certainly abroad. Fox indeed went out of his

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1. Loc. Cit.
2. A Journal of the Friends Historical Society, p. 83.
3. Ibid., p. 84.
4. Ibid., p. 85.
5. Ibid., p. 106.

way in his formative years to find those who by vision or fasting were transcending the material world and discovering the truths which lay behind the veil.[1] He often found those who thought much as he did, as at Clawsen, in the Vale of Beavor, where "in several towns and villages Friends were gathered" and "the mighty power of God was there also."[2]

Hinks may have taught the Foxonians something of Familist doctrine but this passing reference cannot be used to join Familism and Quakerism together in a chronological and theological sequence. This having been said, however, there is still remaining the very strong similarity of "theological climate" between Fox and the Familists. They had much in common in doctrine but even more in their attitude to religion. Henry Hallywell noticed this in his three "Advantages of Familists and Quakers over other Sects." They both "pretend to a high degree of holiness," "boast much of immediate Inspiration" and there is a similarity of the "luscious and sweet bewitching Language which they use, as if Suger plumbs lay under their tongues."[3] One could never, however, imagine Henry Nicholas, hunted though he was,

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1. Ibid., pp. 91, 98, 102, 103, 106. "and taken leave of father and mother--travelling up and down as a stranger in the earch, which way the Lord inclined my heart; taking a chamber to myself in the town where I came, tarrying sometimes a month, sometimes more, sometimes less in a place."p.91.
2. Ibid., p. 106.
3. Halleywell, H., An Account of Familism as it is Revived and Propagated by the Quakers. pp. 124 ff. Cf. Braithwaite, W.C., The Beginnings of Quakerism, p. 238.

in the position described by Fox in this passage from his Journal.

> "The next day I came into York, where were several people that were very tender. Upon the first day of the week following, I was commanded of the Lord to go to the great minster --- accordingly I went: and when the priest had done, I told them I had something from the Lord God to speak to the priest and people. 'Then say on quickly,' said a professor that was amongst them, for it was frost and snow and very cold weather. Then I told, this was the word of the Lord God unto them, that they lived in words; but God almighty looked for fruits amongst them. As soon as the words were out of my mouth, they hurried me out and threw me down the steps; but I got up again without hurt, and went to my lodgings."[1]

What George Fox preached openly, that "Fruits" and not "Words" were required of God, was the message of Familism. The boy H.N. had asked his confessors where the fruits of this salvation wrought by Christ were to be found,[2] and as a man he declared:

> "If noew any man be a Christian or boasteth himselfe that he is illuminated and hath his fellowship with the Lorde Jesus, let him then have also a Christian Nature, and stand with us under the obedience of the Love of Jesus Christ."[3]

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1. Journal of George Fox, I, p. 156. In fairness to H.N. it must be noted that he knew that he would only have had one such opportunity and that would have led to his execution, therefore, he continued his propagation in secret.
2. Mirabilia Opera Dei, p. 4.
3. An Introduction to the Holy Understanding of the Glasse of Righteousness, p. 7. Cf. The First Epistle of H.N., Chapter VII, No. 32, p. 42.

Fox and Nicholas sought for perfection in Christ but despised those who used their spiritual perfection and union with God for the exercise of lust. Nicholas writes:

> "Oh alas, how groselie have certen taught the perfection according to the Fleash and applied the freedom of the children of God on the elementish Man, locked into the same according to the fleashly Mind, and bound or knitfast themselves thereon, with a certain use of fleashlie Dealing."[1]

George Fox would not at all have been disagreeable to this or to Henry Nicholas' description of the "Scripture-learned" who set aside the "true doctrine of Christ" which teaches "humilitie and Meekness of heart" and who "administered their own Leaven for the Bread of Life."[2] To such as this "the Scripture was becom -- as a closed Booke or darke Word that was without Light."[3] The great Quaker at Nottingham is seen standing up at the close of a sermon on the Bible as the standard by which all doctrine is tried and crying out "Oh no, it is not the Scripture" which is the standard but "the Holy Ghost by which the holy men of God gave forth the Scriptures."[4] The counterpart of this thought is found in a passage from The Introduction

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1. Evangelium Regni, p. 580. Cf. Discussion on morality in Chapter V of this study.
2. Ibid., p. 66 B.
3. Ibid., p. 65.
4. A Journal of George Fox, pp. 117-118.

which R. M. Jones feels could have "been taken from Fox's Journal or Barclay's Apology."

> "The written word of the letter is not the word itself, that cleanseth and sanctifieth the man, or which procreateth the life. But it is a shadow or figuring out of the holy and true word, a serviceable instrument whereby we are made well-affected inwardly in our souls to the true word of vivification, through the end that through belief and love we might in the spirit of our minds be made of like-being with the nature and being of the Good Life; even as the word's of Scripture witness."[1]

The observations of Henry Nicholas as he looked about him at the ministry of his day are in keeping with the attitude of Fox at York or Nottingham or in a hundred other "steeple-houses." Nicholas remarked that,

> "Heer-out wee have easilie to perceave who are the ministers of the Services and Scriptures who stand captive under the Letter and which are the right. Beleevers and Disciples of Christ that as faithful servants of the Lorde passe or wade thorowe the Servitude of the Service and Letter and obedientle fulfill the same and so become borne again to children of God."[2]

That George Fox and the early Friends would have endorsed this statement there can be little doubt as their criticism of "professors" and "Hireling priests" is read.[3]

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1. An Introduction to the Holy Understanding of the Glasse of Righteousness, Chapter VII, Sec. 29.
2. Evangelium Regni, Chapt. XVII, p. 41B. Cf. AJournal, p.200.
3. A Journal of George Fox, p. 204. "This gospel was freely preached that day, over the heads of about forty hireling priests." "For the steeple-houses and pulpits were offensive to my mind, because both priests and people called them the house of God, and idolized them." pp. 162. Cf. pp. 120, 121, 122, 194-195, 200-201.

Whatever George Fox derived from Familism he tells nothing of it in his Journal, as his only reference to them is as one of a number of parties with which he debated.[1] It seems, however, that many of the "tender" who so readily joined Fox belonged to that wide, unorganized, mystical element which had been influenced by the earlier Society of Familists and by the writings of H.N. These people who stressed love, the operation of the Spirit in the life of the Christian, holy living, perfectionism, silent worship, simplicity of life, and who used Familist writings for want of something better, would find in George Fox that which satisfied their religious longings. To say that Fox appealled to these "quiet in the Land" because he himself was deeply indebted to them in an earlier period of his life would, with what is known at the present, be going too far.

Theodor Sippell while at the Library of the Society of Friends, London, in 1928, discovered a mss. entitled Annual Catalogue which gives a partial key to the library of George Fox.[2] The list contains 112 items

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1. Sewell, Wm. A History of the Quakers, Book III, pp. 88-89 and p. 334, says Fox spoke against the excesses of Familism in a certain situation. This by no means indicates that he was opposed to many of the principles of H.N. or that he earlier was opposed to the "Seekers or Family of Love." Cf. Penn's "Preface" to A Journal of George Fox, p.IX.
2. "George Fox's Library," in The Journal of Friends Historical Society, XXVIII, 1931.

and shows the interest of Fox in Continental mystics since several of their writings were in his possession.[1] The most significant for this study was Den Spegel der Gerechticheyt, dorch der Geist der Liefden, unde den vergodeden Mensch H.N. uth de Hemmelische Warheit betüget (Antwerp: Christopher Plantin, 1580), the chief work of Henry Nicholas.[2] Fox could not, it is generally thought, have read the book himself though there is listed here also a short conversational phrase book for Dutch and French as well as a Dutch Testament.[3] He may have used a translator or a manuscript copy like the fragmentary one in the Bodelian Library, Oxford which contains six chapters in English.[4] The fact that Fox had an interest in the work of Henry Nicholas leads to the thought, that he most probably possessed in his library some of the many English translations of that author's work as well. Giles Calvert had made available once again the Evangelium Regni[5] which is by and large a summation of Den Spegel, George Whittington in 1649 printed An Introduction to the

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1. Listed also are Divinity and Philosophy Dissected, Amsterdam: 1644 (Trans. G. Randall)?Cf. Jones, R.M. Spiritual Reformers, p. 257 and 261 ff). Franck, S., The Forbidden Fruit, London? 1640. (Trans. J. Everard, Cf. Jones, R.M., Op. cit., p. 239).
2. Only three copies of this are now known. Two in Leiden and one in the Guildhall Library, London. At that time Henry More, Lady Conway and George Fox all had copies.
3. Fox did visit Holland in 1684. Journal of Friends Hist. Society, No. 6.1909, p. 37. On G. Fox's use of the Dutch New Testament see Bulletin of F.H.A.,III,p.156 & XIV,p.68.
4. Rawlinson Collection.
5. This was only one of seven of H.N.'s works done by Calvert. Cf. Journal of Friends Historical Society,XX.

Holy Understanding of the Glasse of Righteousness, Samuel Satterthwaite in the same year produced the pilgrim epic Terra Pacis. A True Testification of the Spiritual Land of Peace, and in the same year The Proverbs of H.N. Further it is to be noticed that in this list "The title given unfortunately only names the first of several works bound together and the note at the end shows that George Fox had a least another 227 volumes not listed.---Judging from bound copies in the library of Friends House there must have been several thousand works in the collection."[1] It may well have been that Den Spegel was then only one of several Familist works in the same stack or that there may have been others scattered through the library of several thousand books on mystical religion.

Miss A. E. Terry finds in the publishing efforts of Giles Calvert a possible relationship between Quaker and Familist interests. Giles Calvert who published the major portion of early Quaker literature also published seven selected works of Henry Nicholas as well as other mystical works translated and edited by Giles Randall. It is Miss Terry's suggestion that there was a market among the early Quakers for these works and that Familist

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1. "George Fox's Library," Ibid., p. 4. Cf. Cambridge Journal II, pp. 349-351. "The Disposal of George Fox's Papers."

doctrine thus was formative in the thinking of the Friends. The possession of Den Spegel by George Fox does show that the Friends were not at all adverse to using such literature and that other editions than those done by Calvert were in circulation.

The writings of Nicholas seemingly had a flavour which appealed to the Quaker way of thought. At the beginning of the 18th century Charles Leslie noticed that Henry Nicholas' works were still in circulation and that they were being used by Quakers. Leslie wrote:

> "I have now before me the Works (or part of them) of Henry Nicholas, before mentioned, the Father of the Family of Love: They were given to a friend of mine by a Quaker, with this Ecomium, that he believed he would not find one word amiss, or one superflous in the whole Book; and commended it, as an excellent Piece.
>
> It is not unlikely that he took it for a Quaker Book; for there is not his name at length, only H.N. to it, and it has quite through the Quaker Phyz and Mein, that twins are not more alike. And tho' he directs it, To the Family of Love, yet an ignorant Quaker might take that for his own Family, and apply it to the Quakers--- For the Books of these forenam'd Sectaries are many of them still in being, and the Quakers do like and approve their doctrine."[1]

It is not difficult to understand how a Quaker could pick up and find very palatable many of the writings of Henry Nicholas, especially those reprinted in the period 1649-1656. These writings contained nothing of the fantastic

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1. Charles Leslie, Theological Works, Vol. II, p. 609, (1721)

organization of the sect as conceived by Nicholas in his later years but rather they emphasize righteousness of life, the work of the Holy Spirit, the fruitless lives of the letter-learned, the vanity of life apart from deep inner repentance, the uselessness of outworn sacraments, and the value of silent waiting. Removed from Henry Nicholas by a hundred years even his references to himself as a prophet do not seem so objectionable and in many instances if George Fox were substituted for Henry Nicholas they seem quite up to date.

Henry Hallywell was sure that Quakerism was but Familism warmed over and so stated in his book, An Account of Familism as it is Revived and Propagated by the Quakers, (1673). Hallywell compares the Quakers and Familists in six points of doctrine which are in reality six divisions of one point and his case is quite well taken. He writes that:

> "1. H.N. says that not only the law of Moses, but the ministration of Christ and his Apostles were only temporary things instituted to bring men to the full and perfect Reigne of the Spirit and as children, when they arrive at a good competency of understanding and can read well, they throw away their Horn-books and Primers; so the pedagogy of the Law and the Gospels are to be cast aside when men come to the Spirit and this dispensation of the Spirit is not only in the Familists and their doctrine."[1]

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1. Halleywell, Henry, An Account of Familism as it is Revived and Propagated by the Quakers, pp. 10-11.

> "2. The second thing wherein the Familists and Quakers are all one, is the pretence of immediate Revelation. -- Wil Gibson the Quaker says, that the Gospel which they preach, they have not received it from men, not from books, nor from writings, but by the Revelation of Jesus Christ in them."[1]
>
> "3. A third manifestation of the Familists and Quakers being one and the same sect, is their abrogation and disannuling all outward ordinances and Instituting of Religion."[2]
>
> "4. With like silly and weak confidence they (Familists and Quakers) exclaim against Forms and Prayer, whereas our Blessed Saviour taught his disciples a Form."[3]
>
> "5. Now as for Baptism, it is no wonder if they throw that by as useless carnal Ordinance--for they do but follow the guide and conduct of their own Opinions---."[4]
>
> "6. By the same Diabolical Spirit---they lay aside the sacrament of the Lord's Supper as a thing too carnal for such high flown and conceited Spiritualists---."[5]

Taking the criticisms of Hallywell in their entirety his deep bias against the misunderstanding of all spiritual religion is evident and yet there is a germ of truth in his comments. Both Familism and Quakerism felt that the Law and the Gospels had been superseded as far as practice was concerned and yet both sought for the very basic ethic which was inherent in the Law and was revealed in the Gospels, the ethic of love. Likewise

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1. Ibid., p. 16.
2. Ibid., p. 19.
3. Ibid., p. 22.
4. Ibid., p. 25.
5. Ibid., p. 29.

they both felt that beyond the letter of the law and the Gospels was the Spirit, not just as an ideal but as a divine person who led into all truth. For Familist and Quaker there was a sense that this is the epoch of the Spirit and yet both clearly look back to the Apostolic age and in common with the Anabaptists held a hope of restitution. This restitution, however, was not in the Familists and Quakers a desire to return to apostolic practice but a return to a historical point where the thread of the divine progressive revelation might be picked up. From this it is apparent what the attitude to the sacraments, prayer books and ceremonies would be in each society.

Hallywell had also charged that "Familists and Quakers put no difference between one day and another "in and many times they follow their usual trades on a Sunday."[1] In reply to this, William Penn in his reply to Hallywell entitled Wisdom Justified in her Children (1673) writes "What Familists did is nothing to us.(if they did so) But I am sure he has abused the Quakers: For it is well known they follow the Doctrine of the Apostles."[2] Penn is not quite willing here to admit that the Familists were as bad as Hallywell would have them, but he unequivocally says that Familists and Quakers were not one

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1. Hallywell, H., op. cit., p. 96. Cf. Journal of Friends Historical Society, No. I4, 1917, p. 85.
2. Penn, Wm., Wisdom Justified of her Children, 1673, .

society. The Quaker pioneer knew that enough charges were being levelled falsely at the Friends without adding to it the evil verbiage which heresiographers had laid at the door of Familism, yet oddly enough even William Penn seems to speak language very close to that of Henry Nicholas at times, especially when he spoke of the "Divers--dispensations of God since the creation of the world."[1] Beginning with innocency and the fall he tells of the age of the Patriarchs which was "much outward,"[2] then of the law with its "servitude of the ceremonies and imperfect" which had "an outward priesthood and external rites."[3] With John the Baptist came "the top of the Mosaical dispensation" followed by the dispensation of Jesus Christ "which is the dispensation of sonship" and with this there is "the beginning of the glory of the latter day."[4] The Holy Spirit began to be poured forth "giving unto them the knowledge of God in the face (or appearance) of his Son Jesus Christ."[5] Now God begins to "write his law in the heart, and put his fear and Spirit in the inward parts ---. Then signs types and shadows flew away---and all elementary services were expired in and by him that is the substance of all."[6] The "blessed end of the

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1. Penn, Wm, "Preface," in A Journal, p. i.
2. Ibid., p. ii.
3. Ibid., p. iii.
4. Loc. cit.
5. Loc. cit.
6. Ibid., pp. iii-iv.

dispensation of the Son of God" is the dawn of age of the Holy Spirit when men must "wait for the Spirit, and speak by the Spirit, and pray by the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit too," and thus enter into the purity of that "spiritual dispensation."[1] Men did not understand the "spiritual dispensation" and "degenerated apace into outsides, as days and meats and divers other ceremonies"[2] and "fell into strife and contention" and so "separating one from another." Into the church came "human inventions and novelties" and men gave themselves to superstition, will worship and voluntary humility,"[3] and "thus the false church sprang up, and mounted the chair" while the "true church fled into the wilderness."[4] Now in "this last age" some arose to bring back the truth but "practice quickly failed, for wickedness flowed in a little time, as well among the professors of the Reformation as those they reformed from."[5] The Puritans likewise failed in their reformation and then God "shifting from vessel to vessel" raised up the Seekers and Family of Love who came close to the truth but stopped just short of it and went aside."[6] Finally God in this confusion "was pleased, in his infinite love, to honor and visit this benighted

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1. Ibid., p. iv.
2. Ibid., p. v.
3. Loc. cit.
4. Ibid., p. vi.
5. Loc. cit.
6. Ibid., pp. vii-ix. Cf. Barclay, R., Inner Life etc., p. 177, and Jones, R.M., Studies in Mystical Religion, pp. 452-3.

and bewildered nation with his glorious day spring from on high."[1]

The reader of Evangelium Regni, picking up William Penn's article is struck by the very marked resemblance of the two in their presentation of the historical events across the ages leading to the age of light. This similarity is particularly noticeable in the description both men give of "the falling away" of mankind from the truth. Compare William Penn's "Preface" to Henry Nicholas, as he wrote:

> "But when-as now Many of the Children of Men fel-away from the Beleef of the true Light and Life or turned them therefrom: Clave unto or followed their Goodthinking according to the Imagination of their knowledge: and the earthlie ingenious Wisdom of the Fleash --- So ceassed then likewise with them, the true dailie offering or Godservice, the incorporating into Christ ---, the Renewing of the Life and Minde in Jesu Christ--- And it became over then and over the whole face of the Earth, utterly night and darke: and through the same Darkness, the forgoing service which leadeth to the Life of Jesu Christ, became unknown and there entered in much Ranting and Division among the Children of Men."[2]
>
> "For with all them that turned-off and went astray --- the Beleef of Salvation was forsaken and the Scripture was become to them all, as a closed Booke or darke Woord that was without Light. For that cause also the service which was administered out of the Letter of Scripture, of the ----"

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1. Ibid., p. x.
2. Evangelium Regni, p. 64. Cf. Wm. Penn's "Preface," to A Journal, pp. IV and V.

> "Unilluminated was as a dead Body without Soule or as a dead Wife which is deseassed from her husband and can bring-fourth no Children of Life."[1]

Penn's "Divers dispensations"[2] run a very close parallel to the interpretations of history given at greater length in the Evangelium Regni of Henry Nicholas. There is the age of the Prophets: "this dispensation was much outward, and suited to a low a servile state."[3] With Jesus Christ came "the dispensation of the Son of God" but this quickly gave way to the dispensation of the Holy Spirit by which "Christ's Light and Spirit" --- shined in them"[4] and so "signs types and shadows flew away." Men were not ready for such an age yet and so "human inventions and novelties, both in doctrine and worship, crowded fast into the church."[5] Here Nicholas and Penn see a long dark age which the Reformation tries unsuccessfully to bring to a close but the truth of inward religion is brought to light in a "glorious day spring from on high."[6]

These then are great days with "fresh manifestations of God's power and spirit"[7] in which in the face

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1. Ibid., p. 65.
2. Penn, Wm., "Preface", A Journal, p. i., Cf. Evangelium Regni, Chapter IV.
3. Ibid., p. ii.
4. Ibid., p. iv.
5. Loc. cit.
6. Ibid., p. v.
7. Ibid., p. x.

of severe persecution "the God of all tender mercies was with them in his glorious authority, so that the hills often fled and the mountains melted before the power that filled them."[1]

While recognizing the shortcoming of literary comparisons as a method of proving a relationship, it must likewise be recognized that there is a strong current running through each of these works which is much the same. It cannot be said that they have a common environment for Nicholas preceded William Penn by more than a hundred years and so it seems quite likely, though not certain, that Penn knew of the Evangelium Regni and used it.

Henry More, the Cambridge Platonist, in his efforts to dissuade Lady Conway from her interest in the "crooked and perverse teachings of Quakerism" gives another insight into the Familist-Quaker relationship. In their now famous correspondence is found "a true reflection of the struggle which took place in the soul of infant Quakerism: the struggle between Familism and Apostolic Christianity."[2] More assumes that "Quakers took their original from Behmenism and Familism[3]"and his arguments

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1. Ibid., p. xi.
2. Nuttall, G., James Naylor: A Fresh Approach, p. 2.
3. More, H., A Collection of Several Philosophical Writings, (1662), p. 49.

continually follow this trend of thought as did those of Baxter, Pickworth and Halleywell. Lady Conway "the most brilliant of the brilliant women of that generation,"[1] and an independent thinker on her own right, had correspondence with several philosophers but she especially favored Henry More who called her his "dearest Friend" and who "loved her all his life."

In 1670 Lady Conway had been reading the books of Henry Nicholas and in a letter to More inquires whether he was acquainted with them.[2] She seems to have become interested in H.N. after reading Boehme and "saw in the Familists, as later in the Quakers, only the best aspects."[3] Her only knowledge of them came from their literature and "her imagination was captured by the impassioned language of Nicholas."[4] The Cambridge Platonist replied in a manner calculated to discredit Familists and Quakers alike:

> "A Quaker whyle I was in London brought our severall parcells of choice books amongst which also was the bible, and began to burne them in cheap side or the Exchange. I asked if there were of H.N.'s books among them, but the party told me no. Truly it wer a very desirable thing to the Familists that the whole Bible were burnt and every leaf thereof burned into ashes, els H.N. will never appeare to ---

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1. Nicolson, M.N., Conway Letters, p. 1.
2. Conway Letters, 381, 382. (Nicolson's notes).
3. Loc. cit.
4. Loc. cit.

> "posterity to be an inspired man, but a meer Mock-Prophet, so mad and phrantick are his allusions to and interpretations of Scripture. I have besides his Introduction, read over his Figure of the Spirituall Tabernacle and part of the first book of his Speculum. And truly I came not with an indifferent minde, but with a desire that he should appeare better to me than he has heretofore, and I must confesse in some straines of his, which were according to truth (but they are such as no true Christians but see at first sight) I was very well pleased, but there being many others that beare no compartment nor correspondency with them, but rude and silly above all measure ---."[1]

The "straines" which pleased More were those akin to the Platonic teaching which he himself espoused and that which would seem repugnant to him would be the allusions of H.N. to himself as a prophet and to the Family of Love as the exclusive society in which salvation was found.[2] Even at this More promised that he "will be looking now and then into the Speculum especially into any such part as your ladiship shall hint to me."[3]

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1. Conway Letters, pp. 303-304. (August 65h, 1670) This letter contains two lengthy sections against Familism not included here but available in British Museum Additional Manuscripts 23, 216.F 186. Nothing is to be found here not included in Enthusiasmus Triumphatus and An Explanation of the Grand Mystery of Godliness. Cf. Nicolson, M.H., Op. Cit., pp. X,XI, 304 Note 8.
2. Both Braithwaite,W.C.,(Second period of Quakerism,p.392) and Nicolson feel that both More (Platonists) and the Quakers were "Integral parts of the same movement, two inevitable aspects of the whole." Nicolson,M.H.,Op.Cit. p. 379. Nuttall differs, and rightly so, for theirs is an "utter difference of spiritual climate" in the two movements. Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience, p. 18.
3. Ibid., p. 305.

The book-burning Quaker was John Pennyman, a well-to-do wool merchant of London, who had Familist leanings and quite probably owned the works of H.N. More was not the only one who fastened on Pennyman's eccentricities to bring reproach on the followers of Fox, a fact which led the Quakers to disown him in a public paper dated August 10, 1670, just four days after More's letter to Lady Conway.[1]

It is interesting to note that both More and Lady Conway had in their Libraries a number of books by Henry Nicholas and that they refer especially to his chief work Speculum[2] printed only in "Base-Almayne," Low-German. This now very scarce work is rarely more than mentioned in relevant English literature though George Fox also possessed a copy,as already mentioned. It is wondered if Lady Conway's interest was spurred by George Fox since they both had a lively curiosity for Continental mystical writings. It is worth noting also that More was well enough acquainted with the writings of Nicholas to avoid confusing the Speculum (Speculum Justitiae) and the Introduction (An Introduction to the Holy Understanding

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1. Nicolson, R.H., Conway Letters, p. 303.N.G., Cf. Barclay, R., The Inner Life etc., p. 417.
2. More received his copy from Lady Conway. "This is to informe your Ladiship that I have receiv'd the Speculum Justitiae. I found the language a little more hard than I phancy'd it would be.", Conway Letters,p.295,June 3, 1669.

of the Glasse of Righteousness a common error then and now.[1]

In the previous year another lady, Mrs. Foxcroft, the companion of Lady Conway wrote to More that she had been reading Nicholas' books. This lady, the sister of Benjamin Whichcote, also asked about the writings of H.N. which she had been reading (possibly to the ill Lady Conway) and received this reply.

> "As for H.N. his bookes you mention, I have read them long since, and his Terra Pacis is the very best -- that I have mett with. But it is of no higher reach than may be resolv'd into ordinary poetry or prose or such morality as those which Christendome calles Infidels--."[2]

The works of J.B. (Jacob Boehme) are also mentioned in this correspondence and More found fault with these also although willing to admit that Boehme was a very good man. Mrs. Foxcroft had received these works of "H.N." and "J.B." from the library of a friend who willed them to her at his death. It is interesting to note that this friend Worthington possessed and made use of a number of Henry Nicholas' books.[3]

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1. Gordon, A., "Familists" in Encyclopedia Brittanica. Gordon makes out that the Introduction is a translation of Den Spegel (Speculum). See More's remarks Conway Letters, p. 295, June 3, 1669.
2. Conway Letters, p. 297, June 10, 1669.
3. Worthington, J., Diary and Correspondence. See James Crosseley's notes. Journal of theFriends Historical Society, Vol. VII, No. 1 and 2, pp. 7-17 and 49-55. Conway Letters, p. 296, N. 2.

In his effort to show to his "dearest friend" that Quakerism was the heir of Familism, More attempted to link George Fox with Rice John the Proud Quaker (or Familist) of Nottingham.[1] Lady Conway knowing well the ways of Fox was not taken in by the mere fact that the Quaker visited the meetings conducted by Rice and replied:

> "The reading of their (Quaker) bookes lately had in a great measure freed me from former prejudicate opinions, but their conversation doth much more reconcile me to them. What a Quaker told you of G. Fox being acquainted with Rice John is true and that he hath been sometimes to hear his congregation (as he has been at most other congregations) but they certainly affirme, that he never was of his congregation nore agreed in opinion with him, and I hope we may believe the account they give of themselves, t hat they never were infected with what you call Familisme though perhaps some simple people amongst them may have expressed themselves in suspected t erms out of ignorance."[2]

More also would have found the Christology of George Keith to have had a Familist source but this is also denied by the Viscountess.

> "I am sure this new notion of George Keiths about Christ seems farr removed from Familisme, he attributing by that more to the externall Person of our Saviour, then I think any ever hath done; he was speaking of it here for it seemed very clear to him and he was very full of it --."[3]

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1. Penney, N., ed. A Journal of George Fox, Vol. I, p.396. Lord Conway had also urged More to write to his wife inthis matter. Conway Letters, p. 409-410. On Rice John (Jones) see Braithwaite, The Beginnings of Quakerism,p.45-46. John was an aimless individual who after a sorry career kept an alehouse and died drunk. In the period spoken of above,he was a Ranter though there seems to have been a Familist element at Nottingham.
2. Conway Letters, p. 408, Nov. 29, 1675.
3. Loc. cit.

More was not willing to leave the matter at this and turned to James Nayler[1] as a sure example of "Enthusiastic devotion" for who could deny the extravagances of this man, converted by Fox at Wakefield in 1561, who entered Bristol on October 24th three years later to the crys of "Holy, Holy, Holy."

> "Methinkes that your Ladiship is over sure in that point that the Quakers in the beginning had nothing to do with Familisme. The carriage of James Naylour, who was then at least equall with Fox, is to me a demonstration how much at least many of them were tinctured with Familisme. And I was told by one, when I went up to London last, who was acquainted with the Familists, and in a manner received into their sect, that these very Familists that he was acquainted withall, to the number of about twenty, was downright Quakers as soone as the forme appeared. And I must confesse I always looked upon them as Familists onely armed with rudeness and an obstinate Activity. But that they have emerged into a greater nearnesse to the true Apostolick Christianity, all good Christians out to rejoice in. But they are hardly com off from all points of Familisme."[2]

Lady Conway doesn't enter into an argument over Naylor nor does she deny that some Quakers had been influenced by Familism,[3] but instead she defends George Fox which had been the point of her letter some three months before.

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1. Braithwaite, W.C., The Beginnings of Quakerism, pp. 247-278.
2. Conway Letters, pp. 417-418, Jan. 10, 1676. This letter closes with the P.S., "I hope all sincere Christians will meet together in Heaven at last." p. 419.
3. Jones, R.M., The Church's Debt to Heretics, p. 246.

> "I think you mistook me in what I writt of the Quakers, if I rightly remember it, for I never thought that none of the Familists might turn Quakers either at the first rising of them or since, but that G. Foxe was never listed into that Sect before his taking up of this form."[1]

It has not seriously been suggested that George Fox was ever a Familist since he quite apparently kept himself separated from all sects in the years of his seeking the truth. At the same time it is apparent that many of his associates came out of the Ranters, Seekers, and other parties named and unnamed, organized and disorganized, which were saturated with Familism, finding in the "apostolic" witness of George Fox that which satisfied their longings.

Geoffrey F. Nuttall's recent study sets that conflict "in the soul of infant Quakerism" between Familism and Apostolic Christianity around the two figures of Fox and Nayler. Nayler who represents those "tinctured with Familisme" is not called a Familist but comes from a Familist "milieu." Out of this comes an important point for if in this period specific instances of a Familist Society are sought in vain. True there is much hearsay evidence of Familist parties here and there or

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1. Ibid., p. 421. February 4, 1676. Cf. Journal of the Friends Historical Society, No. 7, 1910, pp. 52-53.

of an individual who is called a Familist but when one tries to isolate the phenomena it vanishes like a mist. Yet there is a definable Familist "milieu" which was the breeding ground in varying degrees, of men like James Nayler, John Saltmarsh, William Dell, Dr. Pordage, Giles Randall, Joseph Salmon, William Erbury and many others.[1] Under the vague names of Familists, Ranters, Seekers and Behemenists were great numbers who influenced by the writings of Henry Nicholas, and later by those of Jacob Boehme were setting the pace in mystical religion.[2] Baxter as early as 1654 saw Familism and Behemism as the dual formative agents in Nayler, and from this same source it is seen that this radical was one of the "leading seducers" spreading this hybrid mysticism.[3] What did Nayler's Familism consist of?

> "That Christ was "a Type, and but a Type;" and that it was possible for man "totally to be inhabited by Christ," "out of the Creature," "having dependence upon none," in perfect unsinning obedience: such was the Familist teaching which diverted Nayler from Apostolic Christianity and which, with a simplicity divine if also naive, he sought to put into practice."[4]

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1. Jones, R. M., The Later Period of Quakerism, Vol. I, p.8
2. Hunt, J., Religious Thought in England, Vol. I, p.240.
3. Nuttall, G., James Nayler, pp. 3-5,7.
4. Ibid., p. 9.

The weird extremes to which Nayler carried his beliefs need not be recounted here but what is of importance is their influence on Quakerism and here Nuttall in his "fresh approach" has done great service in clarifying the issues. Nayler was within the ranks of early Quakerism a representative of a disruptive mysticism strongly suspected of anti-nomianism but after his "repentance and confession" he became a corrective in Quakerism to "the doctrines of perfection and infallibility!"[1] It was unfortunate, writes Nuttall, that Nayler died and that "the balance between Fox and Nayler, so tragically lost by Nayler's fall, was not retrieved."[2] Nayler who had carried the Foxonian principles to shocking extremes recovered from his "Familist imaginings" and would have built a Quaker theology, still a theologia pectoris, much nearer the ideals of Apostolic Christianity, than Fox, but he was not spared to do so.

There is another side to the Familism of Nayler, always a beautiful Christian character, which should be noted. This lies in his very practical admonitions to love and forgiveness. He admonishes the Friends to put away "that which the enemy hath cast long upon the

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1. Ibid., p. 16. Braithwaite, W.C., The Beginnings of Quakerism, p. 244 ff., also notices this.
2. Ibid., p. 19.

children of light (to wit) want of love" and instead to put on Christ,

> "so plentifully that you may have (wherewith) to cast over a brothers nakednesse, a garment of the same love, who came from above to lay down his life for his enemies, and of the same power, who can forgive sins, and offences, above seven times a day, beholding each others with that good eye which waits for the soul and not for the sinne, which covers, and overcomes the evil with the good...giving more abundant honour to him that lacketh, that in the body be no schisme, nor defile one another, nor keep alive a Brothers iniquity, nor blot out the name, and appearing of the holy seed in the least...and the appearance shall be the Lords...and...at his coming shall he...correct every false judgment, and that which ensnares the simple will be cast out."1

Henry Nicholas gave a similar instruction to the House of Love in The First Exhortation and other passages. Such teaching was part of the "milieu," Familist-Behmenist,from which James Nayler had received his strong socio-ethical emphasis and he carried it with him unto the Quaker ranks. It was an important part of his message both before and after his repentance, and a much needed specific against the growing pride of perfection encouraged by George Fox.

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1. Nayler, J., A Message from the Spirit of Truth, 1658), pp. 8 ff., as quoted in Nuttall, G., op. cit., p. 19.

CHAPTER VII

A Discussion of the Dominant Features of Familist Thinking.

CHAPTER VII

In the sixteenth century men found the final irrevocable religious authority in an infallible church, an infallible book or in infallible human reasons; each of which lent itself to a systematic presentation in the form of dogma. There was, however, another court of appeal for truth, one which lay within the ground of the human soul; "the belief in the inspiration of the individual."[1] This was "inner-light" mysticism which said that all "theological tenets whether they are related to objects of faith or modes of worship, were of no sort or moment," and consequently, "it was a matter of perfect indifference what opinions Christians entertained concerning the divine nature provided their hearts burned with the pure and sacred flame of piety and love."[2] This mystical religion, finding the Word of God within, allowed a flexibility of individual expression and avoided the strict doctrinal boundaries by which every tenet of the Christian faith is carefully fenced off. Such an approach they left to those whom they called the "Scripture-learned which are arrogant and proud in their Mind and their own Wisdome."

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1. Inge, Wm., Mysticism in Religion, p. 15.
2. Mosheim, Ecclesiastical History, (Maclaine's notes), Vol. IV, p. 484.

It is no surprise then to find the thought of Henry Nicholas concealed in the mystical entanglements of his writings which are devoid of formal theological presentation. In the mind of the mercer-prophet such exercises were more suitable to the age of "the Body of Christ" than to the age of "the Spirit of Christ." The several statements of faith presented by the Familists in defense of their position support this view for, while in several cases they use the Apostles' Creed as their outline, their content is a far cry from the ordinary commentary.[1] An example of this is H.N.'s comment on "We believe in God the Father;" He wrote:

> "God the Father with the discipline of his Lawe; manneth himself, according to the inward Man, with us, and we become likewise with the Cleernes of his godlie Light--godded or made-conformable, in a good-willing Spirit to the upright Righteousness with hym. To thend that wee through his owne Beeinge should beare or carye, as Men of God; his holye Name, under the Obedience of his Lawe, and lyve and walke eavenso; according to the Lawe or Ordinance of his true Beeng: in all Love."[2]

The major appeal of Familism, as with all such parties from Apostolic times onward, was to the deeper,

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1. De wet de vornompste geboden Godes etc., Dat uprecht Christen-gelove des Glemein shappes. The First Exhortation of H.N., pp. 10 ff. Cf. Nippold, Op. Cit., p. 545 ff.

more profound, hidden truth which lay behind the symbols of the Christian religion. Their objective was to take the inscrutable things and to present them with "naked cleerness" and thus to give a new meaning to all externals. Nicholas, like Boehme and Fox a little later, said that outward profession, learning and church going were not enough to fulfill the requirements of a God who desired to dwell in man's soul.[1] The unum necessarium of religion is that a man become "Godded with God" so that there is a marked change in his entire mode of existence. The Familists, in common with German mysticism, made much of the second birth, the birth of Christ in the soul. They would have found very acceptable the words of a later German mystic, Angelius Silesius:

"Wird Christus tausendmal zu Bethlehem Geboren
und nicht in dir, du bliebst noch ewiglich verloren."

This alone could lead to all truth, to the final authority, to the experience of salvation by the "renewing of the minde, from the naked or uncovered face of our Lord Jesus Christ."[2] The Family of Love had a magnetic attraction for those who sought "the fruits of the Spirit in the churches and found only dry rustling leaves;"[3] it drew

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1. Emott, E. B., The Beginnings of Quakerism, p. 83.
2. First Exhortation, p. 137. The only real truth is "the truth of the naked and uncovered Face of Christ among the children of Men."
3. Jones, R. M., Mysticism and Democracy, p. 127.

together many whose emphasis was on experience rather than doctrine. It laid claim to the "gnosis" by which divinely given revelation, obscured as it was by the letter and hidden by the symbol, was elucidated.

The solution to the root problem of Familism, the tension between forensic and attained righteousness, Henry Nicholas found in the unfolding of the doctrine of love. His entire system radiates from this central point; the dawning age is the "Daye of the Love;" the Holy Spirit is the "Holy Spirit of the Love of Jesus Christ;" the society is the "House of Love" or the "Family of Love." There is no doubt that his first inception of the love concept came in his youthful contact with the Franciscans. These teachers described Francis of Asissi as "wholly sunk in the love of God,"[1] and viewed the world as "inundated by the streams of God's love," which "press upon the soul and penetrate it, beleaguer it from all sides." The theme of love was taught also in the Imitation of Christ[2] well known in the Netherlands.[3] Nicholas differed from Francis and most Roman Catholic mystics in that there is little of the sickening sentimentalism, ascetically excited ecstacies, and pantheistically

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1. Arseniew, N., Mysticism and the Eastern Church, p. 100.
2. Ibid., p. 102.
3. Paurrot, P., op. cit., pp. 304-307.

tinged nature-mysticism. The experience of love was removed from the monastery; it was defrocked, taking on a social rather than a selfish outlook. This would appear to be the influence of German mysticism on Nicholas, probably via the Brethren of the Common Life, an influence which when activated became a modifier of his earlier ideas of love. Without this adaptation, Henry Nicholas' writings would have been meaningless to the sects in England.

Love for the Familists was the provider of all blessings both temporal and spiritual, it was in itself the dynamic which implemented the human contact with the divine source, and it summed up within its orbit that which is the final goal of all things. "Love is the Light of the World," H.N. maintains, "whoso follows after her, walketh not in darkness."[1] Again he writes, "Love is the gracious word of the Lord."[2] It is the summum bonum, "essentially the very true good, the head-sum of the commandment, and the bond of perfection."[3] It is through love that "the secret treasures of God the Father and the abundant riches of his spiritual and heavenly goods be revealed."[4] One cannot receive the "heavenly goods" without Love for "the children of Love are the upright

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1. The Figure of the True and Spiritual Tabernacle. To the Reader No. 13.
2. Ibid., No. 14.
3. Loc. cit.
4. Ibid., No. 15.

heirs of God."[1] Nothing surpassed love,

> "For the end or perfection of all things (namely the chief sum of all good or all what one can name for righteousness or truth) that is the Love: yea, all that is to be known or understood of the godly things, that is the Love; and her mystery is the everlasting life."[2]

The deliverance from sin and the attainment of the varying degrees of holiness ascending to perfection was implemented not primarily by faith, though that is involved, but by love. In the developing stages of revelation faith, the means of holding on to the unseen,is supplanted by love for in this "Daye of Love" men can see with "naked cleerness" the being of God in Christ. In this age of the Spirit the Holy Spirit of the Love of Jesus Christ is the dynamic which leads men and teaches them truth.

Influenced though he was by the "I love" of sixteenth century Franciscan Catholicism, Nicholas was not satisfied by it for it had grown ineffectual and effete but his problems were not resolved by the "I believe" of Protestant theology. As he pieced together his novel doctrine from ideas picked up here and there, he became more convinced that mystical religion with a

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1. Ibid., No. 17.
2. The Second Epistle of H.N., Chapter 2, No. 13.

strong personal and social ethic of love was the answer. It is this central ideal which stands in such vivid contrast to Luther's theology and did so from the first for although he was influenced by German mysticism, and strongly so, Luther followed Augustine in the supremacy of Faith and the subservience of the human will in the saving work of God.[1] Albert Hyma contrasts the theology of love and that of Faith.

> "Luther speaks of love, but not as the result of faith. He begins with faith in God and ends with love for his neighbor. The Christian Renaissance on the other hand (and the Roman Catholic church as well) teaches that love is supreme and that faith is generated by it. Groote, Radewijns, Zerbolt, and the 'Imitation,' do not consider perfect faith the highest good but perfect love."[2]

It has been doubted whether faith and love differ with one another at all. "The distinction," one author says," is not in essence but accidence---. The words are one; only the dialect differs."[3] This may well be for "love embraces belief, and belief subsumes love," yet each will, if given an undue emphasis, engender

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1. This is not to say that Augustine did not stress love. See Burnaby , J., Amor Dei, on the idea of love in Augustinian thought.
2. Hyma , A., The Christian Renaissance, pp. 326-327. Hyma adds that Luther's followers "not seldom shewed a deplorable lack of charity and forebearance."
3. Channing-Pearce, M., "Belief and Love," in Hibbert Journal, July 1949, p. 372.

a system which exalts either love or faith as the essential religious fact. Henry Nicholas having placed dogma in a position of relative unimportance, made little of faith and gave an undue emphasis to love.

It has well been said that "no body has ever expected more of man's possibilities than did the Familists."[1] Their avowed objective was to raise man to "the stature of the fulness of Christ" in this present life without waiting for a hereafter. Barclay sees in their teaching sanctification as subsequently taught by Fox and Wesley, noting that in sixteenth and seventeenth century England it was "becoming greatly obscured or wholly lost sight of."[2] As previously discussed, Nicholas was not original in his perfectionistic doctrine for he drew it from the Franciscans, the Deutschen Mystiker, and the more extreme sects in his environment. The Pantheistic parties abounded in the Low countries and were feared by the church for their teaching on "the annihilation of personality"[3] and the evils attendant on such doctrine. Brandt describes a clash between "Kornhert" and one of these pantheists.

> "First, Kornhert asked him: Do you believe that God is without beginning, and ending, and that he is everlastingly happy? To which N. ---

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1. Jones, R. M., Mysticism and Democracy, p. 128.
2. Barclay, R., The Inner Life etc., p. 28.
3. Huizinga, J., The Waning of the Middle Ages, p. 179.

> "answered, Yes. K. Can anyone be happy without being joyful? N. No. K. No body is joyful without knowing that he is so, and why. N. Right for happiness cannot be without joy. K. You answer well; but pray tell me, how old are you? N. About five and forty years. K. Say then, did you not observe with pleasure about eighty years ago, that you were happy? N. Eighty years ago I was not in being, how could I then rejoyce --? Methinks you mock me Kornhert. No, poor Mortal, replied Kornhert, but you mock me, whilst you falsely boast yourself to be God, for God is eternal, and happy and joyful; but you are not so."[1]

This pantheistic Libertinism as preached in Lefarges shop in Paris and by the Essentialists in Edinburgh was not the doctrine of Henry Nicholas. Despite his many errors he cannot be classified with the Antinomians among the mystics. He may, however, have been swayed by their enthusiastic claims about the perfection of man and yet stayed on a more moderate path himself, perhaps warned by the wild confusion of the Jorists. Nicholas' doctrine of perfection, thus, did not spring from pantheism but like that of Fox from "a time when he was shocked by the inconsistency of religious professors."[2]

When H.N. spoke of being "Godded with God, in the Spirit of his love,"[3] he was using one of a number of

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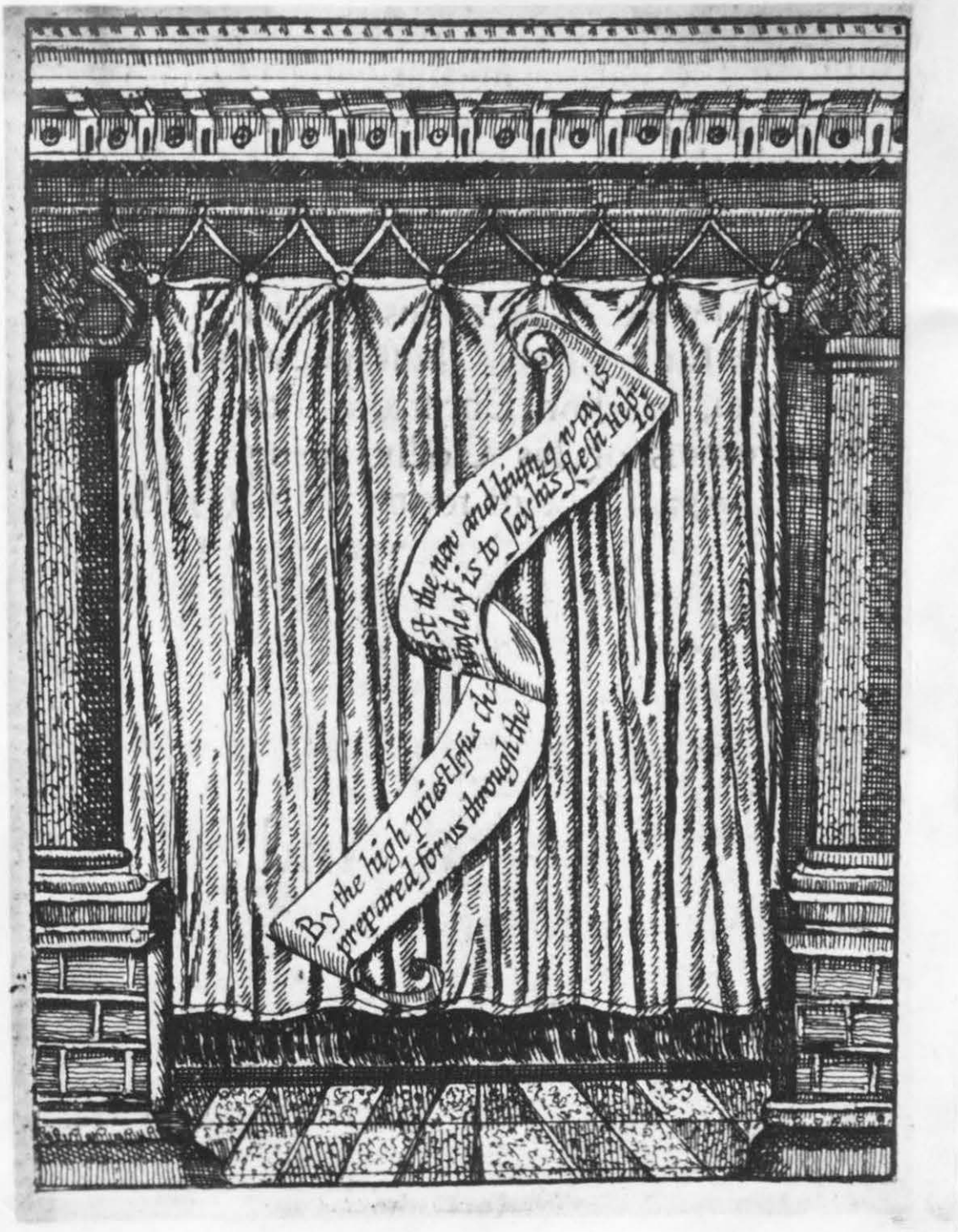
1. Brandt, G., The History of the Reformation in the Low Countries, p. 105.
2. Flew, R. N., The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology, pp. 282-283. Cf. Chapter III, p. 79 of this study.
3. Evangelium Regni, p. 3A.

phrases which he employed to indicate the attainment of that state of perfection which man possessed before his fall. He variously calls it "the eighth vertue or Godlynesse," "the spiritual land of peace," "the new life of the true life of God the Father," "the spiritual or heavenly birth," et cetera. It is a common principle in mysticism at least since the time of Clement of Alexandria who spoke of it as "deification."[1] The host of neo-Platonic and Pseudo-Dionysian mystics who trail across the Middle Ages also found deification at the head of the three steps of purification, enlightenment and unitive love.[2] Of signal import here is the appearance of this teaching of "goddedness" in the Gottesfreunde. Rulman Merswin said that those who ascended the "Neun Felsen" "have become God."[3] "Let this not surprise you," Merswin wrote, "you should know that persons, who in this time attain God's gift of looking into the source, become through grace what God is naturally."[4] The Theologia Germanica taught that

> "God is apprehended only in the soul, and to the end Man may receive God, the scriptures and the sacraments --"

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1. Scott, W. M., Aspects of Christian Mysticism, pp.33-34.
2. Inge, Wm., op. cit., p. 162.
3. Seesholtz, A. G., Friends of God, p. 154.
4. Quoted in loc. cit.



The new and living way.
A Figure of the True and Spiritual Tabernacle

> "are a useful but secondary means. Man receiving God abandons self, loves nothing but God, loves all men because all men are of God: Since God loves only God,man deified through Christ can but love man as a vessel of Christ. Men who love God live in the contemplations of the divine and in the inner peace of brotherhood with all humankind."[1]

Nicholas was very close to the Theologia Germanica's teaching "wo Gott als Gott Mensch ist" that is "God wills that Himself in man be worked and practiced."[2] Both taught that God was born in the likeness of His own Son in the "ground" of the soul and both distinguish between a "deified man" (vergotter-mensch) and "false lights" or "false free spirits."[3] Likewise in both the "passion of love, which shifts the values of life, is the key -- to the victory that overcomes the world."[4]

The Familist concept of salvation centered in this idea of the "deification" of the Pilgrim who travels to the "Spiritual Land" or who, as it is also put, ascends the ladder of the "Eight Vertues." The process involves a new birth which comes to those who are faithful in "fulfilling or accomplishing -- the serviceable Woorde of his Requiring" and this new birth in man "is the God-

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1. Haller, Wm., The Rise of Puritanism, p. 207.
2. Theologia Germanica, (Ed. Winkworth) Chapt. XXX and LI. Cf. Seesholtz, A.G., op. cit., p. 162.
3. Seesholtz, A. G., op. cit., p. 158.
4. Jones, R. M., Studies in Mystical Religion, pp. 327-8.

head and Trueth and Spirit of God or God's true Beeing itself," and with this "incarnation" comes "the Inheritance of all spirituall and heavenlie Goods."[1] In this experience

> "the Vayle that was before the Most-holie is removed from the Most-holie and the Middle-wall, which was betwixt them and God, is taken away: and eavenso is the true Righteousness become the cleerness and friendliness of the uncovered Face of God and Christ made manifest."[2]

This is not accomplished in "a flight into the one" but through the work of Jesus Christ. It is not, as is often the case in mysticism, something apart from the divine initiative and through human effort; rather, it is to be drawn by Love into a full following of Christ,

> "To the end that we should in the true holie place (wherein Christ if we enter into the same with him; beareth our Sinnes and taketh them cleere-away from us) becom implanted into Christ with the like Death of Christ, and his Death of the Crosse and to follow-after him therein in the holie; wee obtaine everlasting Remission and purging of the Sinnes and ye Making-alive or Resurrection from the Death in Jesu Christ, as also the eternall Life, with all holyons and Righteoes and inherit evenso the true spiritual Goods, with Christ in the heavenly being."[3]

The soteriology of Nicholas is built on the idea of man's being "Godded with God." Only the "illuminated"

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1. Evangelium Regni, p. 24 B.
2. Ibid., p. 55.
3. Ibid., p. 56.

or "Godded man with whom the Most highest is also Manned"[1] can be saved. It is not knowledge but this experience of man with God, by which the true light shines in, that redeems. "True Light consisteth not in the knowing of this or that, but in an upright and true Being of God and his eternal Life." [2] This state is not reached immediately and so the man who "is not yet wholly godded in One Spirit of the godly Being, with God" must be careful to avoid the incorrect use of his freedom as it is so used among false lights.[3]

The cleansing so needful to every man who would be "Godded" comes to repentant hearts at the fountain of God's love,

> "When you have seen and perceived your spots, and all what is not conformable to the pure Bride of Christ: so passe then thorowe the communiality of the Holy Ones in the Love ---- and become even so washed in her pure waters namely in the pure waters of the holy Spirit of Love."[4]
> "For to become washed in the Love with her Pure Water is the upright Wasshing and the true fount of Regeneration or New-Birth."[5]

It is by this means that a man comes "into this good City of Peace," and "becometh altogether born anew in the Spirit --- through the said love and her service" and "is changed in every part, as in sences, thoughts and mind."[6]

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1. First Exhortation, p. 104.
2. Loc. cit.
3. Ibid.,pp. 129-130.
4. Ibid., p. 64.
5. First Epistle, III, No. 1.
6. Terra Pacis, p. 118.

To be "Godded" by the power of life involves the via negativa for those who would achieve this must be

> "such as forsake themselves or go without all their Counsell, Will, and Wisdome: turn themselves about with all their hearts, to the childish Simplicity, and submit them under love."[1]

Those who reject the way of self denial "must perish in their own wisdom of the darknesse and dye in their sins" and "obtain everlasting Condemnation, and not behold the lovely Face of God and Christ evermore."[2] Only by this washing of love and denying of self can a man "becom implanted into Christ with the like Death of Christ, and his Death of the Crosse."[3] This is the way, wrote Nicholas, that "wee obtaine everlasting Remission and purging of the Sinnes and ye making alive or Resurrection from the Death in Jesus Christ as also the eternall Life."[4]

Samuel Rutherford was quite inconsistent in his criticism of Familism and this is not difficult to understand. On the one hand he saw them as antinomians who received their pantheistic doctrine from the Libertines,[5] while on the other hand he declares that they are Pelagians.

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1. First Exhortation, p. 97.
2. Loc. cit.
3. Evangelium Regni, p. 56.
4. Ibid., p. 56.
5. Rutherford, S., Op. Cit., Part I, pp. 65-68.

> "Of all means by which men are saved through Christ, they speake only of the works of the Law, of inherent righteousness and repentance, not one word of free grace, faith in Christ, and the imputed righteousness of Christ. Familists are then the legall Pelagians, not we: no reformation is knowne to Familists, but inward, and that of the heart."[1]

Rutherford was confusing the state of perfection which Familism said was obtainable with the method by which it was obtained. There was no paradox in the doctrine of Henry Nicholas who held to a distinction between the being of God and that of man but who also taught that a man could ascend by self-denial and yieldedness of spirit to the place where he was "Godded with God," that is restored to the state before the fall. The result, perfectionism, Rutherford called antinomianism; the process, the synergistic ascent to perfection, he named Pelagianism. The Puritans accused the Familists, and with some reason, of seeking to save themselves by self-effort while the Familists declared that the Puritans made God responsible for salvation and put forth no personal effort to amend their "fleshly ways" by practical spiritual living.

Nicholas taught, then, saying that God expected men to rise above the sins of the flesh to conquer and

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1. Ibid., p. 347.

destroy them. The obtainable objective of the Christian was to have Christ formed in him in such a way that he lived without sin. Salvation meant primarily victory over sin; it is victorious life that comes from the incorruptible seed of God in the heart. H.N. insisted "on the possibility of a complete conquest over sin and an attainment of a new and transformed nature which is victorious over the impulses of the flesh."[1]

There is no reason to believe that the Family of Love were antinomian.[2] The fulfillment of the Law in Christ and in the subsequent age of the Spirit did not mean for them an abandonment of all the standards of the Law. "Christ is," wrote Henry Nicholas," the accomplishment of the Law: and erecteth the upright righteousness, among his believers, and establisheth them in the same."[3] In the House of Love the very first step toward the

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1. Jones, R. M., George Fox Seeker and Friend, p. 57. Jones notes, "It seems pretty evident that Fox was strongly influenced in his conception of salvation by the Familists." Cf. Journal I, pp. 50-51. "Then they asked me if I had no sin? I answered 'Christ, my Saviour, has taken away my sin, and in Him is no sin.'"
2. Domestic State Papers, 1591-1594, CCXLIII, No. 25, Sept. 1592. "The Papist is pure and immaculate, and has a store of goodness for himself and plenty for others. The Family of love cannot sin, but the writers, thank God, cry out peccavimus cum patribus nostris." On Familist morals see Chapter 5, p. 232 ff of this study.
3. A Figure of the True and Spiritual Tabernacle, p. 68.

perfection which is in Christ was the personal fulfillment of the Law. The exposition of the Ten Commandments by Nicholas is prefaced by the admonition,

> "Famelie of Love apply you from your youth upp; to learne and to observe the commandments of the Lord. Heere unto devour you diligently, both Night and Day: and print the same, as a Seale in your heartes, for they are unto you a life."[1]

The Familists considered that the rejectors of the Ten Commandments were rejecting Christ for they were not seeking,

> "through the Doctrine and Beleef of Jesus Christ, to the Purging from the Sinne (To the end that they through the Bloud of Jesu Christ, might becom wasshed and purged from their Sinnes and unpure consciences. Those are verely They that love not God but such as hate him Contemne his Lawe and Worde, account the Bloud of our Lord Jesus Christ, that clenseth and saveth our Soules for unpure and disdayne his Salvation."[2]

The truely Good-willing one will spend time in " Suffering and Anguish with Christ" for his sins and will give himself "daily unto prayer."[3] These obey the law as the very least of their "service," as the beginning of their ascent to perfection, and they "use not also any unlawful or disorderly liberty."[4] When they come to pray

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1. First Exhortation, p. 3.
2. Ibid., p. 11.
3. Ibid., p. 160.
4. Terra Pacis, Chapter 36, No. 15, p. 132.

it must be with clean hearts. "Endeavor you not," wrote H.N., "to enter with unwashed Feet, into God his Sanctuary."[1]

To show the difference between true liberty and false liberty Nicholas adopts the terminology of the Gottesfreunde, the true light and the false light. "Each Light engendereth his Freedom," says the First Exhortation, "but the true light engendereth a true and upright Freedom in Jesus Christ" which is "orderley and comely, also harmful to no man, edifying and helpful towards every man."[2] The Familist walks uprightly but,

> "the false-Light hath not his ministration unto the second Birth or Renewing of the Life, for to live and walk with an upright heart and meek-minded spirit in all love and concord."[3]

An echo of Nicholas' early observation of the looseness of morals among the Lutherans is heard in The First Exhortation though he may well be speaking of the Libertines as well.

> "Howbeit, in that there is presently so much spoken of the Freedome among the people, and that many of them have a lust to their own Freedome -- the which is the false Light itself, that deceiveth them. Wherethrough they are --"

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1. First Exhortation, p. 176. The conversation between a "Father and a Sonne" is largely taken up with the true-light, false-light contrast."
2. Ibid., p. 118.
3. Ibid., p. 110.

> "driven and lead, to the Disobedience of the holy Word, and to the unseemly Customes or Exercises, and inordinate Freedoms: and forsake eventhe upright and true Freedome of the Children of God, which cometh unto Man, in the Renewing of his spirit and mind."[1]

The Familists were, if anything, perhaps too legalistic in their outlook. The ascetic self-denial demanded in the progressive path to purity set out in The Eight Vertues included a plea for separation from worldly pleasures. They declared all fortune-telling to be "an unprofitable delusion, even like as are all vain games also, table playing, maskings or mummeries etc." All such practices "are also unedifying even like as are all manner of rude, light behaviour, disorderly taying and unseemly jesting."[2]

The assumption that the Family of Love fell among those mystics who were pantheistic "and therefore incapable of making moral distinctions is groundless."[3] The Ranters revived the doctrine of the Free Spirits and "were quite swept off the poise of sanity by it," being carried away by a "half digested spiritualism -- which blurred the distinction between good and evil,"[4] but this cannot be said of the Familists either on the Continent or in England.

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1. First Exhortation, p. 119. Many pages are given to this theme in the First Exhortation.
2. A Figure of the True and Spiritual Tabernacle, p. 147.
3. Ewer, M. A., A Survey of Mystical Symbolism, pp. 205-206.
4. Jones, P. M., Studies in Mystical Religion, p. 469.

It may be that the charges were due to a case of mistaken identity. The Family of Love were careful to heed the doctrine of H.N. who wrote,

> "For that cause separate you with a whole heart from every thing that hath an appearance of evil and think always upon that which is right and reasonable."[1]

The central figures of the Reformation, Luther and Melanchthon, Zwingli and Bullinger, Calvin and Beza, Cranmer and Knox, had no doubt but that the Word as speaking from the pages of the Bible was the voice of God. This was not universally true, however, for there was a formidable body of thinkers who declared that the divine Word spoke within the ground of the soul; for these the Word of God was not an outer phenomenon but a lex insita. These radicals said that the Scriptures by themselves were but an empty letter and they looked to the Spirit as their teacher. Some of the more extreme would have done away with the Bible declaring "that the Holy Scripture was undependable for the instruction of men. For men must be taught only by the Spirit,"[2] but they were not in the majority in the left wing of the Reformation.[3] Henry Nicholas and the Familists must be classified with this "inner-light"

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1. First Exhortation, p. 58.
2. Littell, F. H., The Anabaptist View of the Church, p. 21.
3. Bainton, R., "The Left Wing of the Reformation," in The Journal of Religion, Vol. XXI, 1941, p. 129.

theology which placed the Bible in an auxiliary position in its doctrine of revelation. Like Denck and Hetzer,H.N. stood aghast at the quarrels of reforming factions which bombarded each other with proof drawn from the Scriptures, each claiming the Bible to be their infallible guide. The answer to such "contentions and unprofitable Disputations," as Nicholas called their differences of opinion, was to turn to another authority, the "inner word," for if men come to know directly "the power of God and also the Mysterie of the Minde and Woorkes of God,"[1] they would be reconciled one to another in the truth. Nicholas would have agreed with Denck that the Scriptures are "above all earthly treasures" and that "they contain the truth,"[2] and he would also have said "it is God who has given to you the holy Scriptures" so that the truth on the page is entirely dependent on the Word which utters divine truth in the heart. Only by heeding the inner voice of God can the "Good-willing-one" take on once again the imago dei.

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1. Evangelium Regni, p. 45.
2. Keller, Ludwig, "An Apostle of the Anabaptists" in Baptist Quarterly Review, Vol. VII, 1885, p. 40. Cf. A Journal of George Fox, p. 200. At Lancaster Fox "was moved to declare that the Scriptures were given forth by the Spirit of God, and all people must first come to the Spirit of God."

On at least one occasion Nicholas makes the Word equal to the divine continuous revelation in history for he wrote that the "Word of Life (which now inspires us with the holy Spirit of Love) hath in all ages, by figures shadows, parables, words, written letters, been working men up to good will."[1] Very close to Hetzer's statement that "Whoever searches only in the Bible for knowledge, will find it but it will be a useless wisdom,"[2] are these remarks by Nicholas.

> "The written worde of the letter is not the Worde itself, that cleanseth and sanctifieth the man, or which procreateth the life. But it is a shadow and figure out of the holy and true Worde, a serviceable instrument whereby we are made well-affected inwardly in our souls to the true word of vivification, to the end that through belief and love we might in the spirit of our minds be made like-being with the nature and being of the Good Life."[3]
>
> "No-man, how wyse or understanding soever hee bee, in the Knowledge of the Scriptures can by any means comprehend or understand the Wisdom of God nor-yet see, know, finde, nor receave the Giftes of God, nor powers of the holie-gost but onlie they that stand --- submitted under the Worde of Life which proceedeth -- from that Quarter or place where the Summe, the true Daye-Lifht of the Most-highest shyneth."[4]

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1. First Exhortation, p. 13.
2. Weis, Fredrick, The Life and Teaching of Ludwig Hetzer, p. 190.
3. An Introduction to the Holy Understanding of the Glasse of Righteousnesse, Chapter. VII, Sec. 29.
4. Evangelium Regni, p. 10 B.

Nicholas found his chief foe in the "Scripture-learned"and he frequently declaimed against them as Fox did against "hireling-priests." "Oh alas," he wrote, "how groselie have then certen Wise of the Worlde and Scripture-learned over-reached themselves,"[1] and have become "out of their own knowledge and Scripture-learnedness, Judges of the Scriptures."[2] This is not new,he notes,for "the Scripture learned and the Wise of ye Worlde -- have never known the Verytrue of the heavenlie Trueth of Christ-."[3] Those who are bound to the letter Nicholas compares to the seed of Hagar which was in servitude while those who serve the Spirit are free like the true seed of Abraham.

> "Now when this seed of the free woman was borne then was the Servatrice with her Seede putt-away or discharged as one whose Service and Seede was thereafter no more needful to a Service or healpe of the Beleef because the upright Seede was borne out of Beleef."[4]

The "conceited and Scripture-learned" can never know the truth even though it has been declared with "naked cleerness" in "the Daye of the Love." Nicholas taught with a degree of anti-intellectualism that the

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1. Evangelium Regni, p. 34 B.
2. Ibid., p. 10 B.
3. Ibid., p. 53 B. "So shall not likewise presentlie -- the Scripture-learned --- understand the cleerness of the word of Christ."
4. Ibid., p. 22 B.

"Holy Spirit of Love" alone could reveal the truth and that only to those who possess the "Eight Vertues" and have become "the anointed of God" by that "joyful oyl" which "proceedeth from the Living God"[1] and initiated into divine mysteries.

John Rogers was quite unimpressed by Nicholas' supposed nearness to the source of all divine revelation. "For indeed in his Bookes," Rogers writes with tongue in cheek, "he doth not deale so plainly as one being ledde by the Spirit of God, whereof he boasteth," but rather "verie subtiley and darkely ---."[2] This author refers particularly to Henry Nicholas' allegorical methodology in Scripture interpretation which left every systematic thinker dealing with Nicholas' doctrine in a state of utter confusion. Those to whom Rogers gave the prophet's books for study with one accord said "there is no matter in the Author that may be drawn into argument," for they seem "as a riddle or darke speeche." Even Barclay, not at all unfavorable noted,

> "Their books are of a very mystical character -- The reader of the works of the Familists has to seek their doctrines in a wilderness of vague and high sounding words. He gropes his way like a ---"

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1. The Eight Vertues or Godlynesses, No. 22.
2. Rogers, John, The Displaying of an Horrible Sect.

> "traveller in the mist, and is only here and there rewarded by a gleam of something which seems like sunlight. He soon finds it to be a delusion, and again and again he plunges into the darkness."[1]

The reasons for this universal opinion was Henry Nicholas' allegorical hermeneutics. He makes a double interpretation of every scriptural passage with which he deals especially in the Glasse of Righteousness and the Evangelium Regni; the first being the historical, which he does not seem to doubt,[2] and the second the interpretation of the hidden meaning of the historical event which he revels in. He does not always give the same interpretation to each Biblical-historical event thus further confusing those who try to put his doctrine in a pat theological mould. After giving a passage of Scripture Nicholas, typically writes, "O Yee Deerlie-beloved: Consider here the Mysterie of the Woorkes of God and the Providence of his unsearchable Wisdom and behold in the Images and Figures, what they show-fourth unto us."[3]

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1. Barclay, R., The Inner Light etc, p. 27. Cf. Hunt, J., Religious Thought in England, p. 237.
2. Rutherford and others thought that H.N. accepted only the interpretations and not the historical fact. Cf. Rutherford, S., Christ's Dying (1647) , p. 322. Familists believe "that the resurrection is a spiritual thing in the minde; and heaven is but a spiritual sense of Christ; and that Christ is heaven; and that life to come is within the precincts of this life.", p. 322.
3. Evangelium Regni, p. 37 B.

He sets forth the historical facts of David's life and likens David's reign to the rise of the House of Love. From Solomon he concludes, "Solomon signifieth unto us Peacable, or One which is rich of Peace. Jerusalem signifieth unto us a Vision of Peace or of Perfection."[1] H.N. felt justified in this method because he was the prophet of a new age. "In this Day of Love," he wrote, figures and symbols

> "expresse som singular thing unto us and declare in this last time a great mysterie. For in this Day they make-knowen unto us that all which they signifie, or whereof they give their Cleerness, shall now in this last Time be erected according to the true Beeing and fulfilled or accomplished according to the heavenlie Trueth."[2] "Forasmuch now, as that river giveth forth her water abundantly and that the wind or Spirit of the Almighty bloweth: So I cannot refraine nor keep silence: but must needs, through the powers of the same; make manifest even out of burning love, the secret mistery of God, which is given me to understand out of the heavenly truth, in the obedience of the love of Jesus Christ."[3]

This gift of prophetic interpretation was not extended to the entire Family who exercised themselves rather in learning from the eldership the significance of the Scriptures as interpreted by Henry Nicholas. The experience of the average "Good-willing-one" with the

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1. Loc. cit.
2. Ibid., p. 38.
3. Ibid., p. 9.

"Holy Spirit of Love" was limited to the unleashing in their lives of the dynamic of love which led to perfection. It did not extend to continued revelation and novel Scriptural interpretation.

The Familist statement of faith as embodied in William Wilkinson's A Confutation, makes it plain that the English Familists adhered to Nicholas' doctrine of the Word of God. "The Bible, wrote Theophilus the elder, "is not the Word of God, but a signification thereof, for the Bible is but ink and paper, but the word is spirit and life."[1] Typically this same confession denies any necessary relationship between Scriptural learning and a high standard of Christian living. "It is neither the Scriptures nor yet the knowledge thereof that maketh us righteous, but the life of Jesus Christ, wrought through the belief or faith."[2] This was a shadow of Nicholas' words, "For they have not out of their literal knowledge understood the secret mind of God,"[3] and,

> "Seeing then that they are covered with darkness, and dwell in Ignorance; so do they invent among themselves many manner of good thinking, or self-conceited knowledges, to their appeasment in their ignorance."[4]

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1. Wilkinson, Wm., A Confutation of Certaine Articles.
2. Loc. cit.
3. Evangelium Regni, p. 169.
4. Terra Pacis, p. 32.

In a day when the Bible was becoming available more and more to the masses, and the new freedom of its use was still a heady wine, the extensive marginal use of the Scriptures in Henry Nicholas' writings attracted many to read them. The heavy fire which they drew is an evidence of their acceptance by the public. Among the attackers was Thomas Whitaker, Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, who examined the Familist's use of Scriptures and announced, "These are not Christians truly."[1] Hooker saw the Familists among those who fashion "the very notions and conceits of men's minds in such sort, that when they read the Scripture, they may think that everything soundeth toward the advancement of that discipline and to the udder disgrace of the contrary."[2] Familists, he goes on, show by their writings that they think "that the Scriptures everywhere speaketh in favour of that sect."[3] Nicholas' continuous use of proof texts irked John Knewstub very much.

> "Where he doth usually pester his margent with plenty of authorities, as if nothing but Scripture might at any time be heard out of his mouth: It is abayte layde for the simple who either cannot or will not examen the matter.--"

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1. Whitaker, T., Disputation on Scripture (1588). Ed. Parker Soc., 1849., p. 298.
2. Hooker, Richard, Works, Vol. I, p. 147.
3. Ibid., p. 148.

> "For as Saint George loveth to bee alwayes on horsbacke albeit he never ride: So H.N. hath great liking to be mounting in the margent upon authorities of the sacred worde, albeit they never step forth with him, to speak so much as one woorde for him."[1]

Knewstub is right, to a degree, for Nicholas' army of references do not always advance with him if one takes them in their literal sense. This is not surprising for his system is not based on Biblical theology and historical-textual exegesis but rather he is driven on by a hidden spring of utterance within him in his attempt to "teach men that the essence of religion consisted in the feelings of divine love."[2] To the Prophet of the "Daye of the Love" the Bible was merely an aid and not the seat of final authority.

With this inner-light concept of salvation, H.N. would be expected to minimize the value of the sacraments and that is the case for even though he felt, as noted already, that many threw away the Roman ceremonies too soon, all external services were to give way to the "Service of Love." "Seeing Now that the God of life doth not require Images, Shadows or Figures -- but that which is the living, being or substance itself."[3] Like the

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1. Knewstub, J., A Confutation, etc. pp. 6 B-7.
2. Mosheim, Ecclesiastical History, Vol. IV, p. 484.
3. The Figure of the True and Spiritual Tabernacle, p. 52.

Amalricians the initiates were to be led out of these shadows step by step into the true light of which all sacraments and services were but a shadow.[1] Nicholas goes as far as to say that these externals had been "imputed unto the people which sought the Righteousness therein --- for Righteousness,"[2] but with the coming of the House of Love this is no longer the case." Men are only "implanted into Christ and codeified with God" by a spiritual partaking of the sacraments, that is those who have,

> "kept the Passe-over with Christ and obtained the Renewing of their Spirit and Minde in Jesu Christ -- wherein men rightly eate ye Bodie of Christ: drinke his Bloud: and partakers of his Suffering and baptized in his Death unto his Burying: and evenso remember the Sufferings of Christ and witness or publish his Death till unto his Coming. That is until the true Light arise in the heart."[3]

The right baptism is the persual of the *via negativa* by which sin is recognized and repented of.

> "For that same baptism is the right font of regeneration, serving to the washing away of sin, wherethrough the believing man, who doth with Christ according to the flesh, lay away, mortify--"

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1. See Chapter I, p. 28 of this study.
2. *Evangelium Regni*, p. 70 B.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 63B - 64.

> "and bury the sin in the flesh, is made alive again with Christ --- and so through the second birth from death, -- he becometh holy and altogether renewed in the spirit of his inward mind, and the Holy Ghost poured upon him."[1]

The House of Love alone has the right answer to the true meaning of baptism in the Scripture.

> "Oh, alas, how great Contention and Disputation hath ther ben among many touching the Baptisme. --- But whylst that it was yeat Night with them so hath no man ben able, before this Daye of Love, which is the true Light and Glorie of God himself, to understand nor distinct, the Baptisme of John, nor the Baptisme of Christ."[2]

The "Baptisme of John" is the outward baptism supported by those who have not come to the truth of spiritual religion; the "Baptisme of Christ" is the inward baptism of the Holy Spirit which the Family of Love teach.

There is no evidence of the Familist's practicing re-baptism or adult baptism. John Rogers has said that they,

> "decreed all men to be infants to the age of thirty, so if they be asked whether their infants may be baptized they say "yea', meaning thereby he is an infant until he attains to thirty years."[3]

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1. A Figure of the True and Spiritual Tabernacle, p. 103.
2. Evangelium Regni, p. 46 B.
3. Rogers, J., The Displaying of an Horrible Sect. A. Gordon, "Familists," in Encyclopedia Britannica seems to follow this in remarking that H.N. "admitted his followers by the rite of adult baptism." This article is generally misleading.

This, however, scarcely fits their spiritualizing of the sacraments and is most likely just another example of the inaccuracy of the hear-say evidence collected by Rogers.

Löwith's analysis of Joachim's position on the sacraments is equally applicable to Nicholas.

> "The real significance of the sacraments is not, as with Augustine, the signification of a transcendant reality but the indication of a potentiality which becomes realized within the framework of history."[1]

Toleration to Thomas Edwards was the most terrifying of all the evils which he classified in his three-part work Gangreana. "Other Errors and Heresies," he wrote, "do not offend against all Scripture, but against such and such places," but, "this general Toleration, throws down all at once."[2] The acceptance of the Old Testament principles of theocracy and attitude toward the heathen made toleration unheard of among the main reform parties.[3] It was left to the small sects, who bore the brunt of the attacks, to preach toleration and in many cases it was purely a cry for mercy. Castellio could say with real earnestness that to put a man to the stake for his belief is not to defend "the faith" but

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1. Löwith, K., Meaning in History, p. 151.
2. Edwards, Thomas., A Treatise Against Toleration, p. 5.
3. Whiting, C. E., Studies in English Puritanism, pp. 475ff.

to burn a man.[1] Similarly the Anabaptists preached pacificism with a conviction born of that sense of reality which comes when a man faces death.

The Familists in England made two appeals to the crown for recognition; the first to Elizabeth[2] and the second to James I. These were not briefs for universal toleration but defensive measures which grew in part from a boldness encouraged by the growth of the Society. To King James they remark that magistrates "have now lately cast divers of us into prison to our great hindrance and discredit."[3] They ask the monarch to deal with the matter according to the fruits of their lives, for their only desire "to live a godly and honest life, and to love God above all things, and our neighbors as ourselves."[4] They claimed purity in doctrine, deed and nature and asked James to act to their benefit when his "kingly affairs of importance --- shall be well overpast."[5]

> "And our further humble suit unto your Highnesse is that of your gracious favour and clemency you will grant and give order unto your Majesties officers in that behalfe that all of us your faithful loving subjects which are now in prison in any part of this your Realme, for the same cause, may be ---

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1. Bainton, R., The Travail of Religious Liberty, See Chapter on Castellio.
2. See Chapter III of this study.
3. "A Petition of Familists to King James," Rutherford, S., A Survey, p. 348.
4. Loc. cit.
5. Ibid., p. 349.

> "released upon such baile or bond as we are able to give, and that neither we nor any of that company (behaving ourselves orderly and obediently under your Highnesse Laws) may be any further persecuted or troubled therein."[1]

From the petition to James it cannot be assumed that the English Familists were champions for religious toleration. They were merely requesting freedom to worship as they saw fit and asking for an honest examination of their beliefs by the rule of upright Christian living. The one reference to a Familist view of toleration is found in John Rogers' polemic when he objects to them because

> "They hold that no man should be put to death for their opinions and therefore they condemn Master Cranmer and Master Ridley for burning Joan of Kent."[2]

This seems to be in keeping with the tone of Familist teaching though it is an isolated reference. Lyons, in his volume Religious Liberty in England, would disagree, however, saying that "Toleration was never the concern of the Family of Love" since they held a doctrine "of a mental reservation far beyond that sanctioned by the Roman Catholic church."[3] This is scarcely the case for if their evasive tactics had been entirely foolproof they would not have troubled to make two appeals to the

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1. "A Petition of Familists to King James," p. 351.
2. Rogers, John, op. cit.,
3. Lyons, T., Religious Liberty in England, p. 237.

Crown as they did. The Familists like almost every persecuted minority were interested in freedom, primarily for themselves. There is, however, a sense in which it can be said that Toleration was not a primary concern of the Family of Love. Henry Nicholas was possessed of an optimistic philosophy, rooted in his eschatological view of the age of love as the ultimate in divine revelation and victory within history which gave him to feel that there soon would be an inevitable domination of the world by the House of Love.

The ideal of Nicholas clouded though it was by his method of expression was brotherhood on the basis of the Gospel of Christ and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Haller has said that judging

> "from his rather finely poetic, rhapsodic and allegorical tracts (Nicholas) was one who had learned that vain is all hope but love. He taught that love of God mystically experienced in the soul, is one with the love of man. Loving God and one another, men should live together as one great family. Nothing else can avail to free them from ignorance, error, strife and tyranny, from sin in this life and hell hereafter."[1]

There is in the Familist doctrine an inherent sense of toleration.[2] Nicholas noted that "the whole World is every-where in great Divisions and Discorde

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1. Haller, Wm., The Rise of Puritanism, p. 205. Cf. Haller, Wm., Tracts on Liberty, Vol. I, pp. 42-45.
2. Gorden, Alex. "Familists" in Encyclopedia Britannica. Gordon compromises on this by saying that "in an age of strife and polemics (they) seemed to afford a refuge for quiet, gentle spirits, and meditative temperaments."

and all against one another," but despite their "great Revyling, Strife and Hatred" he would remain"unpartiall towards them all" and "contend with none of them."[1] The House of Love, Nicholas felt, is destined to conquer all in the impending epoch but this victory will not come by force but by the "Holy Spirit of Love." The attitude of the members until the consummation of this victory must be one of peace. The Familist's desire for himself is

> "that I may walk under the Obedience of the Love, and the wayes of Love all the Dayes of my Life---, and shew forth all good towards my Neighbor, deal and behave myself with all Men, peacably and uprightly."[2]

The Family are to stay apart from every kind of personal and social evil which would disturb the sereneness of the world. They must avoid

> "envy or division, contention or discord, high-mindedness or pride, subtilty, deceit, craftiness, cruelty, arrogancy, disorderlyness---maliciousness, commotion or uproar, treachery, striving, fighting, persecuting, lying, war or battle, destroying, spoyling, oppressing, killing murdering, dishonest dealing, unreasonableness or injustice, gluttony, unchastity ---."[3]

The pacificistic attitude of the Family must serve as an example until all men become "good-willing-ones" and

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1. An Introduction to the Holy Understanding of the Glasse of Righteousness, p. 3.
2. First Exhortation, p. 141.
3. A Figure of the True and Spiritual Tabernacle, p. 145. Chapter 19, No. 4, p. 145.

cease from violence. This theme is carried further in Nicholas' pilgrim epic Terra Pacis. This world as it is now found takes the name of "the Land of Ignorance" while the ideal state is denominated "the City of Peace." In the latter there is perfect harmony for all have achieved the "Eight Vertues" and are "Godded with God" but in "the Land of Ignorance"

> "They make there also many swords, halberds, spears, bows and arrows, ordnance or guns, pellets, gunpowder, armor or harness and gorgets, etc. for that the tyranical oppressors, and those that have a pleasure in destroying, should use war and battle one against another."[1]

It is clear from these references that the Family of Love were against all violence, war, persecution, oppression and even the milder outbreaks of sin in the social order. Their answer to this was not found primarily in a doctrine of toleration, though this was the temporary solution, but in the exclusivistic belief that the movement with which they were identified was about to inherit the earth.

Among the Spirituales the conjoining of a progressive concept of history with an activistic ethic of love had revolutionizing results. This compound of factors swept through the society of Europe issuing in

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1. Terra Pacis, p. 33.



The way, the truth, and the life.
An Introduction to the Holy Understanding of the the Glasse of Righteousness

a variety of theological garbs and having a profound influence on the Reformation but finding a more direct ingress to public thought through the groups whose theological position was not controlled by the Augustinian tradition. The Medieval expression of this combination was crystallized in the Familists whose eschatological interpretation of it expressed both the religious and utopian desires of many who were wandering unstably in days of unusual stress. This was true in the England of the Commonwealth and the days preceding it when the eschatological message of Henry Nicholas was rediscovered and newly applied in differing degrees by social reformers, left-wing Puritans and quite probably by the Quakers.

The eschatology of the Familists bears a very strong resemblance to that of Joachim.

> "Joachim's eschatological scheme consists neither in a simple millenium nor in the mere expectation of the end of the world but in a twofold eschaton: an ultimate historical phase of the history of salvation, preceeding the transcendant eschaton of the new aeon, ushered in by the second coming of Christ. The Kingdom of the Spirit is the last revelation of God's purpose on earth and in time. Consequently the institution of the papacy and clerical hierarchy is limited to the second epoch.---The existing church though founded on Christ will have to yield to the coming church of the Spirit when the history of salvation has reached its plenitude."[1]

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1. Löwith, K., Meaning in History, p. 15.

Nicholas declared the arrival of a new day which fulfilled and transcended the revelation of the prophets and the Gospels. This day, he says, was commenced in Christ but not revealed until the fulness of time in the present hour. He speaks of it as the "coming of Christ" and yet holds that it is within history as the preceding ages were and not beyond time, fixing it prior to the consummation of all things. Thus, he says "behold, in this present Day, the glorious coming of our Lord Jesus Christ --- becometh manifested."[1] And yet even in the fulfillment of this "coming" the "children of righteousness" live so that "all their longing is that the eighth day, which is the upright rest of the world -- might appear "to bring "an everlasting rest of the children of God and of the whole world."[2]

The emerging age is a preparation for "the eighth day" or eternal kingdom and it is this final historical age which Nicholas feels bound to announce, an age in which God will make right the great injustices and reveal Himself.

> "This is the Day of Renewing, the very newest Day; to the honour and glory of the supreme God."[3] "This is the Day of Love: which Day of Love,--"

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1. Evangelium Regni, p. 5., Cf. G. Fox, "But Christ is come to both dwell and reign in the hearts of his people." Journal, I, p. 214.
2. H.N. Upon the Beatitudes, p. 196.
3. Evangelium Regni, p. 14.

> "God himself both appointed or ordained, for to judge in the same, the universal compasse of the earth according to his Word, with Righteousnesse, and to take away all false Lights and inordinate or false Freedoms, from the hearts of Men, --- and so to plant the lovely Being of Love, with all meek-mindedness therein."[1]

There is a judgement occuring within history by the hand of"the supreme God." This judgement will include men and institutions alike and even the Roman church which dominates the second age must pass away before "the lovely Being of Love." God who has been approaching nearer to man "in cleerness through the process of tyme" is declaring "the most holy tabernacle to the establishing of his promises."[2]

The general proclamation of this truth is to all "Lovers of the truth" but the immediate revelation of it is only in the hearts of the "Good-willing-ones" for, writes H.N., "this new miraculous work of God, whereof we witness; hath God now in this his holy day of love begunne or taken in hand with us."[3] The hour is pregnant with significance, as the eternal begins to manifest its nature in time with the implicit promise that it will absorb the historical state. The Evangelium Regni especially speaks of this,

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1. First Exhortation, p. 134.
2. Evangelium Regni, p. 12 B.
3. Ibid., p. 9.

> "For lo, I bring forth now my Day so clear, as a light of my Glory to the lighting of the whole World with Righteousness; my living Word, as a true Bread of Life to the satisfying of all hungry souls; my true Being or perfection as a Kingdom of Heaven, full of all lovelyness, pure beauty and undisturbable powers; and my service of love as a naked or uncovered Truth: all which is my Spirit wherethrough Man is led into all Truth; to the end that now in tis my holy day, my righteousness might in the obedience of the requiring of my Love break forth and obtain the Victory upon the Earth: and that all people may love the upright Righteousness, and live peaceably into all love."[1]

The power for this new age was made obtainable to man by the work of Jesus Christ but because men became "estraunged from the true Doctrine of Jesu Christ which leadeth to the new Birth,"[2] this spiritual dynamic was never let loose but housed in an age of faith. In this intermediate epoch men were led astray by an intruding religious system. This organization, the Roman church, Nicholas equates with Antichrist as did Joachim. "Because of this," writes H.N., a religious system arose "which is called Antichrist --- that multiplied itself evenso among Manye on the earth, in the bringing-fourth of

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1. Evangelium Regni, p. 13. Cf. Penn, Wm., "Preface," to A Journal. Penn speaks of "The appearance of the Lord's everlasting Truth, and its breaking forth again in his Eternal Power, in this our day and age in England."
2. Ibid., p. 65.

his wicked Fruites."[1] This Antichrist, "hath exalted himself, with his deadlie service -- against all which is of God or of the Upright Being of Jesu Christ."[2] Nicholas goes on to include all the "scripture learned" of his day as part of the "counteranoynting" which is Antichrist. In this imprisonment of truth God has revealed the breaking forth of a new age. H.N. paraphrases the New Testament to describe his hour which is like a woman great with child and the child she is about to bring forth is "the Woorde of Life" that will in turn beget "the Service of the holie Spirit of the Love." When this new revelation comes to its fulness then "all Kingdomes on the Earth, stand bowed and obedient to this same One peacable Kingdome of the Love, and all people obtain, to an eternal peace, the concord in all Love, according to the promise."[3]

This eschatology cannot be thought of apart from the ethical message of Familism. The burgeoning age will bring with it "One Peacable Kingdome of the Love" which will dominate "the new good world in the which all love, peace, and righteousness dwelleth."[4] The "City of Peace" to which the pilgrim travels will

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1. Loc. cit.
2. Loc. cit.
3. First Exhortation, p. 138.
4. A Figure of the True and Spiritual Tabernacle, p. 135.

become universal and the "land of ignorance" will be destroyed. In this land men will dwell in peace "and the love is their bond wherewith they are united with each other, in the light of the true life," and their "nature and mind is nothing else but love, and peace and righteousness."[1] When Winstanley sought "to mediate between the eschatological and ethical "schools of thought in his day he had an excellent start in the writings of Nicholas.[2] Walwyn, looking for a positive expression of hopeful Christianity could not find it in the main parties of English Reform for they were looking for the speedy end to the world but the optimistic eschatological-ethical message of the Family of Love gave him encouragement.[3]

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1. Terra Pacis, p. 131. See the description of the "City of Peace, Chapters XXXV-XL.
2. Winstanley, E. W., Jesus and the Future. Cf. MacCulloch, J. A., "Eschatology," in Hastings Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics.
3. Glasson, T. F., His Appearing and His Coming, pp. 150-152, 167.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

1. Bibliographical Notes.
2. The writings of Henry Nicholas.
3. The writings of Familist Elders.
4. Anti-Familist writings.
5. Relevant Contemporary writings.
6. Secondary sources.
7. Periodical Articles.
8. Encyclopedia and Dictionary articles.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Henry Nicholas felt himself called as a divine prophet to set down those things which were revealed in the successive visions that marked out the course of the House of Love. The major portion of his writing was done during the Embden period (1540-1560) with revised editions appearing after 1560, the printing of which has already been noticed. Several excellent bibliographical studies have been made of Nicholas' works since that of Nippold (1862).[1] P. A. Tiele of Antwerp[2] (1868), J. H. Hessels of Dublin[3] (1869), Dr. Corrie of Cambridge[4] (1880), Miss C. F. Smith[5] (1900) have all contributed to the field.[6] These works, though still useful, have been supplemented by the

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1. Nippold, F. "Heinrich Niclaes und das haus der Liebe" in Zeitschrift für die historische Theologie, 1862, pp. 328-402, 473-549.
2. Tiele, P. A., "Christopher Plantin et le Sectarie Mystique, Henry Niclaes," in Le Bibliophile Belge, 1868.
3. Hessels, J. H., "Henry Nicklaes: The Family of Love," in Notes and Queries, 1869, pp. 365 ff, 404 ff, 430 ff.
4. Corrie, Rev. Dr., List of Books Relating to the Family of Love.
5. Smith, C. Fell, "Henry Nicholas," in D.N.B.
6. The projected bibliography mentioned by A. C. Thomas in his Haverford Study, The Family of Love, does not seem to have materialized. Miss A. B. Hewitt assistant curator at the Haverford College Library could find no trace of it.

recent article of H. de la Fontaine Verwey "De Geschriften van Henrik Niclaes" in Het Boek.[1] This extremely well done study is further enhanced by notes on new discoveries which Mr. Verwey had kindly placed at my disposal. The article which contains eleven cuts from Nicholas' work primarily deals with the technical aspect of book production and as such takes its place beside Max Rooses' great volume on Plantin.

The bibliography itself gives many of the Continental locations of the Familist volumes along with some in English libraries.

The best collections of Henry Nicholas' works in England are in the British Museum, Cambridge University Library and the Bodelian Library, Oxford. The works at Trinity College, Dublin date from the interest of J. H. Hessels who at the behest of P. A. Tiele began a search for the works in England. Dr. Corrie of Jesus College Cambridge, willed his collection, for some time in the possession of J. H. Hessels, to the Cambridge University Library. In the United States a quite complete selection of Familist and related writings is preserved in the McAlpine Library at the Union Theological Seminary in New York.[2] A great number of Continental libraries

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1. Het Boek (1940-1942), pp. 161-221.
2. Catalogue of the McAlpin Collection, Ed. C. P. Gillet)

have copies of Familist works, the best collection being found at Leiden University Library and the Mennonite Library Amsterdam. Other locations have been noted in the bibliography.

The chief work of Henry Nicholas is The Mirror of Righteousness, never translated into English, which expanded in successive editions until in 1580 it was 1,140 pages in length. The Figure of the True and Spiritual Tabernacle was composed as a prologue to this tome. In England the handbook of Familism was Evangelium Regni: A Joyful message, a volume which closely follows The Mirror of Righteousness in outline and indeed it is a digest of much of that book, many of the chapters closing with the note that its doctrine is"more fully" declared in the Glasse of Righteousness.[1] The central ideas of these two most significant works are found at the end of Chapter IV of the Evangelium Regni. The four controlling themes are "the falling away or disobedience of man," the earnest love which God has always shown to man to bring him back,

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1. Nippold, F., op. cit., p. 484. "Evangelium des Ryckes, ist nächt seinem Spiegel der Gerechtigeit" H.N. hauptwerk; auch begieht sich der Inhalt vielfach auf dieselben Punkte, wie aus der mannichfachen Berweisung auf den Spiegel ersichtlich ist."

how God has approached "in clearness" through "the process-of-tyme," and finally how "in this Daye of his Love" God has declared the most holy tabernacle to the establishing of his promise.[1] Around this nucleus of thought in H.N.'s chief works stand his exhortations, epistles, prophecies, revelations, catechisms, pilgrimages, psalms, and songs.

The style of Henry Nicholas' books, not all attractive by modern standards, has been criticized severely from the time they were published. Dirck Coornhert, himself a rational mystic, found them obscure; Grevinchoven declared them to be dark and difficult; the English critics Rogers, Knewstub and Wilkinson joined in condemnations of this mystical wandering which was to them utterly pointless as did the Puritan Samuel Rutherford. Even Barclay, who is not entirely unsympathetic, says

> "The reader of the works of the Familists has to seek their doctrine in a wilderness of vague and high-sounding words. He gropes his way like a traveller in the mist, and is only here and there rewarded by a gleam of something which seems like sunlight. He soon finds it to be a delusion, and again and again he plunges into the darkness."[2]

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1. Evangelium Regni, p. 11.
2. Barclay, R., The Inner Light etc. p. 27.

Brandt an adherent of purely scholasticized Christianity remarked that "of all the works of the writers among the sects --- there was none that had less Method, Argument, Sense, or Truth than these of Henry Nicholas."[1] Nicholas does have a peculiarly repetitive style which conceals his meaning and one needs to stand back from it as before an impressionistic painting allowing the pattern of thought to assert itself. The allegorical method which he employs weaves his themes into Biblical stories and travel motifs, the hidden meanings of which were revealed by the elders to the initiated. It is probable that some of the teaching so hidden has never come to light but this is not so important for this study since it was the main themes which affected English life. Nicholas' books contain none of the speculative mysticism of Bünderlin or Entfelder, nor of the earlier Eckhart or Suso; there is no nature mysticism as in Francis of Assisi; he never rises to the heights of Bernard of Clairvaux; there is no direct grappling with the theological problems of cognition and revelation as in Denck. All of this disappoints the investigator until he realizes that Nicholas was travelling over unknown ground and moved by the spirit of his age, he was trying to secularize the

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1. Brandt, J., History of the Reformation in The Low Countries, p. 105.

dreams of the medieval mystics in a more realistic manner than the attempt of the Brethren of the Common Life. The tools he employed were hopelessly anachronistic and the whole edifice of the House of Love came tumbling about his ears. Yet the same ideals revivified and reinterpreted had considerable significance on the English scene.

The books of Nicholas, especially The Epistles were bound in a variety of combinations by the booksellers. H.N. on the Beatitudes, and H.N. on the seven deadly sins appear only with the First Exhortation of H.N. The Eight Vertues or Godlynesses is always attached to A Figure of the True and Spiritual Tabernacle.

The second editions of H.N.'s works were illustrated by woodcuts, a number of which appear in the course of this paper. These are described briefly in J.H. Hessel's article, in Notes and Queries (1869) and by the same author in a fuller article in the Bookworm for the same year, (pp. 81, 106, 116, 131). Nippold gives the details on seven of these cuts in his monograph in Zeitschift für die hist. theol. (1862), (pp. 336-337 and 530-535), Thomas following these descriptions in his study. Ames in Typographical Antiquities (Ed. Herbert) Vol. III, No. 1636-1643, also deals in a cursory manner with the cuts. Max Rooses describes and

REVELATIO DEI.

THE REVELATION OF GOD, and his *Great Propheſie*, Which God now (in the laſt day) Hath ſhewed unto His *ELECT*.

Set forth by *H N*. and by him peruſed anew, and more diſtinctly declared.

Tranſlated out of Baſe-Almaine.

9. 15.0 (Sel e)



Hen. Nicholas

O all ye people that dwel on earth, look now to it, that the ſame come not over you, which is ſpoken of in the Prophets; behold ye diſpiſers, and wonder, and periſh: for I do a work in your times, which ye ſhal not believe, when any one ſhal tel it unto you. *Habac* 1. *Act*. 13.

London, Printed for *Giles Calvert*, at the ſign of the *Black-Spred-Eagle*, at the Weſt-end of *Pauls*. 1649.

Vignette employed on the title-page of Henry Nicholas' books.

reproduces some of the illustrative material in the Plantin editions. The fuller treatment of these cuts by Verwey has already been noted. Miss. C. Fell Smith found that there are twelve extant woodcuts executed by Richard Gaywood in 1656 which were "sent abroad for insertion in reprinting earlier editions."[1] These bear the false dates 1573, 1575, 1577. The early English editions bear a seal on the titlepage which is reproduced here. It is composed of a circle, ropelike in appearance, in which is inscribed in a wreathlike form "Coronae Assimilabo indicium meum 4 Esd's." In the very center appears the name Jehovah in Hebrew, surrounded by the rim of a glowing sun.

Throughout the works of Nicholas is interspersed the admonition, "Take it to heart," or "Let everyone take it to heart." Every book ends with the phrase, CHARITAS EXTORSIT PER H.N. There is also frequent use of little jingles with doctrinal content. They appear both with and apart from illustrations. In the frontpiece of A Figure of the True and Spiritual Tabernacle under the cut of an illuminated heart in which "Love," and "Truth" have joined hands, is the rhyme,

> Our Heart is the Minde of God most high
> Our Beeing amiable as the sweete Lillie.
> Our faithfulness Love and Trueth upright.
> Is God, Light, Life and Cleerness bright.

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1. Smith, C. F., "Henry Nicholas," in D.N.B.

Each titlepage quotes in full several verses of Scripture in keeping with the theme of the book. The Evangelium Regni uses "Apoc. 14:9," "Matt. 24b," "Esa 52b," "Nahu 2:9," "Rom. 10:c." The References are to the Cranmer Bible though the translations of verses are closer to the Tyndale edition. The marginal references are numerous with 335 references in the first five chapters (28 pp) of the Evangelium Regni. Typical of the closing benedictions employed in these books is that in the above-named work.

> "The Grace of the supreame God, and the upright Righteousness of Godlie Being of the Communialitie of the holie Spirit of the Love of Jesu Christ (whereunto ye are now out of Grace undeserved; called and lovinglie-bidden) obtained the Victorie in all your heartes. Amen."[1]

Bax sees in the Mirabilia Opera Dei the source from which John Bunyan drew his ideas for his allegorical study, The Pilgrim's Progress. "No one," he writes,

> "reading the Pilgrim's Progress side by side with Tobias' story of the journey of H.N. and his friends, when they set out to an unknown destination, can fail to be struck with the idea that Bunyan had read Tobias' book."[2]

Or at least, says Bax, "they lived in a like mental atmosphere."[3] Actually there is only a general

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1. Evangelium Regni, p. 100 B.
2. Bax, B., The Rise and Fall of the Anabaptists, p. 378.
3. Loc. cit.

similarity between the Mirabilia and Pilgrim's Progress each using the vehicle of the travel story. Much more striking is the often noted similarity of the Bunyan allegory to Terra Pacis: A true Testification of the spirituall Lande of Peace; which is the spirituall Land of Promyse, and the holy Citee of Peace or the heavenly Jerusalem; and of the Holy and spirituall people --- Set foorth by H.N.--[1] in which Pilgrim goes step by step to the land of rest. On the way he encounters many pitfalls each of which is named to suit the geographical-spiritual journey. The evils of the flesh and spirit as well as the demonlike forces of spiritual warfare are anthropomorphized. It is true that there were others in the Reformation age who "saw the life of the spirit as a pilgrimage and battle"[2] such as Bishop Woolten in his Castle of Christians and Fortunes of the Faithful; Thomas Taylor in The Pilgrim's Profession; Robert Wilkinson in The Saints Travel to Spiritual Canaan; and in the writings of Thomas Goodwin where there is a close relationship

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1. Cramer, S., B.R.N., Vol. VII, H.N. is here called a "Voorlooper van Bunyan." Troeltsch, E., in Geschichte der Christlichen Religion, No. 2, 1909, p. 587. Nicolson,M., Conway Letters, p. 297 N. Haller, Wm., Tracts on Liberty, Vol. I, p. 42. Haller, Wm., The Rise of Puritanism, pp.141, 148. C. Fell Smith in D.N.B and R.M. Jones, Studies in Mystical Religion, also note this similarity.
2. Haller, Wm., Op. Cit., p. 141.

between the spiritual biography and the allegory of the pilgrim.[1] None of these, however, seem to have the same tone or climate as Pilgrim's Progress while the style and methodology differs quite significantly, but a comparison of the Bunyan's pilgrim epic with Terra Pacis reveals a great deal in common. It remains yet to establish the exact relationship between these works, a study of which might well uncover a new area of the influence of Familist writings in non-conformists of later Puritanism.

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1. Hutton, W. H., John Bunyan, pp. 162-163, 166 ff. Hutton, who is unaware of the Terra Pacis, looks to Walter Hilton's and Father Baker's Sancta Sophia as sources for Scala Perfectionis, Bunyan's ideas.

THE WRITINGS OF HENRY NICHOLAS

I. The Mirror of Righteousness

Den spegel der gherecthicheit (584 pp)
Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1556.
- Berlin: State Library

Den spegel der gherecthicheit (634 pp)
Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1562.
- Leiden: University Library
- London: Guild Hall Library

Speculum justitiae. de spegel gerechticheit (1140 pp)
Cologne: N. Bohmbarger, 1578-1580.
- Leiden: University Library
- Hamburg: State Library

Six chapters in English translation are preserved in the Bodelian Library, Oxford. Rawlinson Collection, Ms.C554.

II. An Introduction to the Holy Understanding of the Glass of Righteousness.

Introductio. An introduction to the Holy Understanding of the Glasse of Righteousness (288 pp)
c. 1574
- London: British Museum Library
- London: Lambeth Palace Library
- 's-Gravenhage: National Library
- New York: Union Seminary Library

An Introduction to the holy Understanding of the Glasse of Righteousnesse (376 pp)
London: G. Whittington, 1649
- London: British Museum Library
- Cambridge: University Library
- Dublin: Trinity College Library
- New York: Union Seminary Library

An Introduction to the holy Understanding of the Glasse of Righteousnesse (284 pp)
Amsterdam?: 1649
- Cambridge: University Library

III. A Figure of the True and Spiritual Tabernacle
Written as a prologue to Den Spegel.

A figure of the True and Spiritual Tabernacle and of the eight virtues or Godlynesses (195 & 14 pp)
London: Giles Calvert, 1655
- London: British Museum Library
- Edinburgh: New College Library
- Dublin: Trinity College Library
- New York: Union Seminary Library

Of the Eight Virtues also appears as a separate tract under the titlepage of "A Figure" dated 1655 in an edition at Cambridge.

IV. A Concordance to the Mirror of Righteousness

Register unde ordentlilicke anwysinge van die inholdinge aller dingen, die in dem gantzem boeke dem spygel der gerechticheit begrepen zyn. (220 pp)
Deventer: Dirk van den Borne, c. 1554
- Leiden: University Library

V. Evangelium Regni

Evangelium offte eine frölicke bodeschop (192 pp)
Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1555-1562
- Amsterdam: Mennonite Library

Evangelium Regni. Ein frölicke bodeschop (200 pp)
Cologne: c. 1575
- London: British Museum Library
- Cambridge: University Library
- Halle: Bibl. der Franckeschen Stiftung
- Busson: Library of H A. van Baak

Evangelium Regni. A Joyful Message of the Kingdom
c. 1574 (201 pp)
- London: British Museum Library
- Cambridge: University Library
- Harmsworth
- Huntington

Evangelium Regni. A Joyful Message of the Kingdom
London: 1652 (216 pp)
- Cambridge: University Library
- Edinburgh: New College Library
- Dublin: Trinity College Library
- Edinburgh: University Library
- New York: Union Seminary Library

V. Evangelium Regni (cont'd)

Evangelium Regni. Ein frölicke bodeschop
Amsterdam: ? 1656
- London: British Museum Library

Evangelium: seu laetum dei ac Christi nuncium
Kampen: A van Hasselt, c. 1561
- Oxford: Bodelian Library
- Lambeth Palace Library

VI. Terra Pacis

Van dat geestlicke landt der belofften (100 pp)
Deventer: Dirk van den Borne, 1550
- Amsterdam: Mennonite Library

A manuscript copy (92 pp) of the above made at Harlingen in 1562 was owned by Dr. Seep at Amsterdam in 1890. Present location unknown.

Terra Pacis Wäre Getügenisse (104 pp)
Cologne: N. Bohmbarger, 1580
- London: British Museum
- Berlin: National Library
- Halle: Bibl. der Franckeschen Stiftung

Terra Pacis. A True Testification of the Spirituall Land of Peace (164 pp)
c. 1574
- London: British Museum Library
- Cambridge: University Library
- Oxford: Bodelian Library
- Oxford: Emmanuel College Library
- Dublin: Trinity College Library
- Harmsworth
- Huntington

Terra Pacis. A True Testification-(192 pp)
London: Sam Satterthwaite, 1649
- Cambridge: University Library (two copies)
- Edinburgh: New College Library
- Dublin: Trinity College Library
- New York: Union Seminary Library

Terra Pacis, vrai testmoignage de la terre spirituelle de paix (146 pp)
Cologne: N. Bohmbarger, 1580
- Cambridge: University Library

VII. A Publishing of Peace

Van dem rechtferdigen gerichte godes (28 pp)
Vianen of Wezel: A. van Hasselt? 1568?
- Amsterdam: Mennonite Library

Ein klachreden, die de geist der lieften (24 pp)
Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1555-1560
- Amsterdam: Mennonite Library

Vorkundinghe van dem vrede up erden (16 pp)
Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1555-1560
- Amsterdam: Mennonite Library

Eine vorkundinge des fredes up erden
Cologne: 1570 ?
- London: British Museum Library

Annunciatio pacis super terram
1574 ?
- New York: Union Seminary Library

A Publishing of Peace upon Earth (16 pp)
1574
- London: British Museum Library
- Cambridge: University Library
- Dublin: Trinity College Library
- Harmsworth

VIII. The Revelation of God

Revelatio dei - die openbaringe Godes, unde syne grote prophetie (112 pp)
Cologne: c. 1575 ?
- London: British Museum Library
- Halle: Bibl. der Franckeschen Stiftung

Revelatio Dei. The Revelation of God and his Great Prophetie (110 pp)
C. 1574
- London: British Museum Library
- Cambridge: University Library
- Harmsworth
- Huntington

Revelatio Dei. The Revelation of God and his Great Prophetie (126 pp)
London: Giles Calvert, 1649
- London: British Museum Library
- Cambridge: University Library
- Dublin: Trinity College Library
- New York: Union Seminary Library

IX. The Prophecy of the Spirit of Love

Prophetie des geistes der lieften (80 pp)
Cologne: c. 1573
- Göttingen: University Library
- Halle: Bibl. der Franckeschen Stiftung

Prophetie des geistes der lieften (80 pp)
Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1555
- Amsterdam: Mennonite Library

The Prophetie of the spirit of love (78 pp)
1574
- London: British Museum Library
- Cambridge: University Library
- Harmsworth

The Prophecy of the Spirit of Love (102 pp)
London: Giles Calvert, 1649
- Cambridge: University Library (3 copies)
- London: British Museum Library
- Dublin: Trinity College Library
- London: Library Friends Historical Society
- New York: Union Seminary Library

X. The First Exhortation of Henry Nicholas

Exhortatio: de eerste vormaninge H.N. (120 pp)
Cologne: 1573
- Halle: Bibl. der Franckeschen Stiftung

De erste Ermanung Herdrick Nicholassen
Cologne: 1580
- Named in Catalogue Le Long.

Exhortatio I, The First Exhortation of H.N. (112 pp)
1574
- London: British Museum Library
- Cambridge: University Library
- Edinburgh: New College Library
- Harmsworth

The First Exhortation of H.N. with H.N. on the Beatitudes and seven deadly sins (179 pp + 42 + 6 pp)
London: Giles Calvert, 1656
- London: British Museum Library
- Cambridge: University Library (2 copies)
- Edinburgh: New College Library
- New York: Union Seminary Library

XI. The Second Exhortation of H.N.

D'andere vormaninge H.N. to syne Kinderen
Kampen: Peter Warner, 1565
- Location unknown

Exhortatio II, De anderde vormaninge H.N.
Cologne: 1575
- London: British Museum Library
- Oxford: Bodelian Library
  Rawlinson collection A 382

The Second Exhortation of H.N. to his children (136 pp)
C. 1575
- Oxford: Bodelian Library

XII. The Epistles of H.N.

Epistolae H.N. de vornompste epistelen H.N.
Cologne: 1577
- Leiden: University Library
- Antwerp: Museum Plantin Moretus
- Stuttgart: State Library

Epistolae H.N. the principle epistles of H.N. (420 pp)
c. 1574
- London: British Museum Library
- Cambridge: University Library (no title page)
- Harmsworth

The First Epistle of H.N. A crying voice (14 pp)
c. 1574
- Cambridge: University Library
- Edinburgh: New College Library

The First Epistle of H.N. A crying voice
London: 1648
- Cambridge: University Library
- Edinburgh: New College Library

Epistola prima H.N. In qua cunctas nationes
c. 1574
- New York: Union Seminary Library

The First Epistle of H.N. plus Epistle 2,3,4 (64 pp)
London: 1648
- London: British Museum Library
- Cambridge: University Library

XII. The Epistles of H.N. (cont'd)

Fift and sixt epistles, a stirring up of the heart-- c. 1574
- New York: Union Seminary Library

Epistola XI H.N. correction and exhortation (128 pp) c. 1574
- London: British Museum Library
- Cambridge: University Library
- Harmsworth
- Dublin: Trinity College Library

The Titles of the Epistles are as Follows:

A. A crying voice of the Holy Spirit of Love.
Ein Roeponde stemme des hilligen Geistes der Lieften.

B. A Short and pithy Instruction of the Mistery of the Love.
Eine korte unde grundige Berichtinge van de Vorborgentheit der Lieften.

C. A groundlie instruction, where in the Difference betwixt the Father and his Sonne the Lorde Jesus Christ, is declared, etc.
Ein gunidige Berichtinge, wahrinne idt Underscheit tusschen Godt, den Vader, unde synen Sone -- vorklaret wort.

D. A Cleare Instruction of the Mediations of Jesu Christ,etc.
Eine klare Berichtinge van de Middel-workinge Jesu Christi, die in dem Geiste geschüt.

E. A Stirring up of the heart to the Imitation or Following of Christ, in the Suffering of his Crosse, etc.
Ein Upweckinge des Herten t ot de Nafolginge Christi, in dem Leyden synes Crützes, etc.

F. A groundlie Instruction and a destinction of Understandings, according to the Trueth of the Holy Scriptures.
Grundige Berichtinge unde Underscheit der Vorstandenissen, na de Waerheit der hilliger Schrifttüren, etc.

G. A true Judgement or Sentence, proceeding out of the Service of Love, against the false judgement of Sentence, proceeding out of the Flesh, etc.
Ein ware Gericht edder Ordel, uth dem Denste der Lieften, wedder idt falsche Gericht edder Ordel, uth dem Flusche, etc.

H. A cleere Distinction of the Submission and Unsubmission in the Spirit, etc.
Ein klaer Underscheit van de Gelatenheit unde Ungelstenheit in dem Geiste, etc.

I. Of the Services and Ceremonyes of the Christians and of the Unchristians, and of the right and false Uce of them etc.
Van de Densten unde Ceremonien der Christenen unde der Unchrestenen, unde van dem rechten unde falschen Gebrüke dersulver, etc.

K. A precious Juell of pure Instructions and loving Exhortations, etc.
Ein Köstelicke Klennode der süurlicker Berichtigen unde liefflicker Vormangen etc.

L. A Rebuke and Exhortacion out of harty Love etc.
Strasse unde Vormaninge uth heretlycker Lieften, tor Betreckinge under de Gehar samheit der Lieften unde tor Boote vor ere Sünden, etc.

M. An information and loving Exhortation of Reproofe, written and sent unto one out of harty love, etc.
Berispende Underwisinge unde lieflicke Vormeninge uth hertilicke Liefte etc.

N. Loving Informacions unto a Lover of the Trueth which before tyme was a Blaspheamer of the Service of Love and the Ministers thereof, etc.
Lieflicke Underwisingen an einen Liefhebber der Wahrheit die thovohren ein Lasterer des Denster der Lieften--Gewest etc.

O. A briefe Exhortacion unto a Disciple in the Service of Love etc.
Ein korte Vormaninge an einen Jünger in dem Denste der Lieften etc.

P. An harty Exhortacion unto all Lovers of the Trueth,etc.
Eine heretilicke Vormaninge an alle Liefhebberen der Waerheit, etc.

Q. An instrucionable Exhortacion unto the Good-willing-ones which do wholly give-over themselves to the Obedience of the Love etc.
Eine underwisende Vormaninge an de Goedtwilligen, die sich tot de Gehorsamheit der Lieften gantzelich övergeuen, etc.

R. A groundly Instructio of the Mans Glory, in the Beginning of his fall, death, etc.
Van des Menschen Heerlickheit im anfangk: van synem Affal, Dodt, etc.

S. A loving Exhortation written and sent unto an Howsholde, that are joyned to the Famyly of Love, etc.
Eine lieflicke Vormaninge geschreuen unde gesendt an einem Hüsgesinne, dem Hüsgesinne der Lieften thoegedaen etc.

T. An harty Exhortacion unto the most-zealous good-willing Hearts to the Righteousness, etc.
Eine hertelicke Vormaninge an de Yferigeste goedt-willige Herten to de Gerichticheit, etc.

U. A Chastising and Reproofe of Whoordom, etc.
Strasse unde Berispinge der Hoererie, etc.

Epistles 3, 4, 7, 8-9 were printed separately by Dirck van den Borne at Deventer. Epistles 1, 5, 6, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 were printed separately by Plantin at Antwerp. (Mennonite Library, Amsterdam)

XIII. Henry Nicholas on the Beatitudes
See the First Exhortation of H.N.

XIV. Henry Nicholas on the Seven Deadly Sins
See the First Exhortation of H.N.

XV. Of the Eight Vertues or Godlinesses
See A Figure of the True and Spiritual Tabernacle
(Bound as a separate tract with the titlepage A Figure etc.)
- Cambridge: University Library

XVI. The Proverbs of H.N.

De spröken H.N., die he, in die dagen syner olldheit
Cologne: A. van Hasselt, 1570
- Halle: Bibl. der Franckeschen Stiftung.

Proverbia H.N. De Spröken H.N.
Cologne: c. 1575
- London: British Museum Library
- Bussum: H. A. van Baak

XVI. The Proverbs of H.N. (cont'd)

Proverbia H.N. The Proverbs of H.N. (92 pp)
c. 1574
- London: British Museum Library
- Cambridge: University Library
- Edinburgh: University Library
- Harmsworth
- Huntington

Proverbia H.N. Quae Diebus Senactutas
c. 1575
- Cambridge: University Library
- New York: Union Seminary Library

XVII. Dicta H.N.

Dicta H.N.: Leeraftige Rede (73 pp)
Cologne: 1573
- Utrecht: University Library

Dicta H.N.: Leeraftige Rede etc. (88 pp)
Cologne: 1575
- London: British Museum Library
- Göttingen: University Library

Dicta H.N.: Documentall Sentences (96 pp)
c. 1574
- London: British Museum Library
- Cambridge: University Library
- New York: Union Seminary Library
- Oxford: Bodelian Library
- Dublin: Trinity College Library

XVIII. Institution Puerorum

Institutio Puerorum. De gantze boekstaven der A.B.C.
Cologne: 1573
- Amsterdam: Mennonite Library
- Antwerp: Plantin-Moretus Museum

Institutio Puerorum. Kinder bericht, met vele goeder lere.
Cologne: 1575
- Paris: National Library

XIX. Three Groundlie Refreines

Dre Gründige refereinen, die H.N. (32 pp)
Cologne: 1575
- Leiden: National Library
- Paris: National Library

Three groundlie Refreines which H.N. hath set fourth against his enemies.
c. 1575
- London: Lambeth Palace Library

XX. Comoedia

Comoedia: Ein gedicht des pels van sinne (128 pp)
Cologne: 1574
- London: British Museum Library
- Amsterdam: University Library
- Leiden: University Library
- Dublin:- Trinity College Library
- Paris: National Library

Comoedia: A Work in ryme contayning an enterlude of mindes (64 pp)
c. 1575
- London: British Museum Library
- Cambridge: University Library
- Oxford: Bodelian Library
- Harmsworth
- Huntington
- Clawson
- Yale (Elizabethan Club)

XXI. Psalms and songs

Psalmen unde ledern, vorthgebracht dorch H.N. (112 pp)
Vianen of Wezel: A. van Hasselt ? 1568 ?
- Bussum: H. A. van Baak

De psalmen H.N. (64 pp)
Cologne: c. 1575
- Halle: Bibl. der Franckeschen Stiftung

Cantica H.N. Leider offte gesangen (48 pp)
Cologne: 1573
- Antwerp: Plantin-Moertus Museum
- Amsterdam: Mennonite Library
- Hague: National Library

XXI. Psalms and songs (cont'd)

De Lieder edder gesangen H.N. (96 pp)
Cologne: 1575
- Leiden: University Library

Cantica. Certen of the Songes of H.N.
c. 1574
- Harmsworth
- Huntington

Psalms and Songes brought forth thru H.N.
Ms. carefully written on paper 1574-1600
- London: Lambeth Palace Library (ms. 859)

A new balade or song of the Lambes feast
1574
- London: British Museum Library

A new balade or song of the Lambes Feast
Long Credon, Buckinghamshire: Loyd Haberley, 1928
(125 copies handprinted. Illustrations and versal letters engraved on wood by the printer.)

XXII. Confession of Faith

De wet offte de vornömpste geboden Godes unde de twelf vornompsts hövet-artyckelin des Christen-gheloues.
Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1555-1562.
- Amsterdam: Mennonite Library

Dat uprechte Christen-gelove des Ghemein schappes der Hilligen des Huses der Lieften; Dar oick de uprechte Christlioke döpe inne betüget unde beleden wert.
- Amsterdam: Mennonite Library

WRITINGS OF ELDERS OF THE FAMILY OF LOVE

An Apology for the Service of Love --- and the Family of Love
1575
- Cambridge: University Library

Same title as above
London: Giles Calvert, 1656
- Cambridge: University Library (two copies)
- New York: Union Seminary Library

A Brief Rehearsall of the Beleef of the Goodwilling ---
London: 1575
- London: Lambeth Palace Library

Same title as above
London: Giles Calvert: 1656
- London: British Museum Library
- Cambridge: University Library
- New York: Union Seminary Library

A Supplication of the Family of Love
Cambridge: John Legate, 1606

A Petition of the Family of Love to the King's Most Excellent Majesty James the First. (1604)
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