NICOLAS OF LYRA

by A. SKEVINGTON WOOD

MEDIAEVAL biblical exegesis is a field of study in which some fine pioneer work has been done in recent years, notably (so far as England is concerned) by Dr. Beryl Smalley. But one still finds the Middle Ages dismissed by people who ought to know better as without significance for the history of biblical interpretation. The mediaeval exegetes deserve to be studied both for their own sakes and also for the sake of their influence on following generations, notably on the Reformers. Nicolas of Lyra's influence may be traced in England as well as on the Continent: John Purvey, editor of the second Wycliffite version of the English Bible (1395) acknowledges his debt to Lyra—and the extent of that debt may be recognized by the careful student. The following paper was read by Dr. Skevington Wood to the Tyndale Fellowship Church History Group at the beginning of 1961. Dr. Skevington Wood's qualifications to deal with such a subject need no emphasizing to readers of THE EVANGELICAL QUARTERLY.

CURIOUSLY enough the name of Nicolaus de Lyra, the outstanding Christian exegete of the fourteenth century, is familiar to modern readers chiefly through the medium of a doggerel couplet from the pen of one Peter of Pflug.[1] Perhaps the original version ran thus:

> Si Lyra non lyrasset
> Nemo doctorum in Bibliam saltasset.

But the jingle is now repeated in a form which makes explicit reference to the indebtedness of Martin Luther and consequently of the Protestant Reformation as a whole to this great Biblical scholar:

> Si Lyra non lyrasset
> Lutherus non saltasset.

We shall be enquiring later into the validity of this claim, but meanwhile we must introduce ourselves to Nicolas himself. Only the sketchiest accounts of his life and influence have appeared in English, and some of these are guilty of historical inexactitude. Most of the basic research has been carried out by French acade-

[1] *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge*, ed. S. M. Jackson, Vol. VII, p. 99.

micians and it is to their findings that we must turn in seeking to compile a satisfactory biography.

Of the greatness of Lyra there can be no doubt. Schaff recognized in him "the chief medieval commentator."[2] Labrosse hailed him as beyond contradiction "the most illustrious of the Christian exegetes in the Middle Ages."[3] Farrar christened him the Jerome of the fourteenth century and welcomed him as "one green island among the tideless waves of exegetic commonplace."[4] That such verdicts stand unaltered is indicated by the contemporary judgment of Professor Warren A. Quanbeck, the distinguished Lutheran scholar, who describes Lyra as "the most influential expositor of the late Middle Ages."[5] Considering his obvious importance in the history of Biblical interpretation, it is surprising that so little serious attention has been paid to his hermeneutical contribution and that his biography is so attenuated.

Perhaps we can begin by filling up some of the gaps in the latter. Nicolas was born in France, probably in the year 1265. There has been much controversy concerning both the date of his birth and that of his death, but the evidence supplied by Labrosse to substantiate a year certainly before 1270 and in all likelihood as early as 1265 would appear to be virtually conclusive.[6] The birthplace was Lire (now Vieille Lyre) in Normandy, in the diocese of Évreux, and it is from hence that he is named Nicolaus de Lyra, and not from Lierre in Brabant as some have erroneously supposed.[7]

Two other suggestions as to Lyra's origin must also be set aside. According to John Trithemus, followed by John Bale, Sixtus of Sienna, Chytraeus and Leland, Nicolas was of English nationality.[8] Such a view cannot be seriously sustained since his name does not appear in any of the lists of English Franciscans, the Order to

[2] P. Schaff, *The German Reformation*, Vol. II, p. 356.

[3] H. Labrosse, "Sources de la biographie de Nicolas de Lyre", *Études Franciscaines*, Vol. XVI, p. 383.

[4] F. W. Farrar, *History of Interpretation*, p. 274.

[5] W. A. Quanbeck, "Luther's Early Exegesis", *Luther Today*, Vol. I, p. 69.

[6] H. Labrosse, "Biographie de Nicolas de Lyre," *Études Franciscaines*, Vol. XVII, pp. 490-492.

[7] The theory of Lyra's Brabançon origin was first formulated by Werner Rolewinck in his *Fasciculus temporum*. Cf. K. Michalski, *Bulletin Internationale de l'Académie Polonaise*, 1926, p. 72.

[8] J. Trithemus, *De Scriptoribus ecclesiasticis*, fo. 121. Cf. J. Bale, *Scriptorum catalogus*, p. 391; Sixtus Senensis, *Biblia sancta*, Vol. IV, p. 276; D. Chytraeus, *Chronologia;* J. Leland, *Antiphilarcia*, p. 124.

which he belonged.[9] It is equally unlikely that he was of Jewish stock on the maternal side. This legend is of no earlier than fifteenth-century origin and is unsupported by the evidence of Lyra's own writings. Nowhere does he hint that he was born in the Synagogue, and in referring to the customs and errors of Judaism he appeals to the experience of others, not to his own. His knowledge of Hebrew was acquired in the course of his academic training and not in the home. Paul de Burgos, himself a converted Jew, objected that Lyra leaned too heavily on the Jewish commentators, but never assumed that he was of Hebrew ancestry.

It was at the turn of the century (i.e., *c.* 1300) that Lyra entered the Franciscan Order of Friars Minor at Verneuil, not far from his birthplace.[10] Gonzaga thought that the Minorites were not established at Verneuil until 1310, but Labrosse has shown that they were installed at least as early at 1267, for they figure in a list of religious houses upon which Alphonse de Poitiers desired to bestow charities.[11] We know from his epitaph that Lyra wore the habit for forty-eight years and since, according to the most reliable evidence, he died in 1349, his novitiate must have begun with the century, or thereabouts.[12]

By 1309 we find him a Regent Master in the University of Paris, so it may be taken that he began his studies there some little time previous to this date.[13] He is recorded as a Bachelor in 1307 at the period of the consultation on the Templars.[14] On April 11, 1309, his name appears amongst the Masters of the Theological Faculty who subscribed to the examination of a book by the mystic, Marguerite Porrette.[15] It was also in 1309 that he obtained his *Quodlibet* and engaged in debate with Jean de Pouilly.[16]

[9] Labrosse, *Études Franciscaines,* Vol. XVII, p. 493.

[10] P. Glorieux, *Répertoire des Maîtres en Théologie de Paris au XIII Siècle,* p. 215. R. Schmid, *Realencyklopädie für Protestantische Theologie und Kirche,* ed. J. J. Herzog, Vol. XII, p. 29, has 1292, on the assumption that Lyra died in 1340. So also J. A. Fabricius, *Bibliotheca Latina,* Vol. V, p. 349.

[11] F. Gonzaga, *De Origine seraphicae religionis,* p. 568; Paris Archives Nationales J 317; Labrosse, *Études Franciscaines,* Vol. XVI, p. 403.

[12] Labrosse, *Études Franciscaines,* Vol. XVI, p. 397. Epitaph: "*provinciae Franciae alumnus, in conventu Vernoliensi, custodiae Normandiae, habitum Minorum accepit, quem honorifice exemplariterque quadraginta octo annis portavit . . .*"

[13] Glorieux, *op. cit.,* p. 215.

[14] *Ibid.;* Labrosse, *Études Franciscaines,* Vol. XVII, p. 595

[15] She was burnt as a heretic on May 31, 1310. April 11 might be 1309 or 1310 according to the calendar style. The Old Style year 1309 ran from March 30 to April 19.

[16] Glorieux, *op. cit.,* p. 215.

His Regency only covered two years, for he was succeeded in 1311 by Bertrand du Tour.[17] No doubt his disputation had been rewarded with the Doctor's degree, although this is not expressly recorded.

Our next notice is in 1319 when Nicolas is listed amongst those present at the Abbey of Longchamps on February 1, when Blanche, daughter of Philip the Fair, donned the habit. He is designated as "adonc menistre des freres mineures en France et tout le couvent des seurs" (*sic*).[18] As Provincial of his Order in France he would superintend Paris, Champagne, Artois, Vermandois, Lorraine, Flandre, Normandie, Liège and Rheims. In 1322 Lyra is mentioned amongst those present at the General Chapter of Minorites at Pèrouse when the theme of the conference was the poverty of Christ and His apostles. He appears as "minister Francie."[19]

According to an eighteenth-century manuscript history of the Franciscan province of Burgundy, housed in the Library at Lyons, Nicolas succeeded Humbert as Provincial in 1314.[20] Charles Victor Langlois, in his account of Lyra in *Histoire Littéraire de la France,* assumes that a copyist's error has omitted the Roman numeral ten from the date 1324, and that it was in fact in this year and not in 1314 that Lyra was appointed Provincial of Burgundy, instead of France.[21] The Province comprised the charges of Lyons, Dijon, Besançon, Lausanne, Vienne and Auvergne. In the following year Lyra was named as executor of the estate of Jeanne of Burgundy, widow of King Philip VI, and helped to found the Burgundian College in Paris.[22]

There is a passage in the *Chronicon* of Dietrich Engelhus which speaks of a visit to Erfurt in Saxony. Here he is said to have prepared his Bible commentary and also his treatises against the Jews. The date given is 1329, followed by the cryptic reference: "as he himself wrote on Revelation Chapter XIII."[23] As there is no such allusion in Lyra's commentary either under Revelation 13 or anywhere else, we can only conclude with Labrosse that a

[17] *Ibid.*

[18] A. Molinier, *Obituaires de la Province de Paris,* Vol. I, p. 659. The original MS. is in the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris, MS. Fr. 11,662.

[19] E. Baluze, *Miscellanea,* ed. J. D. Mansi, Vol. III, p. 208.

[20] Bibliothèque de Lyons, MS. No. 1,422.

[21] C. V. Langlois in *Histoire Littéraire de la France,* Vol. XXXVI, pp. 358-359.

[22] Labrosse, *Études Franciscaines,* Vol. XVI, pp. 388-391.

[23] D. Engelhus, *Chronicon,* Vol. II, p. 978.

sojourn in Erfurt is neither proven nor even likely.[24]

On September 3, 1328, the University of Paris laid down additional regulations relating to those qualified to read for degrees and this statute was signed in the presence of two members of each Faculty. Theology was represented by Pierre d'Abbeville and "*Nicolaus Cordifer,*" identified by Denifle and Châtelain with Lyra.[25] In 1333 twenty-nine Doctors of Theology in Paris addressed to King Philip VI, at his request, a dissertation on the Beatific Vision in answer to the view of Pope John XXII that the souls of those who die in a state of grace do not enjoy it until after the Last Judgment. Lyra is fifth in the list which is drafted in order of honour. His name follows those of Pierre de la Palu (Patriarch of Jerusalem), Pierre Roger (Archbishop of Rouen), Guillaume Bernard (Chancellor of Paris) and Jean de Blangi (the doyen of the Faculty and spokesman at the conference).[26]

For many years it was wrongly assumed, on the basis of Lyra's epitaph, that he died in the year 1340. It is stated in such usually reliable authorities as the *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, Realencyklopädie für Protestantische Theologie und Kirche, The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge,* the *Catholic Encyclopaedia* and elsewhere. In 1895 M. Jules Viard, National Archivist in Paris, reported the discovery of an important text which exposed the inexactitude of 1340 as the date of Lyra's death. According to the entry for July 20, 1349, in the *Journaux du Trésor* of Philip VI, Gautier de Chanteloup, described as "*provisor garnisionum vinorum Regis,*" debited the sum of 24 *l.* 4 *s.p.* which he had received by order of the Queen to buy a queue of wine for Nicolas of Lyra. The receipt was signed by Chanteloup on July 6.[27] From this invaluable reference it is clear that Lyra was living in 1349 and this is now thought to be the year of his death. The only remaining item of dispute relates to the precise day: whether it was October 14 or 23. Lyra's epitaph gives the 23rd, but since it has been shown to be inaccurate in respect of the year it may also be inaccurate in respect of the day. The original epitaph was attached to Lyra's tomb in the Chapter Hall of the Convent of the Cordeliers in Paris. On November 15, 1580, this was seriously damaged by fire and

[24] Labrosse, *Études Franciscaines,* Vol. XVII, p. 601.

[25] H. Denifle and P. Châtelain, *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis,* Vol. II, No. 681 ; Vol. III, p. 660.

[26] *Histoire Littéraire de la France,* Vol. XXXVI, p. 360; Denifle and Châtelain, *op. cit.,* Vol. II, p. 431.

[27] *Journaux du Trésor de Charles IV,* ed. J. Viard, No. 203.

the inscription was destroyed. The tomb was restored in 1631 by Matthieu Doles and the epitaph was rewritten, with some insertions. This, too, has disappeared, but copies of each have been preserved and are printed by Labrosse.[28] Both give October 23 as the date of Lyra's death, with 1340 as the year. Labrosse explains at some length how a misreading of the Roman numerals might have taken place and argues cogently for October 14, which is proposed by the earliest authorities.[29]

We must now turn from Lyra's life-story to catalogue his works, before proceeding to examine his contribution to hermeneutics. His major achievement lies in his commentary on the whole Bible, in two parts, the first expounding the literal sense and the second the mystical or moral. *Postilla litteralis super Biblia* was produced from 1322 to 1331 ; *Postilla mystica seu moralis* in 1339. These ran through numerous editions and had the distinction of constituting the first *printed* Bible commentary. In 1333 Lyra compared the Vulgate Old Testament with the Hebrew text in *Tractatus de differentia nostrae translationis ab Hebraic littera in Veteri Testamento*. Two treatises against the Jews appeared in 1334. The first was *Probatio adventus Christi contra Iudeos*—the theme of his *Quodlibet* in 1309. The second is entitled: *Responsio ad quemdam Iudaeum ex verbis Evangelii secundum Matteum contra Christum nequitur arguentem*. Then there is his unpublished theological treatise on the Beatific Vision directed against the heterodoxy (said to have been recanted) of Pope John XXII—*De visione divinae essentiae ab animabus sanctis a corpore separatis*. Finally, a devotional work bears the date 1339—*Oratio devota seu contemplatio ad honorem S. Francisci*.[30]

The remainder of this article will be occupied with a brief survey and estimate of Lyra as a Biblical commentator. In the Introduction to his informative outline of Latin exegesis in the Middle Ages, Professor Spicq links the famous *Glossa Ordinaria* of the twelfth century with Lyra's *Postillae* in the fourteenth and regards them as the culmination of the exegetical tradition of the Medieval Church. No other comparable work appears until Luther and Cajetan.[31] It is on the *Postillae* that we now focus our attention.

Lyra opens his *magnum opus* with two prologues. In the first —*De commendatione sacrae Scripturae in generali*—he introduces

[28] Labrosse, *Études Franciscaines*, Vol. XVI, p. 397.

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 403 ; Vol. XVII, pp. 490-491.

[30] For bibliography, cf. Glorieux, *op. cit.*, pp. 215-231.

[31] C. Spicq, *Esquisse d'une histoire de l'exégèse Latine au Moyen Age*, p. 7.

the Holy Bible as the book of life. He regards it as a unity, despite the fact that it is composed of several parts, and he eulogizes its superiority to the writings of the philosophers.[32] He recognizes that the primary function of Scriptures is to reveal truth about God and he describes it as the sole text-book of theology.[33] He then makes an observation which forms the basis of his entire hermeneutical approach. The many books of the Bible have this one feature in common, namely, that they bear more than one sense. The text of Scripture is patient of an inner and an outer meaning. Like Ezekiel's roll and the seven-sealed book in the Apocalypse, it is written within and without (Ezekiel 2: 10; Revelation 5: 1).[34] There is the literal sense and there is the mystical sense. These are one and yet distinct. And the mystical sense itself is divisible into three parts: the allegorical (*si res significate per voces referantur ad significandum ea quae sunt in nova lege credenda*); the tropological or moral (*si referantur ad significandum ea quae per nos sunt agenda*); and the anagogical (*si referantur ad significandum ea quae sunt speranda in beatitudine*).[35] Hence the Scholastic verse:

> Littera gesta docet, quid credas allegoria,
> Moralis quid agas, quo tendas anagogia.

So far Lyra has simply been echoing the teaching of his time. But in the second prologue—*De intentione auctoris et modo procedendi*—he formulates the principle that anticipates the emphasis of Luther and the Reformers. He explains that the literal sense is primary. Each of the mystical interpretations presupposes the literal.[36] It is therefore necessary to begin with the plain meaning of the letter. Whoever would profit in the study of Scripture, declares Lyra, must start by laying hold of the *sensus litteralis*. Without such a foundation it is impossible to expound the Word of God correctly. This sense alone, and not the mystical, can establish a proof or determine a doubtful point, as Augustine maintains in his *Epistle to Vincentius the Donatist*.[37] Elsewhere, in his comment on the Third Chapter of Job, Lyra defines the literal sense as that which was intended by the author. It is upon

[32] P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Vol. 113, col. 25.
[33] *Ibid.*, col. 26.
[34] *Ibid.*, col. 28.
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] *Ibid.*, col. 29.
[37] *Ibid.* Vincentius, Rogatist Bishop of Cartenna, was one of Augustine's correspondents.

this that the understanding of the book depends.[38] Of course, Thomas Aquinas, following the lead of Albert the Great and the Victorines, had laid special stress on the literal interpretation of Scripture and his unique authority paved the way for a more universal recognition of its primacy. Whilst reproducing many of the arguments of Aquinas, Lyra sharpened them and then applied the principle in actual exegesis.[39]

Lyra acknowledges that this quest for the *sensus litteralis* has been complicated because of the difficulty involved in establishing the true text of Scripture. The alterations made in successive centuries through faulty transcription or irresponsible emendation have conspired to obscure the original readings. This is particularly noticeable in the case of the Old Testament, Lyra thinks, where scribes have been misled by the similarities between Hebrew letters, have placed vowel points incorrectly or have divided verses inaccurately. The only solution to this general problem is to recover the Hebrew codices and correct the Latin text from them. It needs to be remembered, however, that the Jews had tampered with many texts relating to the divinity of Christ, as he had shown in his *Quodlibet* treatise.[39] The literal sense had been furthermore concealed beneath a layer of elaborate mystical exposition. Nevertheless, despite all these hindrances, Lyra will endeavour by the help of God to avoid all these pitfalls, to discover the plain meaning of the letter and insist upon its absolute hermeneutical primacy.[40]

Lyra's resort to the Hebrew text of the Old Testament as a corrective to the Vulgate is noteworthy. Spicq considers this feature to be the chief merit of the *Postillae*.[41] It was because of his attention to the original that Lyra gained the esteem of Reuchlin, who confessed that he honoured him as a teacher and had been stimulated by the linguistic comments in the *Postillae* to learn the Hebrew language.[42] A single instance of Lyra's method must suffice. The Vulgate of Psalm 130: 4 reads: "Quia apud te propitiatio est: et propter legem tuam sustinui te Domine." This reading of *legem* is based on the Greek *nomos* which appears in some manuscripts, although the Septuagint has *onoma*. Lyra rejects the Vulgate and goes back to the Hebrew text. He points

[38] *"Praemittendum est de intentione huius auctoris, quia ex hoc dependet intellectus huius libri"* (*Postilla litteralis*, Job 3: 16).

[39] B. Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, pp. 298-302.

[40] Migne, *P.L.*, Vol. 113, cols. 29, 30.

[41] Spicq, *op. cit.*, p. 338.

[42] J. Reuchlin, *De Rudimentis Hebraicis*, p. 549.

the consonants and arrives at the meaning "feared" which is everywhere accepted nowadays. In order to familiarize himself with the Hebrew text and its interpretation Lyra sat at the feet not only of Christian but of Jewish exegetes. In the preface to his commentary he announces his intention of drawing upon Rabbinic writings as well as upon the doctors of the Church. He makes especial mention of Rashi, whom he values for his concentration upon the literal sense.[43]. Rashi (Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac) was the most influential of the medieval Jewish exegetes. To the two existing methods of interpretation, the *halachic*, or regulative, and the *aggadic*, or homiletical, he added a third, the literal, or rational. The extent of Rashi's influence upon Lyra has been variously estimated. Renan went so far as to say that "Rashi and the Tosephists made Nicolas of Lyra" and in his lifetime he was known as *simius Salomonis*.[44] There is, of course, no question that the effect of Rashi on Lyra was profound.[45] Much of his modification of the Vulgate text is derived from this source. He leans heavily upon Rashi in his comments on the Pentateuch and his treatment of the Psalms is little more than a paraphrase of what his mentor had previously written. Lyra, moreover, is imbued with the spirit of Rashi and the combination of the latter's learning with Lyra's lucidity is often incomparable, in this period. But Lyra was no mere slave of Rashi. He was capable of independent judgment and it is significant that as he proceeds with his exposition of the Old Testament he grows increasingly confident of his own resources and relies less and less upon his confessed director. Incidentally, Lyra was by no means the first Christian commentator to quote from Rashi, as Miss Beryl Smalley has shown.[46]

Some have imagined that Lyra possessed only a mediocre knowledge of the Hebrew tongue and of Rabbinical interpretations. Neumann, however, has demonstrated that he does not confine himself to quoting the Midrash but makes use also of later Rabbinic literature.[47] He mentions R. Moses Hadarshan, R. Joden and Maimonides. Miss Smalley is right in concluding that he "repre-

[43] Migne, *P.L.*, Vol. 113, col. 30.

[44] E. Renan in *Histoire Littéraire de la France*, Vol. XXVII, p. 434.

[45] Neumann, "Influence de Raschi et d'autres commentateurs Juifs sur les *Postillae Perpetuae* de Nicolas de Lyre," *Revue des Études Juives*, Vol. XXVI, pp. 175-182; Vol. XXVII, pp. 250-262.

[46] Smalley, *op. cit.*, p. 190; *Histoire Littéraire de la France*, Vol. XXXVI, p. 385.

[47] *Revue des Études Juives*, Vol. XXVI, p. 179.

sents the culmination of a movement for the study of Hebrew and rabbinics."[48] This is not to suggest that he was altogether ignorant of the classical Christian writers. He alludes to many of them and quotes freely from Jerome and Augustine in particular. He is also consciously indebted to the work of his more immediate predecessors: Albert the Great, Hugh and Richard of St. Victor, Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas. Although he appears to have known the Latin authors at first hand, he quotes from Greek and Oriental sources only through Raymond Martin's *Pugio Fidei*. He nevertheless reveals a refreshing independence of tradition which presages the attitude of the Protestant Reformers. In rejecting an observation by Jerome on the Matthaean genealogy he realizes that some will be surprised that he abandons the customary interpretation, but he firmly avers that the opinions of the Fathers do not possess such an undisputed authority that one must not contradict them in matters which are not determined by the Scriptures themselves.[49]

It remains for us to return to the couplet quoted at the outset of our enquiry and to assess the impact of Lyra on Luther. The name of the fourteenth-century Franciscan occurs frequently in the Biblical works of the pioneer Reformer. At first, however, Luther had no liking for Lyra. Before his determinative experience in the tower room of the Augustinian cloister at Wittenberg in the year 1514, when he discovered the key to God's Word, he had revelled in mystical interpretations and consequently failed to appreciate Lyra's emphasis on the literal sense. But after his "illumination," as he calls it in his *Table Talk*, Luther changed his opinion of Lyra and preferred him almost to all other exegetes because of his attempt to reach the meaning intended by the authors of the several volumes of Scripture. In his exposition of 2 Samuel 23 he praises Lyra for his knowledge of Hebrew and his able refutation of Rabbinical interpreters.[50] Warning his readers against allegorical falsifications of Genesis 2, he adds: "For this reason I like Lyra and rank him among the best, because throughout he carefully adheres to, and concerns himself with, the historical account."[51] Luther's verdict on Lyra is summed up in a sentence: "A fine soul: a good Hebraist and a true Christian."[52]

He does not accept Lyra's comments uncritically, however. He

[48] Smalley, *op. cit.*, p. 355.
[49] *Postilla litteralis*, Matt. 5: 35.
[50] M. Luther, *Werke*, Weimar Auflage, Vol. LIV, p. 30.
[51] Luther, *op. cit.*, Vol. XLII, p. 71.
[52] C. Singer, *The Legacy of Israel*, p. 307.

thinks he is inclined to bow too readily to patristic authority and not always emancipated from the trammels of mystical exegesis.[53] But he is very considerably indebted to Lyra in his exposition of the Old Testament — particularly the Pentateuch — and derives from him many of his Rabbinical references. It must therefore be concluded that there is a certain measure of truth in the popular rhyme. We should not go so far as Soury in dismissing it as "dicton absurde," although we realize what prompted such a peremptory pronouncement.[54] Nicolas of Lyra simply epitomized the hermeneutical tendency of several centuries and must not be regarded as a solitary figure in his adumbration of Reformation principles. The truth of the matter would seem to be that in Lyra Luther met the quintessence both of Christian and Jewish exegesis in the Middle Ages and was quick to capitalize it in the interests of the new movement he represented.

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[53] Luther, *W.A.*, Vol. XLII, p. 137.
[54] J. Soury, *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, Vol. LIV, p. 738.