

**UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.
THE AFRICAN NOVELS OF LOUIS
BERTRAND: A PHASE OF THE
RENASCENCE OF NATIONAL
ENERGY IN FRANCE. A THESIS**

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DAVID CLARK CABEEN

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THE AFRICAN NOVELS OF LOUIS BERTRAND:
A PHASE OF THE RENASCENCE OF
NATIONAL ENERGY IN FRANCE

BY
DAVID CLARK CABEEN

A THESIS

PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL IN
PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN ROMANIC LANGUAGES

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It affords me great pleasure to express my appreciation of the courtesy which M. Bertrand has shown in answering my frequent inquiries. I wish also to thank M. Hugues LeRoux and M. Arthur Pellegrin for their assistance, and particularly M. Robert Randau whose letter to me is a noteworthy contribution to the critical estimate of the work of Louis Bertrand.

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INTRODUCTION

It is the purpose of this paper to study the African, or more strictly speaking, the Algerian novels of Louis Bertrand, his ethnological, economic and literary doctrines, and their application in these novels. Early in the course of his study of M. Bertrand, the writer of this paper met a strikingly clear expression of an idea which was gradually taking shape in his own mind. This idea, which may be said to give a certain unity to the present essay, should here be quoted in full: "Maurice Barrès et Charles Maurras ont travaillé parallèlement, séparément, à édifier tout ou partie d'une théorie de la France. . . . du double apport critique et doctrinal de Maurice Barrès et de Charles Maurras quelques éléments subsisteront, qu'il faudra quelque jour incorporer à un système français.

Le jour venu de cette synthèse, le nom de M. Louis Bertrand ne sera point oublié; sa part de construction ne sera ni la moins originale ni la moins solide. . . . M. Charles Maurras veille aux frontières traditionnelles de la latinité; M. Maurice Barrès assure la défense de nos bastions de l'est. M. Louis Bertrand cherche plus loin une terre à protéger, une province à fortifier dans le dogme français, une lutte à soutenir pour l'élargissement de notre civilisation et l'expansion de notre race. Il franchit la Méditerranée; ses bastions à lui s'érigent à l'entrée du désert. Il est le créateur et le prophète d'un impérialisme africain."¹

The critic then explains the idea of conquest as glorified by Louis Bertrand; that it represents a purification of the ancient instinct which drives man to plunder and enslave his neighbor, and that it is victorious over misery, disorder and the forces of inertia. The heroes of the novels of M. Bertrand are the pioneers sent by France and her sister Latin countries to prepare the uncultivated domain of her new colonies; they are adventurers

¹Lucien Maury, *Louis Bertrand, impérialiste*, *Revue Bleue*, 59th year, June 18, 1921.