Hours of the Virgin - Paris - XVth cent.

M 73

Hours of the Virgin, for Paris Use, preceded by a Calendar for Le Mans and Angers, Sequences of the Gospels and prayers to the Virgin. Following the Hours, are the Seven Penitential Psalms, Litany, Hours of the Cross, Hours of the Holy Ghost, Office of the Dead and Memoriae.

Manuscript on vellum, written and illuminated in Touraine, France, in the XVth cent. and belonging to the group attributed to the artist. "Egregius pistor Franciscus" (Maitre Franconis)(1)

Decoration: Excellent execution. There is one full-page miniature and 9 smaller ones (2 3/4 x 1 3/4 inches) of delicate execution, usually having the spot of vermilion, characteristic of the works of Maitre Franconis. The first page of text is decorated with a scene illustrating Psalm 84 (v. 11) "Mercy and Truth are met together, Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other."

The calendar contains 24 small pictures, two scenes to a page, besides which there are four pictures in the text 1 1/4 x 1 1/2 inches in size.

144 leaves (5 1/2 x 3 3/4 inches) 18 lines. 24°.

Binding: Modern green velvet (2 clasps) in green mor. case lettered "Horae Beatae Virginis Mariae - French Ms. c. 1470" (And a jolly good description too!)

History: In lower margin of leaf 1 is the name of R. P. De La Chaise (Francois d'Aix de La Chaise, 1624-1709, confessor of Louis XIV). Bennett Collection.

Note (1) of Warner G. F., Reproduction from illuminated Ms. In the E.M. Ser. I, plate XXXI;
Add.: Cards.

Ms., Illum., French - XV cent.
" " Toufaille - "
" " Artists - Francois, Maître
" " Artists. Egregius pictor Franciscus
    see
" " Francois, Maître
Provenance - La Chaise, Francois d’Aix, 162401709
Iconography - Psalm 84. v. 11
Calendar - Angers
Calendar - Mens Le Mans
Use - Paris
Ms., Illum., Artists - Maître Francois
    see
Ms., Illum., Artists, Francois, Maître.

Fam. Murray
   Truth

MTH - October, 1932

Another manuscript by this artist is a Petrarch in Vienna; 
cf. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Abendländische Buchmalerei, 
1952, p.70, no. 190.

Bibl. S.C.CHÉW, The Virtues Reconciled, 1947, p.61. pl.2
50. HORAE (Paris). Vellum, 5½ x 3¾, ff. 144; 18 lines to a page; cent. xv (circa 1470); in a rather current hand. Binding: green velvet with silver-gilt clasps.

1. Bookplate of Mr. Bennett.

73. Collation: 1°, 2°, 3°, 4° (?), 5° (wants 1, 2°), 6°, 7°, 8°-13°, 14°-16° (wants 1), 15° (wants 1), 16° (wants 1), 17°-19°, 20° (wants 1), 21°. Quire two consists of two leaves, one of which is the frontispiece to the Hours of the Virgin, replacing the first leaf of the Sequences of the Gospels.

CONTENTS

Kalendar in brown and blue. 1
Frontispiece to Hours of the Virgin. 7
Sequences of the Gospels. 8
Obsecro te. 13
O intermerrata. 17
Hours of the Virgin (Use of Paris). 21
Seven Psalms and Litany. 71
Hours of the Cross (first leaf gone). 87
Hours of the Holy Ghost. 93
Office of the dead (first leaf gone). 96
Memoriae. 137

In the Kalendar are Saints of Le Mans and Angers. The latter see is more prominent.

May. Avertinus.
June. Liborius (Le Mans).
July. Transl. S. Martini, in blue.
    Trans. S. Pauucil.
    22. Maurice, in blue.
The Litany has nothing but Bernardinus and Avia.
The Memoriae include Antony, Claude, and Genivee.
The main body of the book is thus Parisian: the Kalendar is of Angers.
The pictures are as follows. The Kalendar has on the outer margin of each page two pictures, one above the other, in gold frames, with the upper corners rounded off internally representing the occupation and zodiacal signs.

1. Jan. Seated on 2, back to fireplace, at table; servant in red hose on r. brings in birds on a dish.
2. Aquarius. Nude child in a landscape empties a vessel into a stream.
3. Feb. Holds one foot to the fire on r.
6. Aries.
7. April. A girl in red with black headdress, sits in oblong garden, with raised grass seat round it, making a wreath.

8. Taurus.
9. May. Youth in red cap and boots above the knee, turned over at top, rides to l. with hawk on hand and a lady in tall black headdress en croupe.
10. Gemini. Nude, hold a plain gold shield before them.
14. Leo.
16. Virgo, standing by a sheaf of corn, holds a palm.
18. Libra. A woman holds scales and palm.
20. Scorpius. A beast with five legs on one side.
21. Nov. Throws a stick at an oak grove; pigs feeding.
22. Sagittarius. A centaur shooting backwards to r.
23. Dec. With apron and red hose, killing a pig with a mallet.
25. Frontispiece to Matins of the Virgin (misplaced).

Above text:
In a half circle of red angels, bordered with clouds, sit the Father (r.) and Son on a gold throne. The Dove between them. The Son has a cross, the Father tiara and orb; they hold a book open. Below, in c, back to the spectator, kneels Gabriel, with green wings and sceptre.

On l. two women Mistrircorde and Verité, join hands. On r. Justice with sword, and Pax with a cube, embrace.

Initial: A Prophet's head.

Below text: On l. the Virgin kneels at a pretty desk. On r., over a low wall, Gabriel in air with green wings and scroll, Adorna thalamum tuum et suscipe regem.

The frontispiece to the Sequences of the Gospels is gone.

26. In text. Luke seated on l. in chair with desk across the arms; ox on r.
27. In text. Matthew seated on L. by circular desk; angel kneels on R.
28. In text. Mark, in red cap, sits on R. by sloping double desk on table; lion on L.
29. *Obsecro te.* The Virgin and Child throned on L. under red canopy. Before them, at a desk, kneels the owner of the book, a young man in pink gown, with hat slung on his back. Behind, three angels with lute, pipe, and harp. Gold king-post roof above.
30. *O intemerata.* In text. Pietà. The Virgin with the body of Christ on her knees. The Cross behind. John kneels on L. Magdalene with casket on R.
31. *Lauds.* The Visitation. Joseph on L., old; house on R.
32. *Prime.* The Virgin and Joseph (holding his cap) adore the Child; stable on L., with ox and ass; on R., behind Joseph, a shepherd.
33. *Tierce.* On L. a fold of sheep, with a hut in it. In front, outside, a shepherd, seated, in red boots; another further away, looking up. Angel in air with scroll, *Gloria in altissimis deo et in.*
34. *Sext.* Adoration of the Magi. The Virgin and Child on L. A young king on R.; star above stable roof on L.
35. *None.* The Presentation. The Virgin kneels on L., attended by maid with basket and candle, and by Joseph; Symeon with the Child behind the altar, on R., under circular green canopy. Beyond him another man.
37. *Compline.* On R., on a wooden throne, the Son in tiara with book; the Virgin, attended by an angel, kneels on L.; an angel leans over a wainscot and crowns the Virgin; background of red angels.
38. *Seven Psalms.* David kneels in vermillion turban with crown, facing L., at a table with two gold tablets on it; through a window, Christ, with orb, half length. Behind, a settle with a green cushion.

Every page of text has a partial border of conventional foliage, in which birds are introduced with some frequency.

The whole book is a very excellent specimen, probably, of Parisian work—there is just a possibility that it may be Angevine. The colours are most brilliant and the drawing delicate. Walters R. III., dated 1489 is from Champagne.
For printed text or notices of this MS. see:


no. 556, [fol. 13].