Le Roman de la Rose.

133

Le Roman de la Rose, and Testament of Jean de Meun.

Manuscript on vellum, written and illuminated in France in the 14th century (ca. 1380).

Decoration: There are 2 half-page miniatures and 69 small ones (1 3/4 x 1 3/4 inches) throughout the text. The large picture, on fol. 1, is divided into 4 compartments. It is delicately executed in grisaille and pastel shades, reminiscent of the style of the Maître des Bouquetins, as are the remaining smaller pictures. They are all drawn with precision and effectively heightened with touches of colour. Sprays of ivy leaves form border decoration (cf. similar decoration in other Morgan MSS.).

Text: The text belongs to Group II of the Langlois classification. It is in the Burgundian dialect, (cf. Toynebe, Specimens of Old French, p. xxv,) written in a neat book-hand in brown ink. There are many contractions. Blue and rose initials and rubrics throughout.

189 + 1 leaves (8 x 5 1/3 inches) double columns of 34 lines. 12º.

Binding: Brown blind-tooled morocco, with green levant morocco doublures elaborately tooled in gold, to a Nicolas Eve "à la fanfare" design, by Duru (1654). Lettered "Roman de la Rose et Testament de Jehan de Meun — Manuscrit"; in brown morocco solander case lettered "Roman de la Rose et Testament de Jehan de Meun".

History: Owned (ca. 1525?) by "Johannes Marcus" (inscription on fol. 158). Bought 1773 by Pierre Vischer of Bâle (inscription on first leaf); baron de Neubourg sale (Paris, 4 Nov. 1839, no. 591); G. Libri sale (Paris, 1855, no. 1815); A. Firmin Didot sale (Paris, 1878, no. 53); Quaritch, Cat. 1886, no. 35709; Quaritch sale (Paris, 27 Feb. 1892, no. 49); Quaritch, Cat. 1893 (1893), no. 42; bought 20 June 1895 by William Morris (inscription on fly-leaf, and see next page.)
libris); Richard Bennett collection, 1897.

For full description see Morgan Cat. MSS. 1906, no. 112.

Add. Cards:
MSS. - Illum. - French - XIV cent.
  "  "  Grisaille
  "  "  Artists: Des Bouqueteurs, Maître, Style of
Jean de Meun - Testament
French language - Dialects: Burgundy
Bindings - Duru
Provenance - Marcus, Johannes (Jean Marot?)
  "  "  Vischer, Pierre
  "  "  Neubourg, baron de
Poetry - French
Burgundian dialect, see French language - Dialects: Burgundy

Provenance - ?Marot, Jean Desmarets, dit. 1457-1526, see
  "  "  Marcus, Johannes (Jean Marot?)
112. ROMAN DE LA ROSE, etc. Vellum, 8 × 5 ½, ff. 189 + 1; double columns of 34 lines; cent. xiv (last third). Modern morocco, with elaborate gold-tooled linings to the covers. Bookplates of Ambroise Firmin-Didot, Mr. Morris, and Mr. Bennett. On page 1 a faint inscription: "Pierre Mich... cons... Bell 1773."

Collation: 1 ½-8 ½, 9 0, 10 ½ (5, 6 in a rather later hand), 11 ½-19 ½, 20 4, 1 modern leaf, 21 ½-24 ½.

CONTENTS

1. Le Roman de la Rose, by Guillaume de Lorris
and Jean de Meun. 1

    Ci commence une vraie histoire
    qui est de molt haute memoire
    quen nomme rommans de la rose
    ou lart damours est tout enclose
    Maintes gens dient que en songes.

Ends, f. 156a:

    A tant fu lour et le mesuelle
    explicit.

On f. 156b are two passages omitted in the text.

2. Le Testament de Jean de Meun. 158

    Cy commence le testament que fist Maistre Jehan de
    Meun.

Li pere et li filz
Et li sains esperis.

Ends, f. 189b:

    Ou saint liure de vie
    quill meismes escript. Amen.

Address to the Virgin:

    Marie vierge fille et mere
    Ancelle du souuerain pere
    Le fruit que portastes iadis
    et jus nous octrolo paradis. Amen.

The miniatures are in grisaille without grounds; trees, grass, etc., in dull green; pale blue and pink sometimes occur.

f. 1 has a sparse border of ivy leaf, and a picture in four compartments.
1a. The author, young, on bed, head to l.; a curved wooden canopy at the head, a rose tree at the foot. 

b. The author sits on the foot of the bed fastening his shoe.

c. He stoops over a stream between banks with trees.

d. He stands in c.; trees on mounds r. and l.; birds in air; stream on r.

2. f. 2. Haïne. A woman seated full face on a stone seat. X

3. f. 2b. Vilénie. Woman on seat spurning a cupbearer on l. with her foot.  Z X

4. Convoitise. An old woman looking into a chest on l. full of gold plate; silver plate on r.; clothes hanging on a bar above.

5. f. 3. Avarice. Seated woman in chair with bag; chest of money open on l.; clothes on bar above.

6. f. 3b. Envy. Woman seated on chair on r.; the author (?) stands on l. X

7. f. 4. Tristesse. Woman seated full face, hand to head.


9. f. 5. Papelardie. Nun, with white hood, rosary, and open book, kneels; altar on r., with crucifix; curtain on l.


11. f. 6. A maid, the doorkeeper, stands back to a door on l.; trees of garden seen over battlemented wall; the lover on r.

12. f. 6b. A ring of ten people round a tree in c. (dancing).

13. f. 13b. Narcissus kneeling over a square tank in which his face is reflected; three trees behind. X

14. f. 15b. The God of Love on r., crowned, winged, and robed, shoots an arrow at the eye of the lover on l. X

15. f. 17. The God of Love, crowned and winged, takes the hands of the lover, in tightly fitting clothes, on l.

16. f. 26. The lover on l.; Raison, a crowned lady, before a door on r.

17. f. 27. The lover, robed, on l.; Amis, a robed, bearded man in hood on r. consoles him.

18. f. 28. The lover on l.; Pitié, a maid, lays her hand on his shoulder; Franchise, a lady, speaks to Danger; a bearded churl, leaning on a club on r.

19. f. 30. Venus, a lady with flaming torch; the lover on r., with arms crossed on his breast. X

20. f. 31b. Honte et Paour, two ladies: about to rouse Danger, who lies asleep under a tree on r.

21. f. 32b. Jalousie. An old woman directs two masons cutting stones in front; on r. a tower built to imprison Belacueil.

22. f. 34b. Jehan de Meun, bearded, in hooded robe, sits writing at desk; curtain on pole on r.

23. f. 48. Fortune. A crowned lady, blindfold, stands behind a large wheel which she holds by two of its spokes. X

24. f. 50. Raison, crownless, goes off on l.; in c. the lover; Amis approaches him on r.

25. f. 59. Three pairs of youths and maidens, two in front, one behind, sit and converse among trees with birds in them; these are les bonnes gens du temps passé.

26. f. 60b. Lucretia on r. runs a sword through her body; two men on l. look on.

27. f. 66. The jealous man clutches the hair of his prostrate wife, and raises a stick to beat her. X

28. f. 67b. Two robbers, one drawing his sword, emerge from a wood on r.; two travellers on r.

29. f. 68. A bearded king, with crown and sceptre in c., between two groups of people: "Coment le premier roy fu premierement fait du peuple.

30. f. 71. Amis on l.; the lover going to r., holding his hat, takes his hand.

31. f. 71b. The lover on l.; again on r. seated by Richesse, a lady with a diadem, under a tree; a gate on r.

32. f. 73b. The lover. The God of Love on r. lays his hand on his head.

33. f. 74b. A group of ladies on l., the God of Love on r. gives orders to them.

34. f. 75. Faussemblant, in monk's dress, a book slung on his back, a staff in his hand; the God of Love on r., holding a lance, speaks to him.

35. f. 87b. Three ladies on l., with shields, sword, and spear; the God of Love on r. with spear, addresses them; they are to assault the fortress of Jealousy.

36. f. 88. Abstinence as nun, and Faussemblant as monk; on r. Malebouche seated before her fortress.

37. f. 90. Abstinence on l.; Faussemblant strangles the seated Malebouche; gate on r.

38. f. 90b. Courtoisie and Largesse, two ladies, knock at the castle gate; the head of an old woman at a window.

39. f. 91b. The old woman (la vieille maquerelle) holding a chaplet; on r. the castle; Belacueil looks out of window.

40. f. 95. The old woman and Belacueil talking, within the castle. X

41. f. 97. On l. Dido falls forward on a sword; on 

42. f. 102b. The old woman; a bird hangs in a green cage on r. (she is telling Belacuel the example of the caged bird).

43. A young monk in black seated sadly with head in hand; a church behind; he is repenting his vows; this is another of the old woman's warnings to Belacueil.

44. f. 103b. The old woman talks to Belacueil; a fair youth on r.

45. f. 108. The lover on l.; the old woman addresses him.

46. f. 109b. The lover on l. retreating from Danger with raised club; the rose tree on r.

47. f. 110b. A rough man thrusts Belacueil back into the castle on r.

48. f. 111b. Four men (Love's army) in plate armour, with mail gorgets, armed with spears and shields, approach the castle on r.

49. f. 112. The author on l. bowing to a group of monks and friars (Dominican and Benedictine) on r.; he is apologizing for his matter.

50. f. 113b. Three ladies with shields and weapons; Danger with shield, on r., raises his club.

51. f. 114. Pitié, with shield and sword, addresses Danger leaning on his club, on r.

52. f. 115. Honte, a lady with shield and club, about to fight Pitié (on r.).

53. f. 116b. The God of Love with two spears on l.; group of soldiers on r. address him; he is to send a message to Venus.

54. f. 117b. Venus, in a covered car drawn by five doves (tandem-wise), flies through the air to r.; trees below.

55. f. 118b. Human Nature, a woman, on l. with
hammer, fashioning a little man on an anvil; forge
and bellows on r.
56. f. 121b. Nature kneels on l., confessing to
Genius, seated on r. in a canon’s almnce; he lays his
hand on her head.
57. f. 124b. Delilah, seated on l., shows the hair of
Samson, who lies with his head in her lap.
58. f. 130b. Christ, with cross-nimbus, seated full
face, holding a round mirror in His l. hand, in which
His face is reflected.
59. f. 131b. The image of Themis, nude, with
sword and shield, on a pedestal on l.; Deucalion and
Pyrrha kneel to it.
60. f. 135. Venus and Mars in bed; Vulcan at the
foot on r. ties their feet together. ×
61. f. 137b. Man and woman in bed. ×
62. f. 138. Genius, as bishop in mitre and chasuble;
the God of Love on r. puts a crosier into his hand.
63. f. 138b. Genius, as bishop in pulpit addresses a
seated group on r.
64. f. 140b. Death (Atropos), a skeleton on r. with
three spears, presses with a fourth spear the back of
a prostrate youth on l. ×
65. f. 142. Christ as a Lamb, nimbed, and holding
a staff, watches five sheep feeding. ×
66. f. 145. The fountain of life in the midst of
Paradise, a walled inclosure.

Nos. 64-66 illustrate the sermon of Genius.
67. f. 147b. Five armed knights; they are prepared
to attack the castle of Jealousy.
68. f. 148b. Venus shooting an arrow with flaming
head at the summit of the castle on r.
69. f. 149. Pygmalion working with chisel and
mallet at the draped figure of a woman lying on a
table; callipers, axe, and plummet lie round.
70. f. 151. On l. a lady (Galatea?); in c. Pygma-
lion kneels facing r.; on r. two idols on columns, one
draped, one nude, with spears; he is praying in the
temple of Venus.
71. f. 158. Testament of Jehan de Meun. Border
of ivy-leaf work, and pictures, rather over half
page.

In a circle of pink and blue cloud sit the Father
and Son, the Son on l. with book, the Father on r.
with orb; the Dove descends between them; in the
angles are the four Evangelistic emblems with scrolls
bearing the names of the Evangelists.

The pictures at their best (e.g., Nos. 1, 5, 8, 71)
are very good; they are always skilfully and strongly
drawn; their fault is that they are a little hard. But
the book is a beautiful one and a very good example
of secular art.
For printed text or notices of this MS. see:


J. Gordon, Pageant of the Rose, N.Y. 1953, p. 19, pl. 2
For printed text or notices of this MS. see:

Walter S. Gibson, "Hieronymus Bosch and the Mirror of Man", Oud Holland, Vol. 87 (1973) p. 217, fig. 11

Morgan MS. No. M. 132 f. 140v

For printed text or notices of this MS. see:

Wallace K. Fergusson, Florilegium Historiale (Toronto, 1971) fig. #13.

For printed text or notices of this MS. see:

V.A. Kolve, CHAUCER AND THE IMAGERY OF NARRATIVE:
The First Five Canterbury Tales (Stanford, California, 1984) #65, p.172 (fol. 102v)