Hours of the Virgin. Besançon. XV cent.

Hours of the Virgin, for Besançon use, followed by undetermined Vigils of the Dead, Gospel Sequences and Prayers.

Manuscript on vellum, written and illuminated in France, by an artist of the Paris school, or in the neighborhood of Besançon (?), in the XVth century.

Decoration: There are 21 miniatures (3 3/4 x 2 1/3 inches), whose general character agrees with the work of the Paris school of illumination in the middle of the XVth century. The colours are vivid, the landscape and architectural details generally good. The border decoration is weak; a few of the leaves have further incidents illustrated in minute border miniatures; of these the most interesting are found on fol. 113 at the beginning of the Vigils of the Dead. The crowns are of unusual shape.

Text: The MS. has no Kalender. Hours of the Virgin and Litany are for Besançon. Vigils of the Dead omit Lections IV-IX and are not for Besançon use when compared with M 28. The Gospel Sequences follow the Vigils of the Dead, instead of preceding the Hours of the Virgin, and are not illustrated.

173 leaves (7 1/8 x 5 inches) 13 lines. 12°.

Binding: French XIXth century dark brown morocco lettered "Heures".

History: Probably executed in Paris for use at Besançon by a man the unidentified arms of whose family (azure, 3 fusées or, of which the center is charged with an escutcheon; and azure, a chevron or with a bordure of the second) appear in several of the borders. Purchased 20 Nov. 1895 by Richard Bennett.

For full description see Morgan Cat. Ms. 1906, no.34.

Add. Cards (see next page)
M. 196

Add. Cards.

Mac. Illus. Three living and three dead.
- - French XV cent.
- - Paris .
- - Crowns
- - Arms, unidentified
- - Dance of Death.

Use - Besançon

Provenance - Arms, 3 fused or of which the center is charged with an escutcheon, a chevron or with a bordure of the second.

MPh: 1933

1983. Illum. Three monks at their work.

Iconography, cards -
Mary the Virgin; annunciation. f. 1
Mary the Virgin, reading. f. 1
Joseph the Carpenter; annunciation. f. 1
Mary the Virgin; Visitation. f. 15
Jesus Christ; Nativity - adoration. f. 29
Joseph the Carpenter; with candle at Nativity. f. 29
Lord the Saviour; at the Nativity. f. 29
Shepherds; Annunciation. f. 33
Magi; Adoration. f. 70
Jesus Christ; Presentation. f. 46
Flight into Egypt - nursing. f. 51
Mary the Virgin; Coronation - angels descending. f. 60
Pentecost. f. 67
Jesus Christ; Crucifixion. f. 71
David: communing with God. f. 78

over
David, as musician, f. 101
David and Goliath, f. 102
Trinity, f. 103
Apostles: Peter, standing, book and key, f. 102
" sealed with triple, f. 102
Apostles: James Major, f. 103
Claude of Besançon, f. 105
Anthony the Great, f. 106
Chrysostom, f. 107
St. John, f. 107
Christopher of Lydia, crannying Christ Child, f. 108
Annunciation, child Mary, f. 109
Catherine of Alexandria, f. 111
Liturgical scene, bread, f. 113
Legend: Three dead, and three living, f. 113
Purification, death, f. 113
Mary the Virgin, type Misericordia, f. 162
34. HORAE (Besançon). Vellum, 74 x 5, ff. 173; 13 lines to a page; cent. xv; in a rather current hand. Binding: modern black morocco. Bookplate of Mr. Bennett.

Collation: 18-208 (+ 19), 214.

CONTENTS

1. Hours of the Virgin
   a. of the Virgin
   b. of the Cross
2. Seven Psalms and Litany
   a. Adoro te domine
   b. D.I.C. mittere digeris sanctum angelum
   c. D. deus omnipotens creator cell et terre in manus tuas.
   d. Obserco te domina
   e. O intermerata

8. In the Litany:
   b. Confessors: Eugenius, Claudia.
   c. Memorials: Claudia.

These are Besançon saints, and the use is that of Besançon. Every page has a fairly good border of line and leaf-work growing out of a solid band of gold in the outer margin. There are, besides, the following pictures:

1. Matins of the Virgin. The Annunciation. The Virgin kneels in r., under a fine gold structure; above, on l., the Father sends down the Dove; Gabriel in pink dalmatic, with sceptre, kneels on l., a green wall behind him.
2. In the border: a. The Father, seated on a cloud, gives a sceptre to Gabriel kneeling on l. & The Virgin seated, reading.
3. Lauds. The Visitations. Elizabeth kneels on r.; blue starry sky; house on r.
   a. In the border a shield az., three fleurs-de-lis or.
4. Prime. Joseph kneels on l.; the Virgin and a woman beyond her kneel in r., under the stable roof; adoring the Child; above Joseph, in air, is the Father, half-length, with orb; behind the Virgin, the ox and ass.
   a. In the border, a shield purpure, ten fleurs-de-lis or (4, 3, 2, 1), within a bordure of the second.
5. Terce. Three shepherds, frightened; angel in air with scroll (Gloria . . . deo).
   a. In the border a shield az., a chevron or, with a bordure of the second.
7. None. The Presentation. Under a pink structure on l.; Symeon nimbed and copped behind an altar; the Virgin is attended by two nuns with nimbi (Zebulon and Salome), and by Joseph, with orb, and behind him, a small angel in white flying down in c., asssists to crown her; blue and gold hanging behind and sky above.
9. Compline. The Virgin kneels, facing r.; the Son, seated on l., crowns her; the Father, seated on r., with orb, blesses her; a small angel in white flying down in c., assists to crown her; blue and gold hanging behind and sky above.
10. Hours of the Holy Ghost. The Virgin kneels in c.; the Apostles kneel on r. and l.; the Dove in air in c.; pink and gold hangings; window behind.

Memoriae.
1. Office of the Dead.

Vigil swoons on l., supported by John; two holy women on l.; priest (or centurion) and soldiers on r.

11. In the border, the Agony. Three Apostles sleep on l.; the cup on the rock on r.; a wattle fence in front.
12. Seven Psalms. David kneels in a landscape; crown lies on l.; harp on r.; in the air, towards l., God on a cloud, half-length, in gold, holding orb.
13. In the border: a. David kneels on Goliath's body, with raised sword; sling lies on l. b. David crowned and throned plays the harp.

Memoriae. The Father, on a gold throne hung with blue and gold, supports the crucified Son before Him; above His head, the Dove; starry sky.
15. Peter with book and key; Turf-topped seat behind and on each side. Chequered background.
16. In the border. Peter throned as pope in tiara; gold ground.
17. James the Great as pilgrim in landscape; starry sky.
18. In the border: a. the shield of No. 6; b. James as pilgrim, bareheaded.
19. Claudius of Besançon as bishop, in cope, with gold cross staff, blessing; chequered ground.
20. Anthony. In black over blue; fire about his feet; jug on r.; he holds staff, hall, and book, and stands in a paved room with pink and gold arras.
21. In the border: Anthony and Paul seated; raven flies down with bread.
22. Christopher in water with the Child on his shoulders. Hermit by cell on l., with lantern and staff; landscape.
23. Anne, facing l., on a wooden throne hung with blue and gold; an open book on her knee, which the young Virgin stands and reads; a portico behind.
24. Katherine in a paved porch (green and blue) stands on Maximus, and holds sword and broken wheel; chequered ground.
25. In the border. Katherine kneeling; executioner on r. turns handle of a knifed wheel; gold ground.
26. Office of the Dead. In front a gold bier; just behind it two sextons lay a shrouded corpse in the grave; three clerks in copes and a bearer with bucket; one priest sprinkles the corpse; building behind and mooriners on l.; gold ground.
27. In the border: a. Three corpuses on l. meet three frightened horsemen on r.; a cross in c.; b. a group of corpse-skeletons facing l., on brown ground.
28. Obscuro. The Virgin, spreading her cloak, stands sheltering a number of kneeling figures on r., and l., including pope, king, bishop, etc.; chequered ground; starry sky above.

These pictures, while of high average merit, do not anywhere attain positive excellence.
For printed text or notices of this MS. see:
