

ROLL OF PRAYERS FORMERLY BELONGING TO HENRY VIII. WHEN PRINCE.

IN the library of Ushaw College is a roll of prayers, the interest of which is much greater than our knowledge of its history. All that we can learn is, that it was sent to the library by a gentleman, from Liverpool, along with some other antiquities. The roll is a collection of prayers, to many of which indulgences seem to have been attached. The setting forth of these indulgences, as also of certain temporal benefits to be obtained by these prayers, is in almost all instances in a thin purplish red ink, not the ordinary vermilion of manuscripts. From the style of the illumination, we could have decided at once upon the age of this roll, even if King Henry VII., as the then reigning king, had not been named in it. That it belonged at one time to Prince Henry, afterwards King Henry VIII., is evident from the autograph of that Prince; and in all probability the roll was originally written for him, if we may judge from the repetition of the Tudor rose and other emblems appertaining to his royal race. The illuminations on the first and last strips have been much disfigured through the free use of some antimony or lead in the flesh tints; the faces, hands, &c., of many of the figures having become perfectly black. In Italy several such bede-rolls are still preserved in various libraries, and some of them are very richly illuminated, but we are not aware that many such are preserved in England. At all events, a MS. by an English scribe, as this undoubtedly is, cannot fail to be interesting.¹

The roll in question is about eleven feet in length by nearly five inches in breadth. It is formed of four strips of parchment, united by silk thread. The first and last of these are much more dirty and injured than their fellows, and their illuminations are considerably defaced. At the commencement of the roll, in the centre, there is the appearance of the washing out of an illumination, possibly an expanded roll or shield. A faint cross flory is all that now meets the eye. On either side of this is the Tudor rose *en soleil*, beneath which, on the dexter side, is the

¹ For an account of a bede-roll in the possession of Sir W. C. Trevelyan, *Vide* *Archæologia Æliana*, O. S. iv., 1.

Prince's badge of a feather springing from another Tudor rose² *en soleil* and encircled with a crown, and traversed below the crown with a label. On the opposite side are the remains of illumination, where the crown is again to be traced, with something like a quiver of arrows³ beneath.

In the centre below the shield of arms is the *ihc* surrounded by the crown of thorns.

Beneath this is the first illumination, nine inches long by two in breadth, and representing in the upper part the Blessed Trinity, typified by three figures holding the globe. The centre figure of God the Father is crowned, as also is that on the left hand representing the Holy Ghost. The figure of our Saviour is uncrowned, and bleeding. Beneath this is a mitred figure of a bishop praying on his knees before a window, and holding a crosier. Behind is an angel holding a shield, gyronny Gules and Argent,⁴ a cross engrailed between four cinquefoils slipped Or. Immediately beneath this is a prayer of thirty lines for victory over enemies, followed by the initial verses of the three Psalms—"Deus in nomine tuo saluum me fac"—"Deus misereatur nostri"—and "Miserere mei Deus secundum magnam." Then follows a very beautiful prayer for deliverance from dangers and for remission of sins (18 lines). Both the above prayers are in Latin, as indeed are all the prayers on this bede-roll.

The second illumination, of nearly equal length and breadth to the former, represents the Crucifixion of our Lord between two thieves. The crosses are Tau-shaped, and the two thieves have their hands nailed to the back of the crosses. In one case the arms are taken over the cross at the shoulders, in the other at the wrists, and in the former case the head reclines over the top of the cross. Our Lord is suspended in the usual manner; immediately beneath is the following written in red ink: "Iff ye be in synne or tribulacion knele downe on your knees before the Rood, and pray God to have mercy on you, and that he will foryeve you your synnes, and to graunt you your peticion as he graunted Paradise to the thefe, desire your peticion ryghtfully. And than de-

² The roses appear to be white ones in the centre of red ones, the turned-over edges of which seem to be white.—Ed.

³ There is the appearance of 6 or 7 arrows star-wise, passing through an object like a yellow tower, which, if not a quiver, may be the castle of Castile. It is evident that the roll is subsequent to Prince Arthur's death, and it probably was Henry's gift. The badge of Henry and Katherine in a window of Yarnton church, Oxfordshire, is a double white rose crowned, behind which are 9 arrows, one in pale, the rest starwise, points downward, Or, feathered Argent.—Ed.

⁴ Azure would be poorish heraldry, yet there are some faint traces which induce us to say Argent with hesitation. The initial letters in the roll are gold upon a ground of Gules and Azure.

vowtedly behold the fete and sey, 'Adoramus te Jhesu Christe, et benedicimus tibi, quia per sanctam crucem tuam redemisti mundum, miserere nobis.'⁶ And then sey this psalm, 'Ad te levavi oculos meos,' with 'Gloria Patri.' And then sey this anthem, 'Qui crucis in patibulo, oblatu es pro populo, clavis fossus et lancea per tua quinque vulnera pie Jhesu succurre nobis in hac angustia.' And then sey 'Pater Noster,—Ave Maria.' And then stedefastly behold the sydes, and sey, 'Adoramus—Qui crucis—Ps: Deus nomine tuo—Pater Noster—Ave Maria.' And so behold the hands, and sey, &c. And then behold the hed, and sey, 'Adoramus, &c.' And so, with a holl mynde to all the body, sey, 'Adoramus, &c.'" the form in each case being the same, with varied psalms. The last instance concludes with "Credo in Deum."

On the top of the succeeding piece of parchment, we find the following important autograph:—"Willyam Thomas I pray yow pray for me your lovyng master—Prynce Henry."

Beneath this autograph is an illumination representing our Lord in the sepulchre, or rather sitting upright therein. Two Tau-shaped crosses, with figures thereon, appear in openings behind the canopy which hangs over the sepulchre. The figures in this illumination are not in the least discoloured. Blood is spouting from the sacred wounds in the side, the hands, and the head. Beneath this are the following lines in English, and, like all the other English words, written in red ink:—"To all them that befor this ymage of pyte devowtely sey. v. Pater Noster, v. Ave Maria, and i. Credo, shall have lij. m. vij. c. xij. yere and xl. days of pardon graunted be S. Gregory and other holy men." This is similar to S. Gregory's "ymage of pitye," often given in old illuminations, but not exactly identical.

Here follow seven prayers, each commencing with an illuminated letter, and addressed to our Lord in his sacred Passion. Beneath this is a large illumination of our Lord hanging on a Tau-shaped cross. This is one of the best illuminations on the whole roll. On either side of the cross are angels holding scrolls, running nearly the whole length of the figure. The inscription on the right hand scroll is in red letters and in English, that on the left is in Latin.

At the foot of the cross are two angels holding a cloth, on which drops the blood from the wounds of our Lord. The English inscription is as follows:—"This cros xv. times moten is the length of our Lord Jhesu Criste, and that day that ye bere it upon you ther shal no evyl spirit have power of yow on londe ne on water, ne with thonder ne litten-

⁶ A similar prayer to this is used in some of the modern devotions relating to the Crucifixion.

yng be hurt, ne dye in dedely synne withowte confession, ne with fyer be brent, ne water be drowned : and it shal breke your enemys power and encreas your worldly goodes, and if a woman be in travell off childe, ley this on her body and she shal be delyverd withowte parel, the childe crystendom, and the moder purificacyon. S. Cire and his moder S. Julitt⁶ desired these petitions of our Lord."

The prayers and hymn on the opposite scroll are curious :—"Salve decus parvulorum miles reges angelorum, O Cirici, cum beata genetrici tua Julitta. Christus et Maria nos salvent mortis in hora," &c. Then follows a Latin prayer, begging of God, through the intercession of St. Ciricus and Julitta, various graces and favours.

Immediately beneath this is an illumination of the three nails of the Passion passing through the crown of thorns, and with the feet and hands pierced by the nails ; the wounded heart is laid upon the centre nail. The nails are about four inches in length, and the heads are diamond shaped. Below the crown of thorns, and about half way of the length of the nails, is another English inscription as follows :—"Pope Innocent hath graunted to every man and woman y^t berith upon them the length of these nails, seying daily v. Pater Noster, v. Ave Maria, and i. Credo, shall have seven gifts. The first is he shal not dye no soden deth. The second is he shal not be slayne with no sword ne knyfe. The iijde. is he shal not be poysoned. The iiij. his enemys shal not overcom hym. The v. is he shall have sufficient goodes to his lyvès ende. The vj. is he shal not dye withoute all the sacramentes of holy church. The vij. is he shal be defendid fro al evell spirites, pestilens, fevers, and all other infirmities on londe and on water."

Five prayers to the wounds of our Lord follow, each commencing with a well illuminated letter. Then follows an illumination representing the Blessed Virgin and Child, with a town in the distance, and the angelic host looking down from the clouds. Beneath, in red ink, but in Latin, are the following lines, preceding a prayer to the Virgin :—"Sequens hæc oracio data fuit beato Bernardo ab Angelo quæ et dixit, 'Sicut aurum est pretiosissimum metallum, sic ista oracio præcellit alias oraciones.'" The next picture is that of St. Michael conquering the evil spirit, personified by a dragon-like monster with six heads and a tail ending in another head. The archangel is clothed in a tight-fitting feathered garment, of a bright red colour, relieved with gold. Beneath is a hymn to the saint. Following this is a picture of St. George slaying the dragon, with a hymn and prayer for the saint's intercession.

⁶ The martyrdom of SS. Cyr or Cyrique, infant, and his mother Julitta, occurred in the reign of Diocletian. Ciricus and Julitta MM., June 16th, Rome: June 1st, Paris.

The next illumination is a singular one, and represents St. Herasmus of Campania extended on a rack or board, naked, but with his episcopal mitre on his head, while two executioners are winding out his bowels upon a reel, constructed in the boldest defiance of perspective. Beneath is a hymn recording the various torments endured by the saint, and terminating in a prayer for his intercession. The colossal figure of St. Christopher follows, bearing, according to the old legend, the child Jesus on his shoulders, with a hymn and prayer. The figure of St. Anthony has been well drawn, and the black drapery is fine, but the flesh has now become black also. He wears two Tau-shaped crosses, one blue, the other white. In the hymn and prayer St. Anthony is invoked against the St. Anthony's fire, the erysipelas of modern days. St. Pantaleon, a famous saint of the Greek church, occupies the next picture. The saint is represented in a green cope, while an executioner is in the act of beheading him with a sword. He seems to have been invoked against fevers.

The concluding picture represents St. Armyl or Armagil, perhaps the same as the famous St. Armoul of Brittany. The saint is represented praying before a crucifix, and holding by a band or stole passed round its neck a huge dragon which he appears to have vanquished. Beneath this, in red ink, are the following lines:—"He that prayeth hartily to God and to Seint Armyl shal be delyverd fro all these sekenes underwriten. That is to sey of all gowtis, aches, agwis . . . fevers and pockes, and mony other infirmytes: as it apperith in his life and legende the which was brought out of Britaiyne at the yustans off the Kyng owre Sovereyne Lord Harry the vijth."

Then follows the prayer, and the whole is ornamented by the crown of thorns surrounding *m'ce*.

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