

## ON A RHYTHMICAL PRAYER IN THE BOOK OF CERNE.

AMONG the pieces contained in the Book of Cerne which are employed by Dom Kuypers, in the introduction to his edition of the MS, to illustrate the difference in structure and style between the prayers which belong to what may be called the Celtic and the Roman strata, is an *Oratio matutinalis*, which appears also, with some variations, in the Royal MS 2 A xx, cited by Dom Kuypers as A<sup>1</sup>. This prayer, of which the first words are 'Ambulemus in prosperis', is very justly attributed by Dom Kuypers, on grounds of style, to a Celtic source. But it may perhaps be worth while to point out another feature of the piece which bears testimony to its origin. It is apparently composed on a system of rhythm resembling that of the hymn 'Altus prosator', described in the preface to that hymn in the Irish *Liber Hymnorum* as 'vulgaris' in opposition to the system of strict metrical composition described as 'artificialis'; a system depending not on the *quantity* but on the *number* of syllables, and with 'correspondence of syllables, and of quarter verses and half verses'. The 'Altus prosator' is in verses of sixteen syllables each, and the eighth and sixteenth syllables—the last of each half verse—are intended to rhyme: sometimes the last two or three syllables of one half rhyme with the last two or three of the other. The quantity of the syllables is apparently a matter of indifference except in the case of the penultimate syllable of the half verse, which is either short or else made to seem short by the stress laid upon that which precedes or that which follows it. The verses are grouped in 'capitula' of six (or seven) verses each: but this is apparently not an essential feature of the system; the reason for its presence in the 'Altus prosator' lies in the acrostic character of the poem, while the number of verses in the 'capitula' depends upon the subject of the composition<sup>2</sup>.

In the case of 'Ambulemus in prosperis' there are some instances, in both the MSS printed by Dom Kuypers, of apparently faulty rhythm: and an attempt to arrange either text in lines of sixteen syllables leaves some odd half verses. But each text contains some half verses which do not appear in the other: and if the two are combined the product

<sup>1</sup> *Book of Cerne*, pp. 91, 211.

<sup>2</sup> The poems sent by 'Aedilwaldus' (whom Jaffé identifies with Ethelbald of Mercia) to St. Aldhelm while abbot of Malmesbury are in the same rhythm. See Jaffé *Monumenta Moguntina* pp. 38-48. The writer seems to have thought some explanation of their structure necessary.

gives sixteen verses of the same type as those of 'Altus prosator'. In the following arrangement the half verses which occur only in A are printed in italic type, those which occur only in the Book of Cerne being enclosed in brackets.

- Ambulemus in prosperis huius diei luminis,  
 In uirtute altissimi dei deorum maximi,  
 In beneplacito christi, in luce spiritus sancti,  
 In fide patriarcharum, [in meritis prophetarum,]  
 5 [In pace apostolorum,] in gaudio angelorum,  
*In uia archangelorum,* in splendoribus<sup>1</sup> sanctorum,  
 In operibus monachorum, [in uirtute iustorum,]  
 In martyrio martyrum, in castitate uirginum,  
 In dei sapientia, in multa patientia,  
 10 *In doctorum prudentia,* in carnis abstinentia,  
 In linguae continentia, [in pacis habundantia,]  
 In trinitatis laudibus, in acutis sensibus,  
 In semper bonis actibus, in formis spiritalibus,  
 In diuinis sermonibus, in benedictionibus.  
 15 In his est iter omnium pro christo laborantium,  
 Qui deducit post obitum sempiternum in gaudium.

In verse 7 the first half verse has nine syllables, the second half verse apparently only seven. But in the latter case it may be that either 'uirtute' or 'iustorum' is meant to be treated as a word of four syllables. In 'Altus prosator' an initial *i* is apparently always treated as a consonant if followed by a vowel: but in another rhythmical prayer contained in the Book of Cerne 'Iesu', 'uerus' and 'ueni' are apparently treated as trisyllables<sup>2</sup>. If 'monachorum' and 'iustorum' were transposed, the rhythm would be rendered sufficiently correct with no great violence to the sense. In verse 12, where the second half verse is of seven syllables only, Dom Kuypers notes in A an erasure, apparently of two letters, before 'sensibus'. Possibly the original reading was 'assensibus' or 'consensibus': it seems not unlikely that either word, though capable of interpretation, would by reason of its obscurity be corrected to 'sensibus', thus obtaining a more intelligible reading at the expense of the rhythm. In verse 13 the text of the Book of Cerne preserves the rhythm, while the reading of A ('in bonis actibus semper constituti') forsakes it entirely: and in the last verse the rhythm is clearly in favour of 'Qui deducit' (the reading of the Book of Cerne) or of 'Quod deducit', as against the 'Quod ducit' of A.

The fact that a fairly regular system of rhythm results from the combination of the two texts is perhaps a ground for thinking that such

<sup>1</sup> *al.* sanctitate.

<sup>2</sup> *Book of Cerne* pp. 172, 173.

a combination represents the original form of the verses more accurately than either text singly. But it seems probable that the original order of the half verses, even if the combination preserves the whole number, was not quite the same as in the arrangement shewn above. It might be expected, e. g. that the references to the archangels and to the angels would be found in the two parts of one verse; and that this would stand rather earlier in the series than either of the verses between which they are here divided.

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### THE LECTON-SYSTEM OF THE CODEX MACEDONIANUS.

CODEX MACEDONIANUS, 1 in Gregory's notation, ε 073 in von Soden's, is a ninth-century uncial of the Gospels, procured from Macedonia by Mr. J. Bevan Braithwaite of London in 1900<sup>1</sup>. Its lection-system may be collected from the full rubrical notes throughout the MS which are in small uncials of quite similar character to those in the body of the text and are, I think, of nearly the same date. They have been inserted after the corrections made by the διορθωτής, as is evident from Matt. xxii 14 where τῆ. comes after such a marginal correction, and from Luke x. 38 where ἀρχ. precedes one.

The lection-system agrees in the main with the common one throughout the earlier *strata*<sup>2</sup> of the Byzantine lectionary, namely the Sunday lessons throughout the year, and the Saturday lessons throughout the year (including all six week-days during the weeks from Easter Sunday to Pentecost when St John was read), but in the latest settled portion of the lectionary, namely the lessons for the first five week-days in the weeks from Pentecost to the beginning of Lent, it gives us a series of lessons differing from, though closely related to, that in common use. We find the same Five-day system in Evangelium 292 at Carpentras, formerly in Cyprus, a tenth-century uncial whose lessons, as also those in the common system, I cite from C. R. Gregory's *Textkritik des Neuen Testaments* vol. i pp. 344-364, and it may exist in other

<sup>1</sup> For description see *A new uncial of the Gospels* in the *Expository Times* Dec. 1901, and Dr. von Soden's *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments* vol. i p. 132. As Gregory and von Soden point out, it is evidently the MS referred to in Scrivener's *Introduction*, 4th ed. vol. i p. 377 as at Kosinitza, Ἁγία Μοῦνη, 375. The MS is defective for Matt. i 1-ix 11, x 35-xi 4; Luke i 26-36, xv 25-xvi 5, xxiii 22-34; John xx 27-xxi 17.

<sup>2</sup> See Rev. F. E. Brightman *J.T.S.* vol. i p. 447.