

«FORMA SIVE ORDINATIO»

The Evora Coronation Codex

(Contributed by the Rev. J. J. Crowley Ph. D.)

There was recently brought to the notice of the present writer the existence of an interesting document in the Biblioteca Pública e Arquivo Distrital de Evora. The very title was sufficient to arouse curiosity and to warrant a journey to Evora, and an occasion presented itself a few weeks later for a preliminary examination of the document in question.

We found a codex in the section «Diversos Papéis : Grande Britanha»: an illuminated manuscript of eighty pages, numbered in forty leaves. It is strongly bound, in skin on boards, and the binding seems to be original. The size of the pages is 23.5 centimetres by 15.7 centimetres. The script, of a singularly beautiful type and very regular, is black, but alternates with the vermilion of frequent and somewhat lengthy rubrics, and the black of the script and the red of the rubrics gives a very pleasing effect. There are many well coloured and remarkably fresh illuminations serving as capitals.

The inside cover shows a book-plate with the name of D. Didacus Fernandes da Almeida, with the arms and eagles of the family sur-mounted by the ecclesiastical hat and the three rows of tassels indicating episcopal dignity. But the most important fact of all is that the title tells us that the book is from Henry VI of England to Afonso V of Portugal. From the few notes which are given below, and which are the result

of a very cursory examination, it is obvious that the document would well repay a much more detailed study¹.

The superscription on the first page gives the purpose of the document : «Forma sive ordinacō Capelle illustrissimi et Xpianissimi principis Henrici sexti Regis Anglie et Ffrancie ac dñi Hiberniē rescripta Serenissimo principi Alfonso Regi Portugalie illustri per humilem servitutē sñi Willm̄ Say Decanū capelle supradictē».

There was a good reason urging the preparation of so elaborate a copy of the «Order or Use followed in the chapel of the most illustrious and most Christian Prince Henry VI, King of England and France and Lord of Ireland, sent to the «most Serene Prince Afonso illustrious King of Portugal». The document was entrusted to the Portuguese ambassador, whose name also is found on the first page — D. Alvarus Almadaa, whose full name was Alvaro Vaz de Almada. D. Alvaro was concerned in many transactions between the two Courts during these years at the end of the Regency, and since he was killed in battle in 1449 we are thus enabled to date the «Ordo» as belonging to the years 1447-1449. D. Alvaro was made Knight of the Garter and Comes Dunarans, — Count of Avranches in Normandy, (Actes, Rymer, vol. XI.) «by his humble servant William Say, Dean of the said chapel».

We must bear in mind the closeness of the intercourse then obtaining between England and Portugal, and the relationship established through the marriage of Philippa of Lancaster to Afonso's grandfather, a relationship which gave Henry the right to address Afonso as «oure right entierly welbeloved Brothere the King of Portugale». (Actes, Rymer, vol. XI.) Moreover, the rite followed in the diocese of Lisbon, and in other parts of Portugal, up to the unification in the 16th century, was the peculiarly English rite of Salisbury, for when

¹ Rev. Joseph Quinn, Parish Priest of Dukinfield, first spoke to the writer about the Ms., and it would appear that he was the first to draw attention to its presence in the Evora Library. It is well to know that he is preparing a very full study of the Codex.

Gilbert of Hastings was entrusted with the building up of the new diocese of Lisbon after its conquest by Afonso Henriques, he could think of no more fitting ceremonial for his cathedral church than the one to which he, and most Englishmen, had been so long accustomed, the Sarum Use. Since, therefore, there was this community of rite, it was but natural there should also be, to some extent at least, a certain ritual dependence established between the two countries.

The chapel to which Dean William Say refers is the Royal Chapel of Henry's favourite residence, Windsor Castle. A comparison of early «ordines» of Windsor with the Evora «ordo» would be interesting.

The superscription is followed by an introduction which takes up ten leaves, and gives the general instructions as to the constitution of the King's chapel with its «one Dean and thirty cantors». The use prevailing in the chapel and the privileges enjoyed therein are defended by an appeal to long-established custom, and to positive acts of the Roman Pontiffs. «Sciendum itaque in primis est q̄ capella illustrissimi ac «Xp̄ianissimi Regis Anglie et Ffrancie et Dñi hiberie nedū de «antiqua et longa cōsuetudine legitime perscriptā multisque «annos circulis citra et ante conquestū Anglie varii regū temporibus continuata dignitatem auctoritatem et jurisdictionem «suam obtinet ~ verū etiam per multa aplica privilegia diversis «Anglie regib ~ ac praesertim Ricard p̄mo et Henrico tertio «per diversos romanos pontifices concessa ut in archivis regiis «plenē videre quis poterit roborat». That is, «let all know that by the prescriptive rights of old and established custom, for many long years, both before and after the conquest of England, the chapel of the most illustrious and Christian King has vindicated its dignity, authority and jurisdiction; as also by the many privileges given by the Roman Pontiffs to several Kings of England, and more especially to Richard I. and to Henry III, and the authentication of which may be seen by whosoever may so wish in the Royal archives».

Here comes an account of the privileges peculiar to the Royal Chapel. So on page 6, «de altari portatili et celebratione in ōi loco honesto» was no mean concession, — the erecting of an altar and the celebration of Mass in any place

at all if such places were decent. «Omnes praeterea de Capella «regis necnon omnes servientes ejusdem p. privilegium apti «habent potestatem audiendi Missam et cetera divina officia «faciendj in quocumque loco honesto, necnon errigendi altare «etiam sub diu si oportuerit et ibidem conficiendi corpus Xp̄i «et ministrando sacramento necessitatis dummodo aliquis de «capella regis aut duos servitos ejusdem praesentes in eodem «loco fuerit». — Thus, all belonging to the King's chapel could hear Mass and assist at the Divine Offices in any fitting place, and also could erect an altar even in the open for the offering of the Body of Christ, and for the confection of any other necessary sacrament so long as any minister of the chapel or two assistants were present in the same place.

«The boys attached to the Chapel shall learn Grammar».

After these ten pages of introduction comes the «Ordo» on pages 11a to 20b, and is the most interesting part of the codex. «Hic est ordo secundū quem Rex debet coronari pariter et inungi», (the order according to which the King should be crowned and anointed). Then «Verum si regina eodem die inungendi fuerit et coronanda cum rege praeparetur ei similiter...» — (if the Queen is to be anointed and crowned on the same day with the King, the same things are to be prepared. But if the Queen alone is to be crowned, then the prelates and nobles of the Queen should gather in the Royal Palace at Westminster, and the archbishop should order the procession, — «e quo regina sola coronanda est convenient in «palacio regali apud Westm̄ prelati et nobiles regiū et ordin- «etur processio p. archiepūs».

At the end of the codex is found the music for the Coronation Service, pages 32b to 37a.

There are many reasons explaining the use of an English coronation ceremonial in Portugal. As has been mentioned, the contact between England and Portugal at that time was very intimate. Five hundred English Archers had materially assisted the Holy Constable in his victory over the Spaniards at Aljubarrota in 1385; Five thousand had done service under John of Gaunt in the following year; many English soldiers took part in the capture of Ceuta; Philippa of Lancaster had

married John I, and her three sons were responsible for a great development in Portuguese affairs, the Treaty of Windsor was of recent memory... But, further, one would expect that the new and ambitious monarchy, fresh from its successful fight for independence from Spain, should look for means to dignify itself wherever possible. Now there was no very elaborate ceremonial of consecration in use in the Peninsula; nor indeed at any time did the Spanish coronation service develop much beyond what had been inherited from the Goths, and resolved itself finally into the mere act of the placing of the crown on the head of the monarch, — a remnant of the essentially hereditary nature of the Gothic monarchy, as claimed by the Gothic kings of Spain. On the other hand, the English ceremonial had always been noted for its splendour, and for the fact that it included an anointing in the ritual. At the time of which we are writing, there were already in existence no less than four, and possibly five, English ceremonials. The latest in use was the *Liber Regalis*, of which the Evora text is a variation, which was introduced in 1307, and used unchanged until the Reformation. The English ritual was in favour on the Continent, and because of the elaboration and dignity of the service, was adapted by the French kings, although their form was based on a rite somewhat earlier than that contained in the *Liber Regalis*¹.

The most important rite of the English coronation ceremonial was considered to be the anointing with oil. Indeed, in the parallel rite of the Russian ceremonial, we find the Czar trying to establish a claim to be recognized as a *mixta persona*, or one who, while still a layman, could demand to be accepted as a cleric.

It was just this rite of anointing with the Holy Oils which was missing in the ceremony of coronation used by the first kings of Portugal. The beginning of the monarchy was, of course, attended by the added difficulty that — as Rome could not admit the claim of the ruler of Portugal to kingly honour

¹ An early codex of the *Liber Regalis* is still in the custody of the Dean of Westminster. It is to be noticed that the Evora MS. differs in many points from the Westminster codex.

— so neither could the claim for an independent hierarchy be entertained, and much less the right of a member of that hierarchy to anoint a king. By the time of King Duarte (1433-1438) it was thought that the right of anointing might be requested. «This custom of anointing was omitted by the kings of the Spains, because they were possessed of the throne by hereditary right and not by election... Even so, after the Goths, many succeeded to the Throne and used this rite... The kings of Portugal omitted this rite, although they might have been anointed by the Archbishop of Braga; But Eugene IV, at the request of the king Edward (D. Duarte) gave this power of anointing kings to Braga, which same was transferred to the most eminent Patriarch of Lisbon by Clement XI. at the request of the Most Faithful King John V. in 1720. It is to be noted, however, that several kings received the crown from bishops without being anointed with the Holy Oils, and among them may be mentioned the Venerable King Afonso Henriques¹».

The favourable answer to the request of D. Duarte evidently made his son, D. Afonso V, who succeeded in 1438, seek for the most suitable rite of anointing. D. Afonso was crowned in Thomar immediately after his father's death, but there was no ceremony of anointing. For several reasons it would seem improbable that the Evora Codex could have a date earlier than about 1447, so that it might be that the young King asked for the ceremony of anointing only at the end of the regency.

The section of the Evora codex immediately subsequent to the Order of Coronation, and before the Coronation music, deals with the burial service of the King: «de exequiis regalibus cū p̄ris ex hoc seculo migrare contigeret». There is the all night vigil, followed by the three Masses — the first of Our Lady, the second of the Holy Trinity, and the third of the Dead; and finally the actual burial.

There are several unused pages at the end of the codex,

¹ *História Ecclesiae Lusitanae*, por Fr. Thomas da Incarnação. Tome III, Disertatio II. Coimbra 1762.

numbered 37b to 40b¹. These pages are filled with writing, for the most part in Portuguese, and of a much later date. There are entries of events of family interest, and a number of signatures: «Antonio David de Femudo em Fig^{ro} dos Vinhos... Fui padrinho de crisma em 1560... casei no anno 1560... faleceu meu pae 1568...» Antonio David de Femudo, of Figueiró dos Vinhos, I was godfather of Confirmation in 1560. I married in 1560... My father died in 1568». There are some Latin verses, an attempt at a love poem in Portuguese, evidently by a lady, «Com cetas de Amor Querido», and then some scribbles of a more idle nature, and some writing in a very childish hand.

This codex is of the greatest interest, and opens up a whole field of study and speculation.

¹ The numbering throughout the codex is by a later hand, and somewhat conceals the fact that several pages are missing.