A PRAYER BOOK WOVEN IN SILK.

A very remarkable production of textile art, which was exhibited last year in the Paris Exhibition, is described at some length in the following letter from the English poet, Mr. J. A. Henry, of Lyons. It consists of fifty pages of Gothic text in a very elegant character, having a beautiful composition in the text, and also a different design in the ornamentation. There is in the latter a delightful mixture of fruits and flowers, pomegranates, roses, lilies, and berries, gracefully and elegantly interlaced. Here are angels and saints in ecstasy; there, arabesques and armorial bearings, which the most finished engraving would hardly be able to equal. The material used was the quintessence of fine French silk, and the artist was not hampered by considerations of cost, as is sufficiently plain from the closeness of the threads in the warp and weft. The pages have a height of 7:5 millimetres, and a breadth of 15 millimetres, and present the appearance of leaves of very fine vellum. Four pictures are inserted, or rather woven in, the text: the Nativity of Christ, after Fra Angelico; the Crucifixion, by Fra Bartolommeo; a Virgin with angels, in the spirit of the fourteenth century; and the principal scene in the Disputation of the Holy Sacrament, by Raphael. Five hundred thousand cards were required in the weaving of this extraordinary production, and the designs covered in all a surface of 70 square metres. M. Henry was assisted in his difficult task by the Society of St. Mary, which undertook to collect flower borders from the Gothic manuscripts of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, and by M. Ant. Ross, a well-known French publisher. It is intended to produce 500 copies of this magnificent book. We are enabled to present our readers with the accompanying illustration representing one page of the book, by the courtesy of the Société Industrielle de Rouen, to whom we beg to express our most cordial thanks.

MR. HENRY MITCHELL ON FOREIGN TARIFFS.

A word about ourselves in connection with the stand we have taken as to the action this country should adopt with regard to foreign tariff, may be out of place. We are Free Traders; more earnestly so, perhaps, than those who condemn the slightest suggestion as retaliation. It is because we are in favour of Free Trade that we advocate judicious retaliation, by which alone can the present obstructions to trade be removed. This country does not enjoy the benefits of Free Trade at the present time, however strongly some of us may protest our desire to continue the industry of our country. There can be no Free Trade in England while the rest of the world continues to shut the door of commerce in our face. We may continue to buy of those who will sell to us, but that was not what Cobden expected we should have to do when he led the country forty years ago; and it is not Free Trade—it is trade carried on under every possible disadvantage that the ingenuity of our inventors and manufacturers can devise. We wish to see those disadvantages removed, and retaliation is the only method by which such a result can be obtained. Sir Henry Mitchell, speaking on Wednesday at a meeting of the Council of the Bradford Cotton and Woollen Manufacturer's Association, had something to say on matters of this kind:

He thought it was due to the majority of the members of the Chamber to say that in view of the expiration of the French treaty early next year, and of the frightful effects which these constant impositions of higher duties had upon English trade, it was their duty to do all that they could to prevent the imposition of higher tariffs upon that country. There was only one thing that could be done beyond the mere sending of remonstrances, and that was to appeal to the largest and most important industry in France, the wine industry, in order that those engaged in that industry that meant that there had been a new industry nearly £1,000,000 a year of exports to America to make up for the enormous demand it had taken place in the exportation of worsted and silk fabrics; and further, they must bear in mind that the population of America had increased by nearly 20,000,000. Where is the ground for congratulation as to the condition of our trade, would one like to know, after these facts?

A FRENCH PROTEST AGAINST TAXING RAW SILK.

A document issued recently by the Committee of French Weavers which is endeavouring to prevent the imposition of duties on foreign silk will be read with interest, perhaps also with a surprise of admiration. It is well known that dead silk is the raw material of our national industry of silk weaving. In spite of protests from every quarter, and in spite of the opinions of the Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of Commerce, and the whole government, demonstrating superabundantly the disastrous consequences which must ensue—such proposals being adopted, the leaders in this Machiavellian campaign count upon attaining their ends by skillfully confusing the interests of agriculturists and sericulturists. To us they say in language which seems to be bitter mockery:

"When there is less work, in consequence of the dearness of the raw materials, there will be better work for 450,000 workers, to whom this great industry supplies work," which though unnumbered is our only resource, shall we allow our sole means of bread-winning to be sacrificed? No!—[This little word has a line to itself.]—Let us call the attention of the senators and the deputies to the melancholy consequences of legislative measures, which, in the problematic hope of enabling some to gain 50,000,000 francs, would cause others to lose 500,000,000 francs. Along with the man from St. Etienne, St. Chamond, Tours, Paris, Roubaix, Calais, etc., the operatives of Lyons will say to the Parliament:—"It would be criminal to sacrifice the existence of 50,000 citizens to secure a privilege (for it is nothing else) to those who, whilst wishing to protect their own industry to our injury, desire at the same time to withdraw themselves from the advantage which, according to the fundamental principles of modern law, ought to be equal for all. Measures more in harmony with progress can be applied to the support of such establishments, which, according to the fundamental principles of modern.