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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE DANCE OF DEATH ***

Of this edition Seven hundred and fifty copies have been printed, of which this is Number ...71...

The Dance of Death

by Hans Holbein, with an
introductory note by
Austin Dobson

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mcmiii

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THE DANCE OF DEATH

The Book

"*Les Simulachres & Historiées Faces de la Mort avtant elegamtment pourtraictes, que artificiellement imaginées.*" This may be Englished as follows: *The Images and Storied Aspects of Death, as elegantly delineated as [they are] ingeniously imagined.* Such is the literal title of the earliest edition of the famous book now familiarly known as "*Holbein's Dance of Death.*" It is a small *quarto*, bearing on its title-page, below the French words above quoted, a nondescript emblem with the legend *Vsus me Genuit*, and on an open book, *Gnothe seauton*. Below this comes again, "*A Lyon, Soubz l'escu de Coloigne: M. D. XXXVIII,*" while at the end of the volume is the imprint "*Excudebant Lvgdvni Melchoir et Gaspar Trechsel fratres: 1538,*"—the Trechsels being printers of German origin, who had long been established at Lyons. There is a verbose "Epistre" or Preface in French to the "*moult reuerende Abbesse du religieux conuent S. Pierre de Lyon, Madame Iehanne de Touszele,*" otherwise the Abbess of Saint Pierre les Nonnains, a religious house containing many noble and wealthy ladies, and the words, "*Salut d'un vray Zèle,*" which conclude the dedicatory heading, are supposed to reveal indirectly the author of the "Epistre" itself, namely, Jean de Vauzelles, Pastor of St. Romain and Prior of Monrothier, one of three famous literary brothers in the city on the Rhone, whose motto was "*D'un vray Zelle.*" After the Preface comes "*Diuerses Tables de Mort, non paintes, mais extraictes de l'escripture sainte, colorées par Docteurs Ecclesiastiques, & umbragées par Philosophes.*" Then follow the cuts, forty-one in number, each having its text from the Latin Bible above it, and below, its quatrain in French, this latter being understood to be from the pen of one Gilles Corozet. To the cuts succeed various makeweight Appendices of a didactic and hortatory character, the whole being wound up by a profitable discourse, *De la Necessite de la Mort qui ne laisse riens estre pardurable.* Various editions ensued to this first one of 1538, the next or second of 1542 (in which Corozet's verses were translated into Latin by Luther's brother-in-law, George Oemmel or Aemilius), being put forth by Jean and François Frellon, into whose hands the establishment of the Trechsels had fallen. There were subsequent issues in 1545, 1547, 1549, 1554, and 1562. To the issues of 1545 and 1562 a few supplementary designs were added, some of which have no special bearing upon the general theme, although attempts, more or less ingenious, have been made to connect them with the text. After 1562 no addition was made to the plates.

The Artist

From the date of the *editio princeps* it might be supposed that the designs were executed at or about 1538—the year of its publication. But this is not the case; and there is good evidence that they were not only designed but actually cut on the wood some eleven years before the book itself was published. There are, in fact, several sets of impressions in the British Museum, the Berlin Museum, the Basle Museum, the Imperial Library at Paris, and the Grand Ducal Cabinet at Carlsruhe, all of which correspond with each other, and are believed to be engraver's proofs from the original blocks. These, which include every cut in the edition of 1538, except "The Astrologer," would prove little of themselves as to the date of execution. But, luckily, there exists in the Cabinet at Berlin a set of coarse enlarged drawings in Indian ink, on brownish paper, of twenty-three of the series. These are in circular form; and were apparently intended as sketches for glass painting. That they are copied from the woodcuts is demonstrable, first, because they are not reversed as they would have been if they were the originals; and, secondly, because one of them, No. 36 ("The Duchess"), repeats the conjoined "H.L." on the bed, which initials are held to be the monogram of the woodcutter, and not to be part of the original design. The Berlin drawings must therefore have been executed subsequently to the woodcuts; and as one of them, that representing the Emperor, is dated "1527," we get a date before which both the woodcuts, and the designs for the woodcuts, must have been prepared. It is generally held that they were so prepared *circa* 1524 and 1525, the date of the Peasants' War, of the state of feeling excited by which they exhibit evident traces. In the Preface to this first edition, certain ambiguous expressions, to which we shall presently refer, led some of the earlier writers on the subject to doubt as to the designer of the series. But the later researches of Wornum and Woltmann, of M. Paul Mantz and, more recently, of Mr. W. J. Linton leave no doubt that they were really drawn by the artist to whom they have always been traditionally assigned, to wit, Hans Holbein the younger. He was resident in Basle up to the autumn of 1526, before which time, according to the above argument, the drawings must have been produced; he had already designed an Alphabet of Death; and, moreover, on the walls of the cemetery of the Dominican monastery at Basle there was a famous wall-painting of the Dance of Death, which would be a perpetual stimulus to any resident artist. Finally, and this is perhaps the most important consideration of all, the designs are in Holbein's manner.

The Woodcutter

But besides revealing an inventor of the highest order, the *Dance of Death* also discloses an interpreter in wood of signal, and even superlative, ability. The designs are cut—to use the word which implies the employment of the knife as opposed to that of the graver—in a manner which has never yet been excelled. In this matter there could be no better judge than Mr. W. J. Linton; and he says that nothing, either by knife or by graver, is of higher quality than these woodcuts. Yet the woodcutter's very name was for a long time doubtful, and even now the particulars which we possess with regard to him are scanty and inconclusive. That he was dead when the Trechsels published the book in 1538, must be inferred from the "Epistre" of Jean de Vauzelles, since that "Epistre" expressly refers to "*la mort de celluy, qui nous en a icy imaginé si elegantes figures*"; and without entering into elaborate enquiry as to the exact meaning of "*imaginer*" in sixteenth-century French, it is obvious that, although the deceased is elsewhere loosely called "*paintre,*" this title cannot refer to Holbein, who was so far from being dead that he survived until 1543. The only indication of the woodcutter's name is supplied by the monogram, "HL" upon the bedstead in No. 36 ("The Duchess"); and these initials have been supposed to indicate one Hans Lutzelburger, or Hans of Luxemburg, "otherwise Franck," a form-cutter ("formschneider"), whose full name is to be found attached to the so-called "Little Dance of Death," an alphabet by Holbein,

impressions of which are in the British Museum. His signature ("H. L. F. 1522") is also found appended to another alphabet; to a cut of a fight in a forest, dated also 1522; and to an engraved title-page in a German New Testament of the year following. This is all we know with certainty concerning his work, though the investigations of Dr. Édouard His have established the fact that a "formschneider" named Hans, who had business transactions with the Trechsels of Lyons, had died at Basle before June, 1526; and it is conjectured, though absolute proof is not forthcoming, that this must have been the "H. L.," or Hans of Luxemburg, who cut Holbein's designs upon the wood. In any case, unless we must assume another woodcutter of equal merit, it is probable that the same man cut the signed Alphabet in the British Museum and the initialed *Dance of Death*. But why the cuts of the latter, which, as we have shown above, were printed *circa* 1526, were not published at Lyons until 1538; and why Holbein's name was withheld in the Preface to the book of that year, are still unexplained. The generally accepted supposition is that motives of timidity, arising from the satirical and fearlessly unsparing character of the designs, may be answerable both for delay in the publication and mystification in the "Preface." And if intentional mystification be admitted, the doors of enquiry, after three hundred and fifty years, are practically sealed to the critical picklock.

Other Reproductions

The *Dance of Death* has been frequently copied. Mr. W. J. Linton enumerates a Venice reproduction of 1545; and a set (enlarged) by Jobst Dienecker of Augsburg in 1554. Then there is the free copy, once popular with our great grandfathers, by Bewick's younger brother John, which Hodgson of Newcastle published in 1789 under the title of *Emblems of Mortality*. Wenceslaus Hollar etched thirty of the designs in 1651, and in 1788 forty-six of them were etched by David Deuchar. In 1832 they were reproduced upon stone with great care by Joseph Schlotthauer, Professor in the Academy of Fine Arts at Munich; and these were reissued in this country in 1849 by John Russell Smith. They have also been rendered in photo-lithography for an edition issued by H. Noel Humphreys, in 1868; and for the Holbein Society in 1879. In 1886, Dr. F. Lippmann edited for Mr. Quaritch a set of reproductions of the engraver's proofs in the Berlin Museum; and the *editio princeps* has been facsimiled by one of the modern processes for Hirth of Munich, as vol. x. of the Liebhaber-Bibliothek, 1884.

The Present Issue

The copies given in the present issue are impressions from the blocks engraved in 1833 for Douce's *Holbein's Dance of Death*. They are the best imitations in wood, says Mr. Linton. It is of course true, as he also points out, that a copy with the graver can never quite faithfully follow an original which has been cut with the knife,—more especially, it may be added, when the cutter is a supreme craftsman like him of Luxemburg. But against etched, lithographed, phototyped and otherwise-processed copies, these of Messrs. Bonner and John Byfield have one incontestable advantage: they are honest attempts to repeat by the same method,—that is, in wood,—the original and incomparable woodcuts of Hans Lutzelburger.

THE DANCE OF DEATH

(CHANT ROYAL, AFTER HOLBEIN)1

*"Contra vim Mortis
Non est medicamen in hortis."*

He is the despots' Despot. All must bide,
Later or soon, the message of his might;
Princes and potentates their heads must hide,
Touched by the awful sigil of his right;
Beside the Kaiser he at eve doth wait
And pours a potion in his cup of state;
The stately Queen his bidding must obey;
No keen-eyed Cardinal shall him affray;
And to the Dame that wantoneth he saith—
"Let be, Sweet-heart, to junket and to play."
There is no king more terrible than Death.

The lusty Lord, rejoicing in his pride,
He draweth down; before the armèd Knight
With jingling bridle-rein he still doth ride;
He crosseth the strong Captain in the fight;
The Burgher grave he beckons from debate;

He hales the Abbot by his shaven pate,
Nor for the Abbess' wailing will delay;
No bawling Mendicant shall say him nay;
E'en to the pyx the Priest he followeth,
Nor can the Leech his chilling finger stay ...
There is no king more terrible than Death.

All things must bow to him. And woe betide
The Wine-bibber,—the Roisterer by night;
Him the feast-master, many bouts defied,
Him 'twixt the pledging and the cup shall smite;
Woe to the Lender at usurious rate,
The hard Rich Man, the hireling Advocate;
Woe to the Judge that selleth right for pay;
Woe to the Thief that like a beast of prey
With creeping tread the traveller harryeth:—
These, in their sin, the sudden sword shall slay ...
There is no king more terrible than Death.

He hath no pity,—nor will be denied.
When the low hearth is garnishèd and bright,
Grimly he flingeth the dim portal wide,
And steals the Infant in the Mother's sight;
He hath no pity for the scorned of fate:—
He spares not Lazarus lying at the gate,
Nay, nor the Blind that stumbleth as he may;
Nay, the tired Ploughman,—at the sinking ray,—
In the last furrow,—feels an icy breath,
And knows a hand hath turned the team astray ...
There is no king more terrible than Death.

He hath no pity. For the new-made Bride,
Blithe with the promise of her life's delight,
That wanders gladly by her Husband's side,
He with the clatter of his drum doth fright;
He scares the Virgin at the convent grate;

The Maid half-won, the lover passionate;
He hath no grace for weakness and decay:
The tender Wife, the Widow bent and gray,
The feeble Sire whose footstep faltereth,—
All these he leadeth by the lonely way ...
There is no king more terrible than Death.

ENVOY.

Youth, for whose ear and monishing of late,
I sang of Prodigals and lost estate,
Have thou thy joy of living and be gay;
But know not less that there must come a day,—
Aye, and perchance e'en now it hasteneth,—
When thine own heart shall speak to thee and say,—
There is no king more terrible than Death.

1877. A. D.

¹ ([return](#))

This Chant Royal of the King of Terrors is—with Mr. AUSTIN DOBSON'S consent—here reprinted from his *Collected Poems*, 1896.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

N.B.—The German titles are in general modernized from those which appear above the engraver's proofs. The numerals are those of the cuts.

THE CREATION

I

Die Schöpfung aller Ding.

Eve is taken from the side of Adam.

THE TEMPTATION [II](#)

"Adam Eva im Paradyss."

Eve, having received an apple from the serpent, prompts Adam to gather more.

THE EXPULSION [III](#)

"Vsreibung Ade Eue."

Adam and Eve, preceded by Death, playing on a beggar's lyre or hurdy-gurdy, are driven by the angel from Eden.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE FALL [IV](#)

Adam baut die Erden.

Adam, aided by Death, tills the earth. Eve, with a distaff, suckles Cain in the background.

A CEMETERY [V](#)

Gebein aller Menschen.

A crowd of skeletons, playing on horns, trumpets, and the like, summon mankind to the grave.

THE POPE [VI](#)

Der Pöpst.

The Pope (Leo X.) with Death at his side, crowns an Emperor, who kisses his foot. Another Death, in a cardinal's hat, is among the assistants.

THE EMPEROR [VII](#)

Der Kaiser.

The Emperor (Maximilian I.) rates his minister for injustice to a suitor. But even in the act Death discrowns him.

THE KING [VIII](#)

Der König.

The King (Francis I.) sits at feast under a baldachin sprinkled with *fleurs-de-lis*. Death, as a cup-bearer, pours his last draught.

THE CARDINAL [IX](#)

Der Cardinal.

Death lifts off the Cardinal's hat as he is handing a letter of indulgence to a rich man. Luther's opponent, Cardinal Cajetan, is supposed to be represented.

THE EMPRESS [X](#)

Die Kaiserinn.

The Empress, walking with her women, is intercepted by a female Death, who conducts her to an open grave.

THE QUEEN [XI](#)

Die Königin.

Death, in the guise of a court-jester, drags away the Queen as she is leaving her palace.

THE BISHOP

[XII](#)

Der Bischof.

The sun is setting, and Death leads the aged Bishop from the sorrowing shepherds of his flock.

THE DUKE

[XIII](#)

Der Herzog.

The Duke turns pitilessly from a beggar-woman and her child. Meanwhile Death, fantastically crowned, lays hands on him.

THE ABBOT

[XIV](#)

Der Abt.

Death, having despoiled the Abbot of mitre and crozier, hales him along unwilling, and threatening his enemy with his breviary.

THE ABBESS

[XV](#)

Die Abtissin.

Death, in a wreath of flags, pulls away the Abbess by her scapulary in sight of a shrieking nun.

THE NOBLEMAN

[XVI](#)

Der Edelmann.

Death drags the resisting Nobleman towards a bier in the background.

THE CANON, OR PREBENDARY

[XVII](#)

Der Domherr.

The Canon, with his falconer, page, and jester, enters the church door. Death shows him that his sands have run.

THE JUDGE

[XVIII](#)

Der Richter.

Death withdraws the Judge's staff as he takes a bribe from a rich suitor.

THE ADVOCATE

[XIX](#)

Der Fürsprach.

Death comes upon him in the street while he is being feed by a rich client.

THE COUNSELLOR, OR SENATOR

[XX](#)

Der Rathsherr.

The Counsellor, prompted by a devil, is absorbed by a nobleman, and turns unheeding from a poor suppliant. But Death, with glass and spade, is waiting at his feet.

THE PREACHER [XXI](#)

Der Predicant.

Death, in a stole, stands in the pulpit behind the fluent Preacher, and prepares to strike him down with a jaw-bone.

THE PRIEST, OR PASTOR [XXII](#)

Der Pfarrherr.

He carries the host to a sick person. But Death precedes him as his sacristan.

THE MENDICANT FRIAR [XXIII](#)

Der Mönch.

Death seizes him just as his begging box and bag are filled.

THE NUN [XXIV](#)

Die Nonne.

The young Nun kneels at the altar, but turns to her lover who plays upon a lute. Death meantime, as a hideous old hag, extinguishes the altar candles.

THE OLD WOMAN [XXV](#)

Das Altweib.

"*Melior est mors quam vita*" to the aged woman who crawls gravewards with her bone rosary while Death makes music in the van.

THE PHYSICIAN [XXVI](#)

Der Arzt.

Death brings him a hopeless patient, and bids him cure himself.

THE ASTROLOGER [XXVII](#)

(*See p. 10, l. 12.*)

He contemplates a pendent sphere. But Death thrusts a skull before his eyes.

THE RICH MAN [XXVIII](#)

Der Reichmann.

Death finds him at his pay-table and seizes the money.

THE MERCHANT [XXIX](#)

Der Kaufmann.

Death arrests him among his newly-arrived bales.

THE SHIPMAN [XXX](#)

Der Schiffmann.

Death breaks the mast of the ship, and the crew are in extremity.

THE KNIGHT [XXXI](#)

Der Ritter.

Death, in cuirass and chain-mail, runs him through the body.

THE COUNT [XXXII](#)

Der Graf.

Death, as a peasant with a flail, lifts away his back-piece.

THE OLD MAN [XXXIII](#)

Der Altmann.

Death, playing on a dulcimer, leads him into his grave.

THE COUNTESS [XXXIV](#)

Die Grafinn.

Death helps her at her tiring by decorating her with a necklet of dead men's bones.

THE NOBLE LADY, OR BRIDE [XXXV](#)

Die Edelfrau.

"*Me et te sola mors separabit*"—says the motto. And Death already dances before her.

THE DUCHESS [XXXVI](#)

Die Herzoginn.

Death seizes her in bed, while his fellow plays the fiddle.

THE PEDLAR [XXXVII](#)

Der Kramer.

Death stops him on the road with his wares at his back.

THE PLOUGHMAN [XXXVIII](#)

Der Ackermann.

Death runs at the horses' sides as the sun sinks, and the furrows are completed.

THE YOUNG CHILD [XXXIX](#)

Das Junge Kind.

As the meagre cottage meal is preparing, Death steals the youngest child.

THE LAST JUDGMENT [XL](#)

Das jüngste Gericht.

"*Omnes stabimus ante tribunal Domini.*"

THE ESCUTCHEON OF DEATH [XLI](#)

The supporters represent Holbein and his wife.

[*Added in later editions*]

THE SOLDIER [XLII](#)

Death, armed only with a bone and shield, fights with the Soldier on the field of battle.

THE GAMESTER [XLIII](#)

Death and the Devil seize upon the Gambler at his cards.

THE DRUNKARD [XLIV](#)

Men and women carouse: down the throat of one bloated fellow Death pours the wine.

THE FOOL [XLV](#)

The Fool dances along the highway with Death, who plays the bagpipes.

THE ROBBER [XLVI](#)

Death seizes the Robber in the act of pillage.

THE BLIND MAN [XLVII](#)

Death leads the Blind Man by his staff.

THE WAGGONER [XLVIII](#)

The waggon is overturned; one Death carries off a wheel, the other loosens the fastening of a cask.

THE BEGGAR [XLIX](#)

The Beggar, lying on straw outside the city, cries in vain for Death.

[Two others, not found in the earlier editions, "The Young Wife," and "The Young Husband," are not included in the Douce reprint for which the foregoing blocks were engraved.]

Les simulachres &
HISTORIEES FACES
DE LA MORT, AVTANT ELE
gammēt pourtraictes, que artifi-
ciellement imaginées.



A LYON,
Soubz l'escu de COLOIGNE,
M. D. XXXVIII.

I.

Formauit **DOMINVS DEVS** hominem de limo terræ, ad
imaginē suam creauit illum, masculum &
fœminam creauit eos.

GENESIS I. & II.

DIEV, Ciel, Mer, Terre, procrea
De rien demonstrent sa puissance
Et puis de la terre crea
L'homme, & la femme a sa semblance.



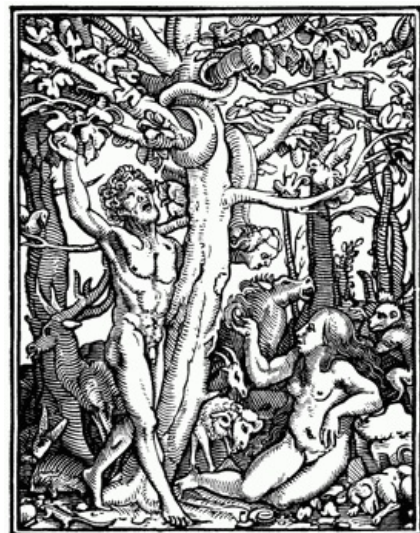
THE CREATION.

II.

Quia audisti vocem vxoris tuæ, & comedisti de
ligno ex quo preceperam tibi ne comederes, &c.

GENESIS III.

ADAM fut par EVE deceu
Et contre DIEV mangea la pomme,
Dont tous deux ont la Mort receu,
Et depuis fut mortel tout homme.



III.

Emisit eum DOMINVS DEVS de Paradiso voluptatis, vt operaretur terram de qua sumptus est.

GENESIS III.

DIEV chassa l'homme de plaisir
Pour uiure au labeur de ses mains:
Alors la Mort le uint saisir,
Et consequemment tous humains.



THE EXPULSION.

IV.

Maledicta terra in opere tuo, in laboribus comedes cunctis diebus vitæ tuæ, donec reuertaris, &c.

GENESIS III.

Mauldicte en ton labeur la terre.
En labeur ta uie useras,
Iusques que la Mort te soubterre.
Toy pouldre en pouldre tourneras.



THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE FALL.

V.

Væ væ væ habitantibus in terra.

APOCALYPSIS VIII.

Cuncta in quibus spiraculum vitæ est, mortua sunt.

GENESIS VII.

Malheureux qui uiuez au monde
Tousiours remplis d'aduersitez,
Pour quelque bien qui uous abonde,
Serez tous de Mort uisitez.



A CEMETERY.

VI.

Moriatur sacerdos magnus.

IOSVE XX.

Et episcopatum eius accipiat alter.

PSALMISTA CVIII.

Qui te cuydes immortal estre
Par Mort seras tost depeché,
Et combien que tu soys grand prebstre,
Vng aultre aura ton Euesché.



THE POPE.

VII.

Dispone domui tuæ, morieris enim tu, & non viues.

ISALÆ XXXVIII.

Ibi morieris, & ibi erit currus gloriæ tuæ.

ISALÆ XXII.

De ta maison disposeras
Comme de ton bien transitoire,
Car là ou mort reposeras,
Seront les chariotz de ta gloire.



THE EMPEROR.

VIII.

Sicut & rex hodie est, & cras morietur, nemo enim ex regibus aliud habuit.

ECCLESIASTICI X.

Ainsi qu'auiourd'hui il est Roy,
Demain sera en tombe close.
Car Roy aulcun de son arroy
N'a sceu emporter aultre chose.



THE KING.

IX.

Væ qui iustificatis impium pro muneribus, & iustitiam iusti aufertis ab eo.

ESAIÆ V.

Mal pour uous qui iustifiez
L'inhumain, & plain de malice
Et par dons le sanctifiez,
Ostant au iuste sa iustice.



THE CARDINAL.

X.

Gradients in superbia potest Deus humiliare.

DANIE III.

Qui marchez en pompe superbe
La Mort vng iour uous pliera.
Côme soubz uoz piedz ployez l'herbe
Ainsi uous humiliera.



THE EMPRESS.

XI.

Mulieres opulentæ surgite, & audite vocem meam. Post dies, & annum, & vos conturbemini.

ISALÆ XXXII.

Leuez uous dames opulentes.
Ouyez la uoix des trespassez.
Après maintz ans & iours passez,
Serez troublées & doulentes.



THE QUEEN.

XII.

Percutiam pastorem, & dispergentur oves.

XXVI. MAR. XIII.

Le pasteur aussi frapperay,
Mitres & crosses renuersées.
Et lors quand ie l'attrapperay,
Seront ses brebis dispersées.



THE BISHOP.

XIII.

Princeps induetur mœrore. Et quiescere faciam superbiâ potentium.

EZECHIE. VII.

Vien, prince, avec moy, & delaisse
Honneurs mondains tost finissantz.
Seule suis qui, certes, abaisse
L'orgueil & pompe des puissantz.



THE DUKE.

XIV.

*Ipse morietur. Quia nō habuit disciplinam, & in
multitudine stultitiæ suæ decipietur.*

PROVER. V.

Il mourra. Car il n'a receu
En soy aulcune discipline,
Et au nombre sera deceu
De folie qui le domine.



THE ABBOT.

XV.

Laudai magis mortuos quàm viuentes.

ECCLE. III.

I'ay tousiours les mortz plus loué
Que les uisz, esquelz mal abonde,
Toucesfoys la Mort ma noué
Au ranc de ceulx qui sont au monde.



THE ABBESS.

XVI.

*Quis est homo qui viuet, & non videbit mortem,
eruet animã suam de manu inferi?*

PSAL. LXXXVIII.

Qui est celluy, tant soit grande homme,
Qui puisse uiure sans mourir?
Et de la Mort, qui tout assomme,
Puisse son Ame recourir?



THE NOBLEMAN.

XVII.

Ecce appropinquat hora.

MAT. XXVI.

Tu uas au choeur dire tes heures
Paiant Dieu pour toy, & ton proche.
Mais il fault ores que tu meures.
Voy tu pas l'heure qui approche?



THE CANON.

XVIII.

Disperdam iudicem de medio eius.

AMOS II.

Du mylieu d'eulx uous osteray
Iuges corumpus par presentz.
Point ne serez de Mort exemptz.
Car ailleurs uous transporteray.



THE JUDGE.

XIX.

Callidus vidit malum, & abscōdit se innocens,
pertransijt, & afflictus est damno.

PROVER. XXII.

L'homme cault a ueu la malice
Pour l'innocent faire obliger,
Et puis par uoye de iustice
Est uenu le pauvre affliger.



THE ADVOCATE.

XX.

Qui obturat aurem suam ad clamorem pauperis, & ipse clamabit, & non exaudietur.

PROVER. XXI.

Les riches conseillez tousiours,
Et aux pauvres clouez l'oreille.
Vous crierez aux derniers iours,
Mais Dieu uous fera la pareille.



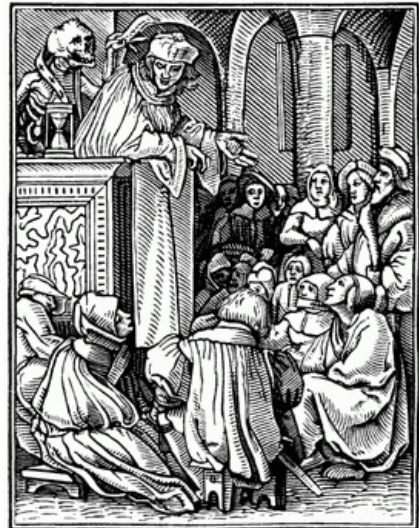
THE COUNSELLOR.

XXI.

Væ qui dicitis malum bonum, & bonum malū,
ponentes tenebras lucem, & lucem tenebras,
ponentes amarum dulce, & dulce in amarum.

ISALÆ XV.

Mal pour uous qui ainsi osez
Le mal pour le bien nous blâmer,
Et le bien pour mal exposez,
Mettant avec le doux l'amer.



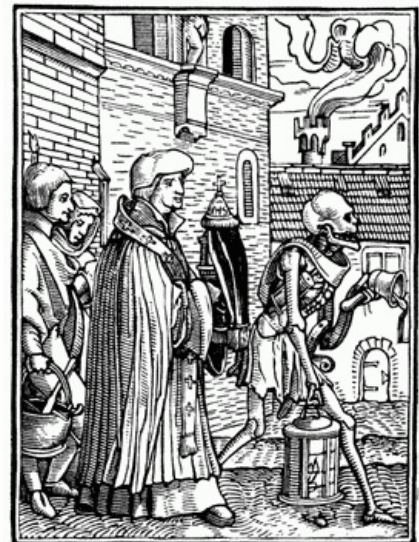
THE PREACHER.

XXII.

Sum quidem & ego mortalis homo.

SAP. VII.

Ie porte le saint sacrement
Cuidant le mourant secourir,
Qui mortel suis pareillement.
Et comme luy me fault mourir.



THE PRIEST.

XXIII.

Sedentes in tenebris, & in vmbra mortis, vinctos
in mendicitate.

PSAL. CVI.

Toy qui n'as soucy, ny remord
Sinon de ta mendicité,
Tu fierras a l'umbre de Mort
Pour t'ouster de necessité.



THE MENDICANT FRIAR.

XXIV.

Est via quæ videtur homini iusta: nouissima autem
eius deducunt hominem ad mortem.

PROVER. IIII.

Telle uoye aux humains est bonne,
Et a l'homme tresiuste semble.
Mais la fin d'elle a l'homme donne,
La Mort, qui tous pecheurs assemble.



THE NUN.

XXV.

Melior est mors quàm vita.

ECCLE. XXX.

En peine ay uescu longuement
Tant que nay plus de uiure enuie,
Mais bien ie croy certainement,
Meilleure la Mort que la uie.



THE OLD WOMAN.

XXVI.

Medice, cura teipsum.

LVCÆ III.

Tu congnoys bien la maladie
Pour le patient secourir,
Et si ne scais teste estourdie,
Le mal dont tu deburas mourir.



THE PHYSICIAN.

XXVII.

Indica mihi si nosti omnia. Sciebas quòd
nasciturus esses, & numerum dierum tuorum
noueras?

IOB XXVIII.

Tu dis par Amphibologie
Ce qu'aux aultres doibt aduenir.
Dy moy donc par Astrologie
Quand tu deburas a moy uenir?



THE ASTROLOGER.

XXVIII.

Stulte hac nocte repetunt animam tuam, & quæ
parasti cuius erunt?

LVCÆ XII.

Ceste nuict la Mort te prendra,
Et demain seras enchassé.
Mais dy moy, fol, a qui uindra
Le bien que tu as amassé?



THE RICH MAN.

XXIX.

Qui congregat thesauros mendacij vanus & excors
est, & impingetur ad laqueos mortis.

PROVER. XXI.

Vain est cil qui amassera
Grandz biens, & tresors pour mentir,
La Mort l'en fera repentir.
Car en ses lacz surpris sera.



THE MERCHANT.

XXX.

Qui volunt diuites fieri incidunt in laqueum
diaboli, & desideria multa, & nociua, quæ
mergunt homines in interitum.

I. AD TIMO. VI.

Pour acquerir des biens mondains
Vous entrez en tentation,
Qui uous met es perilz soubdains,
Et uous maine a perdition.



THE SHIPMAN.

XXXI.

Subito morientur, & in media nocte turbabuntur
populi, & auferent violentum absq_e manu.

IOB XXXIII.

Peuples soubdain s'esleuront
A lencontre de l'inhumain,
Et le uiolent osteront
D'auéc eulx sans force de main.



XXXII.

Quoniam cùm interiet non sumet secum omnia,
neq_e cum eo descēdet gloria eius.

PSAL. XLVIII.

Avec soy rien n'emportera,
Mais qu'une foys la Mort le tombe,
Rien de sa gloire n'ostera,
Pour mettre avec soy en sa tombe.



THE COUNT.

XXXIII.

Spiritus meus attenuabitur, dies mei
breuiabuntur, & solum mihi superest sepulchrum.

IOB XVII.

Mes esperitz sont attendriz,
Et ma uie s'en ua tout beau.
Las mes longziours sont amoindriz,
Plus ne me reste qu'un tombeau.



THE OLD MAN.

XXXIV.

Ducunt in bonis dies suos, & in puncto ad inferna descendunt.

IOB XXI.

En biens mōdains leurs iours despendēt
En uoluptez, & en tristesse,
Puis soubdain aux Enfers descendent
Ou leur ioye passe en tristesse.



THE COUNTESS.

XXXV.

Me & te sola mors separabit.

Rvth. I.

Amour qui unyz nous faict uiure,
En foy noz cueurs preparera,
Qui long temps ne nous pourra suyure,
Car la Mort nous separera.



THE NOBLE LADY.

XXXVI.

De lectulo super quem ascendisti non descendes,
sed morte morieris.

III. REG. I.

Du lict sus lequel as monté
Ne descendras a ton plaisir.
Car Mort t'aura tantost dompté,
Et en brief te uiendra saisir.



THE DUCHESS.

XXXVII.

Venite ad me qui onerati estis.

MATTH. XI.

Venez, & apres moy marchez
Vous qui estes par trop charge.
Cest assez suiuy les marchez:
Vous serez par moy decharge.



THE PEDLAR.

XXXVIII.

In sudore vultus tui vesceris pane tuo.

GENE. I.

A la sueur de ton uisaige
Tu gaigneras ta pauvre uie.
Après long trauail, & usaige,
Voicy la Mort qui te conuie.



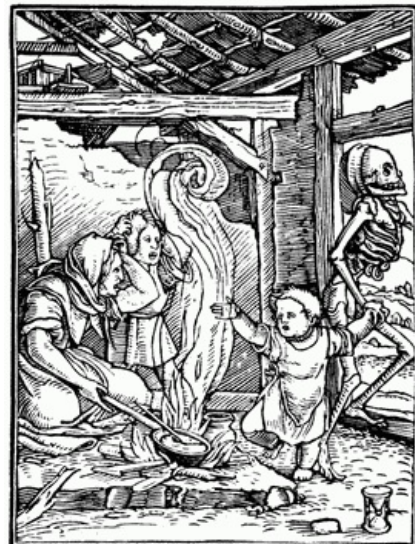
THE PLOUGHMAN.

XXXIX.

Homo natus de muliere, breui viuens tempore
repletur multis miserijs, qui quasi flos egreditur,
& conteritur, & fugit velut vmbra.

IOB XIII.

Tout homme de la femme yssant
Remply de misere, & d'encombre,
Ainsi que fleur tost finissant.
Sort & puis fuyt comme faict l'umbre.



THE YOUNG CHILD.

XI.

Omnes stabimus ante tribunal domini.

ROMA. XIII.

Vigilate, & orate, quia nescitis qua hora venturus sit dominus.

MATT. XXIII.

Deuante le trosne du grand iuge
Chascun de soy compte rendra
Pourtant ueillez, qu'il ne uous iuge.
Car ne scauez quand il uendra.



THE LAST JUDGMENT.

XLI.

Memorare nouissima, & in æternum non peccabis.

ECCLE. VII.

Si tu ueulx uiure sans peché
Voy ceste imaige a tous propos,
Et point ne seras empesché,
Quand tu t'en iras a repos.



THE ESCUTCHEON OF DEATH.

[ADDED IN LATER EDITIONS]

XLII.

Cum fortis armatus custodit atriū suū, &c. Si autem fortior eo superueniens vicerit eum, uniuersa eius arma aufert, in quibus confidebat.

Le sort armé en jeune corps
Pense auoir seure garnison;
Mais Mort plus forte, le met hors
De sa corporelle maison.



THE SOLDIER.

XLIII.

Quid prodest homini, si vniuersum Mundum
lucretur, animæ autem suæ detrimentum
patiatur?

MATT. XVI.

Que vault à l'homme tout le Monde
Gagner d'hazard, & chance experte,
S'il recoit de sa uie immonde
Par Mort, irreparable perte?



THE GAMESTER.

XLIV.

Ne inebriemini vino, in quo est luxuria.

EPHES. V.

De vin (auquel est tout excès)
Ne vous enyurez pour dormir
Sommeil de Mort qui au decès
Vous face l'ame, & sang vomir.



THE DRUNKARD.

XLV.

Quasi agnus lasciuiens, & ignorans, nescit quòd
ad vincula stultus trahatur.

PROVERB VII.

Le Fol vit en ioye, & deduict
San scavoit qu'il s'en va mourant,
Tant qu'à sa fin il est conduit
Ainsi que l'agneau ignorant.



THE FOOL.

XLVI.

Domine, vim patior.

ISALÆ XXXVIII.

La foible femme brigandée
Crie, O seigneur on me fait force.
Lors de Dieu la mort est mandée,
Qui les estranglé à dure estorce.



THE ROBBER.

XLVII.

Cæcus cæcum ducit: & ambo in foueam cadunt.

MATTH. XV.

L'aveugle un autre aveugle guide,
L'un par l'autre en la fosse tombe:
Car quand plus oultre aller il cuide,
La MORT l'homme iecte en la tombe.



THE BLIND MAN.

XLVIII.

Corruit in curru suo.

I CHRON. XXII.

Au passage de MORT peruerse
Raison, chartier tout esperdu,
Du corps le char, & cheuaux verse,
Le vin (sang de vie) espandu.



THE WAGGONER.

XLIX.

Miser ego homo! Quis nie liberabit de corpore
mortis huius?

ROM. VII.

Qui hors la chair veult en Christ viure
Ne craint mort, mais dit un mortel,
Helas, qui me rendra deliure
Pouure homme de ce corps mortel?



THE BEGGAR.

Of this edition of Holbein's "The Dance of Death," seven hundred and fifty copies have been printed on Japan vellum, for the Scott-Thaw Co., by the Heintzemann Press, July, MCMIII.

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