



## CHAPTER X.

### *Other Dances of Death.*



HAVING thus disposed of the two most ancient and important works on the subject in question, others of a similar nature, but with designs altogether different, and introduced into various books, remain to be noticed, and such are the following :—

I. "Les loups ravissans fait et composé par maistre Robert Gobin prestre, maistre des alicencie en decret, doyen de crestienté de Laigny su Marne au dyocese de Paris, advocat en court d'église Imprimé pour Anthoine Verard à Paris." 4to. without date but about 1500. This is a very bitter satire, in the form of a dream, against the clergy in general, but more particularly against Popes John XXII. and Boniface VIII. A wolf, in a lecture to his children, instructs them in every kind of vice and wickedness, but is opposed, and his doctrines refuted, by an allegorical personage called Holy Doctrine. In a second vision Death appears to the author accompanied by Fate, War, Famine, and Mortality. All classes of society are formed into a Dance, as the author chooses to call it, and the work is accompanied with twenty-one very singular engravings on wood, executed in a style

perhaps nowhere else to be met with. The designs are the same as those in the second Dance of the Horæ, printed by Higman for Vostre, No. I. page 53.

II. "A booke of Christian prayers, collected out of the ancient writers," &c. Printed by J. Day, 1569. 4to. Afterwards in 1578, 1581, 1590, and 1609. It is more frequently mentioned under the title of "Queen Elizabeth's prayer-book," a most unsuitable title, when it is recollected how sharply this haughty dame rebuked the Dean of Christ-church for presenting a Common Prayer to her which had been purposely ornamented with cuts by him.<sup>1</sup> This book was most probably compiled by the celebrated John Fox, and is accompanied with elegant borders in the margins of every leaf cut in wood by an **unknown** artist, whose mark is **C**, though they have been most unwarrantably ascribed to Holbein, and even to Agnes Frey, the wife of Albert Dürer, who is not known with any certainty to have practised the art of engraving. At the end is a Dance of Death different from every other of the kind, and of singular interest, as exhibiting the costume of its time with respect to all ranks and conditions of life, male and female. In the library at Lambeth Palace, No. 1049, there is a copy of this book in Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, English, and French, printed by J. Day, 1569, 8vo. It was given by Archb. Tillotson, and from a memorandum in it supposed to have been the Queen's own copy. The cut of the Queen kneeling was used so late as 1652, in Benlowes' Theophila. Some of the cuts have the unexplained mark **C**.

These are the characters :—"The Emperor, the King, the Duke, the Marques, the Baron, the Vicount, the Archbishop, the Bishop, the Doctor, the Preacher, the Lord, the Knight, the Esquire, the Gentleman, the Judge, the Justice, the Serjeant at law, the Attorney, the Mayor, the Shirife, the Bailife, the Constable, the Physitian, the Astronomer, the Herauld, the Sergeant at arms, the Trumpetter, the Purseviant, the Dromme, the Fife, the Captaine, the Souldier, the Marchant, the Citizen, the Printers (in two compartments), the Rich Man, the Aged Man, the Artificer,

<sup>1</sup> Strype's Annals, i. 272, where the curious dialogue that ensued on the occasion is preserved.

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the Husbandman, the Musicians (in two compartments), the Shepherd, the Foole, the Beggar, the Roge, of Youth, of Infancie." Then the females:—"The Empresse, the Queene, the Princes, the Duchesse, the Countesse, the Vicountesse, the Baronnesse, the Lady, the Judge's Wife, the Lawyer's Wife, the Gentlewoman, the Alderman's Wife, the Marchantes Wife, the Citizen's Wife, the Rich Man's Wife, the Young Woman, the Mayde, the Damosell, the Farmar's Wife, the Husbandman's Wife, the Countriwoman, the Nurse, the Shepherd's Wife, the Aged Woman, the Creeple, the Poore Woman, the Infant, the (female) Foole." All these are designed in a masterly manner, and delicately engraved. The figures of the Deaths occasionally abound in much humour, and always with appropriate characters. The names of the unknown artists were worthy of being recorded.

III. "Icones mortis, sexaginta imaginibus totidemque inscriptionibus insignitæ, versibus quoque Latinis et novis Germanicis illustratæ. Norimbergæ Christ. Lockner, 1648." 8vo.<sup>2</sup>

IV. "Rudolph Meyers S: Todten dantz ergântzet und heraus gegeben durch Conrad Meyern Maaler in Zürich, im jahr 1650." On an engraved title-page, representing an angel blowing a trumpet, with a motto from the Apocalypse, Death or Time holds a lettered label with the above inscription or title. In the background groups of small figures allusive to the last judgment. Then follows a printed title:—"Sterbenspiegel, das ist sonnenklare Vorstellung menschlicher Nichtigkeit durch alle Stand und Geschlechter: vermittelst 60 dienstlicher kupferblatteren lehrreicher uberschriften und beweglicher zu vier stimmen auszgesetzter Todtengesangen, vor disem angefangen durch Rudolffen Meyern S. von Zürich, &c. Jetzaber zu erwekung nothwendiger Todsbetrachtung, verachtung irdischer eytelkeit, und beliebung seliger ewigkeit, zu end gebracht und verlegt durch Conrad Meyern Maaler in Zürich und daselbsten bey ihme zu finden. Getruckt zu Zürich bey Johann Jacob Bodmer, MDCL." 4to. That is:—The Mirror of Death, that is, a brilliant representation of human nothingness in all ranks and conditions, by means of 60 appropriate copper-plates. spiritual superscriptions, and

<sup>2</sup> Catal. de la bibliothèque du Roi, ii. 153.

moving songs of Death, arranged for four voices, formerly commenced by Rudolph Meyer of Zurich, &c. but now brought to an end and completed, for the awaking of a necessary consideration of Death, a contempt of earthly vanity, and a love of blissful eternity, by *Conrad Meyer* of Zurich, of whom they are to be had. Printed at Zurich, by John Jacob Bodmer, MDCL.

The subjects are the following:—1. The Creation. 2. The Fall. 3. Expulsion from Paradise. 4. Punishment of Man. 5. Triumph of Death. 6. An allegorical frontispiece relating to the class of the Clergy. 6. The Pope. 7. The Cardinal. 8. The Bishop. 9. The Abbot. 10. The Abbess. 11. The Priest. 12. The Monk. 13. The Hermit. 14. The Preacher. 15. An allegorical frontispiece to the class of Rulers and Governors. 15. The Emperor. 16. The Empress. 17. The King. 18. The Queen. 19. The Prince Elector. 20. The Earl and Countess. 21. The Knight. 22. The Nobleman. 23. The Judge. 24. The Steward, Widow, and Orphan. 25. The Captain. 26. An allegorical frontispiece to the Lower Classes. 26. The Physician. 27. The Astrologer. 28. The Merchant. 29. The Painter and his kindred: among these the old man is Dietrich Meyern; the painter resembles the portrait of Conrad Meyern in Sandrart, and the man at the table is probably Rudolph Meyern. 30. The Handcraftsman. 31. The Architect. 32. The Innkeeper. 33. The Cook. 34. The Ploughman. 35. The Man and Maid Servant. 36. The old Man. 37. The old Woman. 38. The Lovers. 39. The Child. 40. The Soldier. 41. The Pedlar. 42. The Highwayman. 43. The Quack Doctor. 44. The Blind Man. 45. The Beggar. 46. The Jew. 47. The Usurer. 48. The Gamesters. 49. The Drunkards. 50. The Gluttons. 51. The Fool. 52. The Certainty of Death. 53. The Uncertainty of Death. 54. The Last Judgment. 55. Christ's Victory. 56. Salvation. 57. True and False Religion.

The text consists chiefly of Death's apostrophe to his victims, with their remonstrances, verses under each subject, and various other matters. At the end are pious songs and psalms set to music. This work was jointly executed by

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two excellent artists, Rudolph and Conrad Meyer or Meyern, natives of Zurich. The designs are chiefly by Rudolph, and the etchings by Conrad, consisting of sixty very masterly compositions. The grouping of the figures is admirable, and the versatile representations of Death most skilfully characterised. Many of the subjects are greatly indebted to the Lyons wood engravings.

In 1657 and 1759 there appeared other editions of the latter, with this title, "Die menschliche Sterblichkeit under dem titel Todten Tanz in LXI original-kupfern, von Rudolf und Conrad Meyern berühmten kunstmahlern in Zurich abermal herausgegeben, nebst neuen, dazu dienenden, moralischen versen und ueberschriften." That is, "Human mortality, under the title of the Dance of Death, in 61 original copper prints of Rudolph and Conrad Meyer, renowned painters at Zurich, to which are added appropriate moral verses and inscriptions." Hamburg and Leipsig, 1759, 4to. The prolegomena are entirely different from those in the other edition, and an elaborate preface is added, giving an account of several editions of the Dance of Death. Instead of the Captain, No. 25, the Ensign is substituted, and the Cook is newly designed. Some of the numbers of the subjects are misplaced. The etchings have been retouched, and on many the date of 1637 is seen, which had nowhere occurred in the first edition here described.

In 1704 copies of 52 of these etchings were published at Augsburg, under the title of "Tripudium mortis per victoriam super carnem universæ orbis terræ erectum. Ab A. C. Redelio S. C. M. L. P." on a label held by Death as before. Then the German title:—"Erbaulicher Sterb-Spiegel, das ist sonnen-klahre vorstellung menschlicher nichtigkeit durch alle stande und geschlechter: vermittelt schoner kupffern, lehr-reicher bey-schriften und hertz-beweglich angehangter Todten-lieder ehmahls herausgegeben durch Rudolph und Conrad Meyern mahlern in Zurich; anjetzo aber mit Lateinischen unterschritten der kupffer vermehret und aussgezieret von dem Welt-berühmten Poeten Augustino Casimiro Redelio, Belg. Mech Sac. Cæs. Majest. L. P. Augsburg zu finden bey Johann Philipp Steu'ner. Druckts, Abraham Guggler.

1704." 4to. That is, "An edifying mirror of mortality, representing the nullity of man through all stations and generations, by means of beautiful engravings in copper, instructive inscriptions, and heart-moving lays of Death, as an appendix to the work formerly edited by Rudolph and Conrad Meyern of Zurich, but now published with Latin inscriptions and engravings, augmented and renewed by the worldly-renowned poet Augustin Casimir Redel," &c.

In this edition the Pope and all the other religious characters are omitted, probably by design. The etchings are very inferior to the fine originals, and without the name of the artist. The dresses are frequently modernised in the fashion of the time, and other variations are occasionally introduced.

V. "Den Algemeynen Dooden Spiegel van Pater Abraham à Sancta Clara," *i. e.* The universal mirror of Death of Father Abraham à Sancta Clara, on a frontispiece engraved on copper, with a medallion of the author, and various allegorical figures. Then the printed title:—"Den Algemeynen Dooden Spiegel ofte de Capelle der Dooden waerin alle Menschen sich al lacchende oft al weenende op recht kunnen beschouwen, verciert met aerdige historien, Sin-rycke gedichten ende seelenleerende Beeldt-schetsen op gestelt door den eerwaardigen Pater Abraham à Sancta Clara, Difinitor der Provincie van het order der ongeschoende Augustynen, end Predickant van syne Keyserlycke Majesteyt Leopoldus. Getrouwelyck overgeset uyt het hoogh-duyts in onse Nederduytsche Tael. Tot Brussel, by de Wed. G. Jacobs tegen de Baert-brugge in de Druckerye, 1730." 12mo. *i. e.* "The universal mirror of Death taken from the chapel of the dead; in which all men may see themselves properly, whether laughing or weeping, ornamented with pretty stories, spirited poems, and instructive prints, arranged by Father Abraham à Sancta Clara, of the Augustinian order, and preacher to his Imperial Majesty Leopold, and faithfully translated out of High Dutch into our Netherlandish language."

The work consists of sixty-seven engravings on wood within borders, and of very indifferent execution in all respects; the text a mixture of prose and poetry of a religious nature, allusive to the subjects which are not

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uniformly a Dance of Death. The best among them are the Painter, p. 45; the Drunkard, p. 75; the Dancing Couple, Death playing the Flageolet, p. 103; the Fowler, p. 113; the Hen-pecked Husband, p. 139; the Courtezan, p. 147; the Muscian, p. 193; the Gamester, p. 221; and the Blind Beggar, p. 289.

VI. "Geistliche Todts-Gedancken bey allerhand Gemahlden und Tchildereyn in abbildung Interschiedlichen geschlechts, alters, standes, und wurdend persohnen sich des Todes zu erinnern aus dessen lehrdie tugende zu üben und die Sund zu meymen. Erstlich in kupfer entworfen nachmalen durch sittliche erörtherung und aberlegung unter Todten-farben in vorschein gebracht, dardurch zumheyl der seelen im gemuth des geneigten lesers ein lebendige forcht und embsige versorg des Todes zu erwecken. Cum permissu superiorum. Passau, Gedruckt bey Frederich Gabriel Mangold, hochfurst. hof buchdruckern, 1753. Lintz, verlegt Frantz Anton Ilger, Burgerl. Buchhandlern allda." Folio. In English:—"The Spiritual Dance of Death in all kinds of pictures and representations, whereby persons of every age, sex, rank, and dignity, may be reminded of Death, from which lesson they may exercise themselves in virtue, and avoid sin. First put upon copper, and afterwards, through moral considerations and investigations brought to light in Death's own colours, thereby for the good of the souls of the well-inclined readers to awaken in them a lively fear and diligent anticipation of Death."

The subjects are:—1. The Creation. 2. Temptation. 3. Expulsion. 4. Punishment. 5. A charnel-house, with various figures of Death, three in the background dancing. 6. The Pope. 7. Cardinal. 8. Bishop. 9. Abbot. 10. Canon. 11. Preacher. 12. Chaplain. 13. Monk. 14. Abbess. 15. Nun. 16. Emperor. 17. Empress. 18. King. 19. Queen. 20. Prince. 21. Princess. 22. Earl. 23. Countess. 24. Knight. 25. Nobleman. 26. Judge. 27. Counsellor. 28. Advocate. 29. Physician. 30. Astrologer. 31. Rich Man. 32. Merchant. 33. Shipwreck. 34. Lovers. 35. Child. 36. Old man. 37. Old woman. 38. Carrier. 39. Pedlar. 40. Ploughman. 41. Soldier. 42. Gamesters. 43. Drunkards. 44. Murderer.

45. Fool. 46. Blind Man. 47. Beggar. 48. Hermit. 49. Corruption. 50. Last Judgment. 51. Allegory of Death's Arms, &c.

The designs and some of the engravings are by M. Rentz, for the most part original, with occasional hints from the Lyons wood-cuts.

Another edition with some variation was printed at Hamburg, 1759, folio.

VII. In the Lauenburg Calendar for 1792, are twelve designs by Chodowiecki for a Dance of Death. These are:—1. The Pope. 2. The King. 3. The Queen. 4. The General. 5. The Genealogist. 6. The Physician. 7. The Mother. 8. The Sentinel. 9. The Fish Woman. 10. The Beggar. 11. The Fille de joye and Bawd. 12. The Infant.

VIII. A Dance of Death in one of the Berne Almanacs, consisting of the sixteen following subjects:—1. Death, fantastically dressed as a beau, seizes the city maiden. 2. Death wearing a Kevenhuller hat, takes the housemaid's broom from her. 3. Death seizes a terrified washerwoman. 4. He takes some of the apple-woman's fruit out of her basket. 5. The cellar-maid or tapster, standing at the door of an alehouse, is summoned by Death to accompany him. 6. He lays violent hands upon an abusive strumpet. 7. In the habit of an old woman he lays hold of a midwife with a newly-born infant in her hands. 8. With a shroud thrown over his shoulder, he summons the female mourner. 9. In the character of a young man with a chapeau bras, he brings a urinal for the physician's inspection. 10. The life-guardsman is accompanied by Death also on horseback and wearing an enormous military hat. 11. Death with a skilnet on his head plunders the tinker's basket. 12. Death in a pair of jack-boots leads the postilion. 13. The lame beggar led by Death. 14. Death standing in a grave pulls the grave-digger towards him by the leg. 15. Death seated on a plough with a scythe in his left hand, seizes the farmer, who carries several implements of husbandry on his shoulders. 16. The fraudulent inn-keeper in the act of adulterating his liquor in the cask, is throttled by Death, who carries an ale vessel at his back. These figures are cut on wood, in a free and masterly manner by

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Zimmerman, an artist much employed in the decoration of these calendars. The prints are accompanied with dialogues between Death and the respective parties.

IX. "Freund Heins Erscheinungen in Holbeins Manier von J. R. Schellenberg Winterthur, bey Heinrich Stiener und Comp. 1785." 8vo. That is: "Friend Hein's appearance in the manner of Holbein, by J. R. Schellenberg." The preface states that from the poverty of the German language in synonymous expressions for the allegorical or ideal Death, the author has ventured to coin the jocose appellation of Friend Hein, which will be understood from its resemblance to Hain or Hayn, a word signifying a grove. The sagacity of the German reader will perhaps discover the analogy. The subjects are twenty-four in number, as follow:—

1. Love interrupted. The lovers are caught by Death in a net, and in no very decent attitude.
2. Suicide. A man shoots himself with a pistol, and falls into the arms of Death.
3. Death in the character of a beau visits a lady at her toilet.
4. The Aeronaut. The balloon takes fire, and the aeronaut is precipitated.
5. Death's visit to the school. He enters at a door inscribed SILENTIUM, and puts the scholars to flight.
6. Bad distribution of alms.
7. Expectation deluded. Death disguised as a fine lady lays hands upon a beau, who seems to have expected a very different sort of visitor.
8. Unwelcome officiousness. Death feeding an infant with poison, the nurse wringing her hands in despair.
9. The dissolution of the monastery. The Abbot, followed by his monks, receives the fatal summons in a letter delivered to him by Death.
10. The company of a friend. An aged man near a grave wrings his hands. Death behind directs his attention to heaven.
11. The lottery gambler. Death presents him with the unlucky ticket.
12. The woman of Vienna and the woman of Rome. Death seizes one, and points to the other.

13. The Usurer. Death shuts him into his money-chest.

14. The Glutton. Death seizes him at table, and forcibly pours wine down his throat.

15. The Rope-dancer. Death mounted on an ass, and fantastically appavelled, enters the circle of spectators, and seizes the performer by one of his legs.

16. The lodge of secrecy (freemasonry). Death introduces a novice blindfold to the lodge.

17. The recruiting Officer. Death enlists some country fellows, a fiddler preceding.

18. Berthold Swartz. Death ignites the contents of the mortar, and blows up the monk. In the usual representations of this story, the Devil is always placed near the monk.

19. The Duel. A man strikes with a sword at Death, who is lifting up the valves of a window.

20. The plunder of the falling-trap. Death demolishes a student by throwing a bookcase filled with books upon him.

21. Silence surrendered. Death appears to a school-mistress. The children, terrified, escape.

22. The privilege of the strong. Death lays violent hands on a lady, whom her male companions in vain endeavour to protect.

23. The apothecary. Death enters his shop, and directs his attention to the poor patients who are coming in.

24. The conclusion. Two anatomists joining hands are both embraced by Death.

The best of these subjects are Nos. 4, 13, 14, 15, and 18. The text is a mixture of prose and verse.

X. "The English Dance of Death, from the designs of Thomas Rowlandson, with metrical illustrations by the author of *Doctor Syntax*." 2 vols. 8vo. 1815-1816. Ackermann.

In seventy-two coloured engravings. Among these the most prominent and appropriate are—The last Chase; the Recruit; the Catchpole; the Death-blow; the Dram-shop; the Skaiters; the Duel; the Kitchen; the Toast-master; the Gallant's downfall; and the fall of four in hand. The rest are comparatively feeble and irrelevant, and many of

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the subjects ill-chosen, and devoid of that humour which might have been expected from the pencil of Rowlandson, whose grotesque predominates as usual in the groups.

XI. "Death's doings, consisting of numerous original compositions in prose and verse, the friendly contributions of various writers, principally intended as illustrations of twenty-four plates designed and etched by R. Dagley, author of 'Select gems from the-antique,' &c. 1826." 8vo.

From the intrinsic value and well-deserved success of this work, a new edition was almost immediately called for, which received many important additions from the modest and ingenious author. Among these a new frontispiece, from the design of Adrian Van Venne, the celebrated Dutch poet and painter, is particularly to be noticed. This edition is likewise enriched with numerous elegant contributions, both in prose and verse, from some of the best writers of the age.

XII. A modern French Dance of Death, under the title of "*Voyage pour l'Éternité, service général des omnibus accélérés, départ à toute heure et de tous les points du globe.*" Par J. Grandville. No date, but about 1830. A series of nine lithographic engravings, including the frontispiece. Oblong 4to. These are the subjects:—

1. Frontispiece. Death conducting passengers in his omnibus to the cemetery of Père la Chaise.
2. "C'est ici le dernier relai." Death as a postilion gives notice to a traveller encumbered with his baggage, &c.
3. "Vais-je bien ? . . . vous avancez horriblement." Death enters a watchmaker's shop, and shows his hour-glass to the master and his apprentice.
4. "Monsieur le Baron, on vous demande.—Dites que je n'y suis pas." Death having entered the apartment, the valet communicates his summons to his gouty master lying on a couch.
5. "Soyez tranquille, j'ai un garçon qui ne se trompe jamais." The apothecary addresses these words to some cautious patients whilst he fills a vessel which they have brought to his shop. Death, as an apprentice in another room, pounds medicines in a mortar.
6. "Voilà, Messieurs, un plat de mon métier." A feast. Death as a waiter enters with a plate of poisonous fruit.

7. "Voulez-vous monter chez moi, mon petit Monsieur, vous n'en serez pas fâché, allez." Death, tricked out as a *fille de joie* with a mask, entices a youth introduced by a companion.

8. "—Pour une consultation, Docteur, j'en suis j'veus . ." Death in the character of an undertaker, hisarse behind, invites an old man to follow him.

9. "Oui, Madame, ce sera bien la promenade la plus délicate ! une voiture dans le dernier goût ! un cheval qui fend l'air, et le meilleur groom de France." Death, habited as a beau, conducts a lady, followed by her maid, to a carriage in waiting.

XIII. "The British Dance of Death, exemplified by a series of engravings from drawings by Van Assen, with explanatory and moral essays. Printed by and for George Smeeton, Royal Arcade, Pall Mall." 8vo. No date. With a frontispiece designed by Geo. Cruikshank, representing a crowned sitting Death, holding a scythe in one hand, and with the other leaning on a globe. This is circular in the middle. Over it two small compartments of Death striking an infant in the cradle, and a sick man. At bottom, two others of Death demolishing a glutton and a drunkard. A short preface states that the work is on the plan of "the celebrated designs of Holbein," meaning of course the Lyons work, but to which it has not the smallest resemblance, and refers to Lord Orford for the mention of the Basle dance, which, as having two or sometimes three figures only, it does resemble. It then states that the late Mr. Van Assen had no intention of publishing these designs, which now appear in compliance with the wishes of many of his friends to possess them. They are very neatly engraved, and tinted in imitation of the original drawings, but are wholly destitute of that humour which might have been expected from the pencil of the ingenious inventor, and which he has manifested on many other occasions. The subjects are the following:—1. The Infant. 2. Juvenile piety. 3. The Student. 4. The Sempstress. 5. The musical Student. 6. The Dancer. 7. The female Student. 8. The Lovers. 9. The industrious Wife. 10. The Warrior. 11. The Pugilists. 12. The Glutton. 13. The Drunkard. 14. The Watchman. 15. The Fish-

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woman. 16. The Physician. 17. The Miser. 18. Old Age. Death with his dart is standing near all these figures, but does not seem to be noticed by any of them.

XIV. A Dance of Death in Danish rimes is mentioned in Nyerup's "Bidragh til den Danske digtakunst historie." 1800. 12mo.

XV. John Nixon Coleraine, an amateur, and secretary to the original Beef-steak Club, etched a Dance of Death for ladies' fans. He died only a few years ago. Published by Mr. Fores, of Piccadilly, who had the copper-plates but of which no impressions are now remaining.

