

At the head of this ballad is a lithographic print of the terrified Lise in Satan's clutches, surrounded by dancing, piping, and fiddling Deaths.

About the same time there appeared a silly ballad, set to music, entitled "The Cork Leg," accompanied by a print in which the man with the cork leg falling on the ground drops his leg. It is seized by Death, who stalks away with it in a very grotesque manner.

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CHAPTER XV

*Initial or capital Letters with the Dance of Death.*



It is very well known that the use of initial or capital letters, especially with figures of any kind, is not coeval with the invention of printing. It was some time before they were introduced at all, a blank being left, or else a small letter printed for the illuminators to cover or fill up, as they had been accustomed to do in manuscripts; for, although the art of printing nearly put an end to the occupation of that ingenious class of artists, they continued to be employed by the early printers to decorate their books with elegant initials, and particularly to illuminate the first pages of them with beautiful borders of foliage or animals, for the purpose of giving them the appearance of manuscripts.

It has more than once been most erroneously asserted by bibliographers and writers on typography, that Erhard Ratdolt, a printer at Venice, was the first person who made use of initial letters about the year 1477; for instances are not wanting of their introduction into some of the earliest printed books. Among the latter the most beautiful spe-