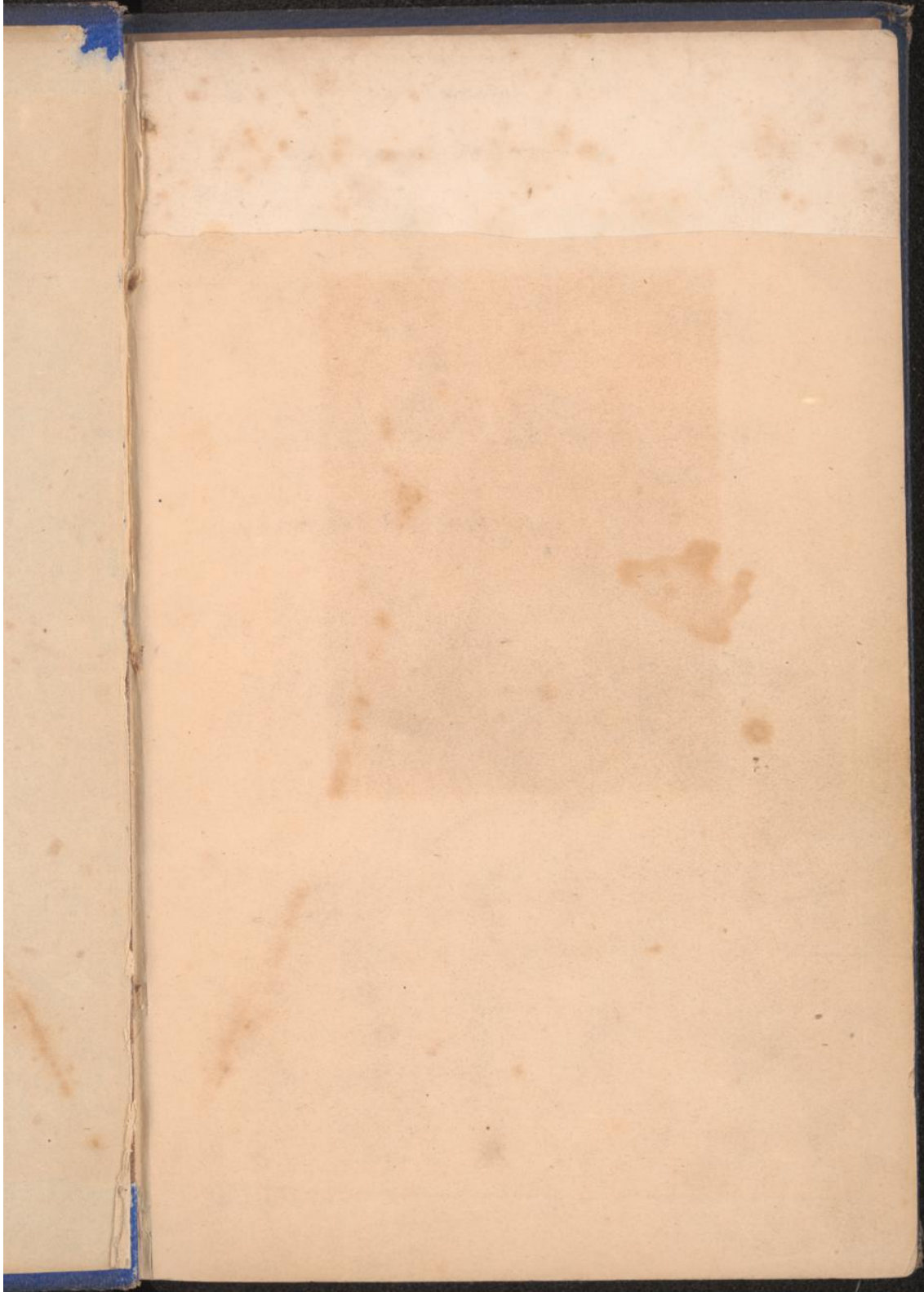


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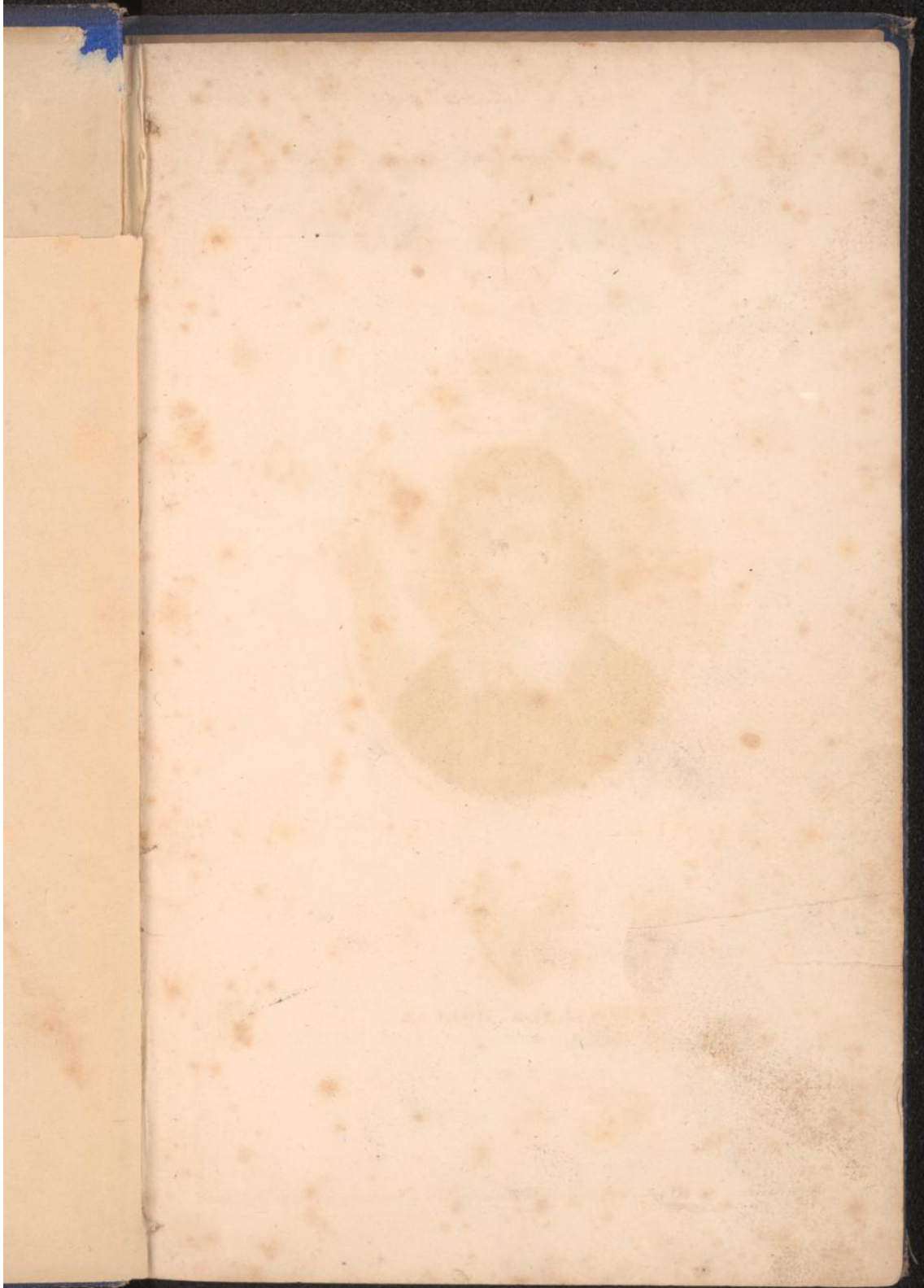


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WENCESLAUS HOLLAR.

THE  
**Dance of Death;**

FROM THE ORIGINAL DESIGNS OF

HANS HOLBEIN.

---

ILLUSTRATED WITH THIRTY-THREE PLATES,

ENGRAVED BY

W. HOLLAR.

WITH

DESCRIPTIONS IN ENGLISH AND FRENCH.

---

What's yet in this  
That bears the name of life? yet in this life  
Lie hid more thousand deaths; yet death we fear,  
That makes these odds all even.

SHAKSPEARE.

---

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. COXHEAD, HOLYWELL-STREET, STRAND.

1816.

[Price 25s. in Boards.]

Printed by J. Coxhead, Holywell-street, Strand.

THE  
DANCE OF DEATH

FROM THE ORIGINAL DRAWING OF

JAMES GILBERT

ILLUSTRATED BY W. W. DOLLAIR

W. W. DOLLAIR

THE

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE

That from the year of 1850 to 1860  
the first and second editions of the  
book were published in New York.

NEW YORK

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. COXHEAD, HOLBORN VICTORIA CHURCH

1861

[Price 2s. 6d. bound]

London: Printed by B. M'Millan,  
Bow Street, Covent Garden. }







HANS HOLBEIN PAINTER.

LIFE OF HOLBEIN.

**JOHN HOLBEIN**, better known by his German name Hans Holbein, a most excellent painter, was born, according to some accounts, at Basil in Switzerland in 1498; but Charles Patin places his birth three years earlier, supposing it very improbable that he could have arrived at such maturity of judgment and perfection in painting, as he shewed in 1514 and 1516, if he had been born so late as 1498. He learned the rudiments of his art from his father John Holbein, who was a painter, and had removed from Augsburg to Basil; but the superiority of his genius soon raised him above his master. He painted our Saviour's Passion in the town-house of Basil;

and in the fish-market of the same town, a Dance of peasants, and Death's dance. These pieces were exceedingly striking to the curious; and Erasmus was so affected with them, that he requested of him to draw his picture, and was ever after his friend. Holbein, in the mean time, though a great genius and fine artist, had no elegance or delicacy of manners, but was given to wine and revelling company; for which he met with the following gentle rebuke from Erasmus. When Erasmus wrote his "*Moriæ Encomium*," or "*Panegyric upon Folly*," he sent a copy of it to Hans Holbein, who was so pleased with the several descriptions of folly there given, that he designed them all in the margin; and where he had not room to draw the whole figures, pasted a piece of paper to the leaves. He then returned the book to Erasmus, who seeing that he had represented an amorous fool by the figure of a fat Dutch lover, hugging his bottle and his lass, wrote under it, "*Hans Holbein*," and so sent it back to the

painter. Holbein, however, to be revenged of him, drew the picture of Erasmus for a musty book-worm, who busied himself in scraping together old MSS. and antiquities, and wrote under it "Adagia."

It is said, that an English nobleman, who accidentally saw some of Holbein's performances at Basil, invited him to come to England, where his art was in high esteem; and promised him great encouragement from Henry VIII.; but Holbein was too much engaged in his pleasures to listen to so advantageous a proposal. A few years after, however, moved by the necessities to which an increased family and his own mismanagement had reduced him, as well as by the persuasions of his friend Erasmus, who told him how improper a country his own was to do justice to his merit, he consented to go to England: and he consented the more readily, as he did not live on the happiest terms with his wife, who is said to have been a termagant. In his journey thither he stayed some days at Stras-

burg, and applying to a very great master in that city for work, was taken in, and ordered to give a specimen of his skill. Holbein finished a piece with great care, and painted a fly upon the most conspicuous part of it; after which he withdrew privily in the absence of his master, and pursued his journey. When the painter returned home, he was astonished at the beauty and elegance of the drawing; and especially at the fly, which, upon his first casting his eye upon it, he so far took for a real fly, that he endeavoured to remove it with his hand. He sent all over the city for his journeyman, who was now missing; but after many enquiries, found that he had been thus deceived by the famous Holbein. This story has been somewhat differently told, as if the painting was a portrait for one of his patrons at Basil, but the effect was the same, for before he was discovered, he had made his escape.

After almost begging his way to England, as Patin tells us, he found an easy admit-

tance to the lord-chancellor, Sir Thomas More, having brought with him Erasmus's picture, and letters recommendatory from him to that great man. Sir Thomas received him with all the joy imaginable, and kept him in his house between two and three years; during which time he drew Sir Thomas's picture, and those of many of his friends and relations. One day Holbein happening to mention the nobleman who had some years ago invited him to England, Sir Thomas was very solicitous to know who he was. Holbein replied, that he had indeed forgot his title, but remembered his face so well, that he thought he could draw his likeness; and this he did so very strongly, that the nobleman, it is said, was immediately known by it. This nobleman, some think, was the Earl of Arundel, others the Earl of Surrey. The Chancellor, having now sufficiently enriched his apartments with Holbein's productions, adopted the following method to introduce him to Henry VIII. He invited the king to an en-

tainment, and hung up all Holbein's pieces, disposed in the best order, and in the best light, in the great hall of his house. The king, upon his first entrance, was so charmed with the sight of them, that he asked, "Whether such an artist were now alive, and to be had for money?" on which Sir Thomas presented Holbein to the king, who immediately took him into his service, with a salary of 200 florins, and brought him into great esteem with the nobility of the kingdom. The king from time to time manifested the great value he had for him; and upon the death of Queen Jane, his third wife, sent him into Flanders, to draw the picture of the Duchess Dowager of Milan, widow of Francis Sforza, whom the Emperor Charles V. had recommended to him for a fourth wife; but the king's defection from the See of Rome happening about that time, he rather chose to match with a protestant princess. Cromwell, then his prime minister (for Sir Thomas More had been removed, and beheaded), proposed Anne of



Cleves to him ; but the king was not inclined to the match, till her picture, which Holbein had also drawn, was presented to him. There, as Lord Herbert of Cherbury says, she was represented so very charming, that the king immediately resolved to marry her; and thus Holbein was unwittingly the cause of the ruin of his patron Cromwell, whom the king never forgave for introducing him to Anne of Cleves.

In England Holbein drew a vast number of admirable portraits; among others, those of Henry VII. and Henry VIII. on the wall of the palace at Whitehall, which perished when it was burnt, though some endeavours were made to remove that part of the wall on which the pictures were drawn. There happened, however, an affair in England, which might have been fatal to Holbein, if the king had not protected him. On the report of his character, a nobleman of the first quality wanted one day to see him, when he was drawing a figure after the life. Holbein,

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in answer, begged his lordship to defer the honour of his visit to another day ; which the nobleman taking for an affront, came, broke open the door, and very rudely went up stairs. Holbein, hearing a noise, left his chamber ; and meeting the lord at his door, fell into a violent passion, and pushed him backwards from the top of the stairs to the bottom. Considering, however, immediately what he had done, he escaped from the tumult he had raised, and made the best of his way to the king. The nobleman, much hurt, though not so much as he pretended, was there soon after him ; and upon opening his grievance, the king ordered Holbein to ask pardon for his offence. But this only irritated the nobleman the more, who would not be satisfied with less than his life ; upon which the king sternly replied, “ My lord, you have not now to do with Holbein, but with me ; whatever punishment you may contrive by way of revenge against him, shall assuredly be inflicted upon yourself : remember,

pray, my lord, that I can, whenever I please, make seven lords of seven ploughmen, but I cannot make one Holbein even of seven lords."

We cannot undertake to give a list of Holbein's works, but this may be seen in Walpole's Anecdotes. Soon after the accession of the late king, a noble collection of his drawings was found in a bureau at Kensington, amounting to eighty-nine. These, which are of exquisite merit, have been admirably imitated in engraving, in a work published lately by John Chamberlaine, F. S. A. certainly one of the most splendid books, and most interesting collections of portraits ever executed. Holbein painted equally well in oil, water-colours, and distemper, in large and in miniature: but he had never practised the art of painting in miniature, till he resided in England, and learned it from Lucas Cornelii; though he afterwards carried it to its highest perfection. His paintings of that kind have all the force of oil-colours, and are

finished with the utmost delicacy. In general, he painted on a green ground, but in his small pictures frequently he painted on a blue. The invention of Holbein was surprisingly fruitful, and often poetical; his execution was remarkably quick, and his application indefatigable. His pencil was exceedingly delicate; his colouring had a wonderful degree of force; he finished his pictures with exquisite neatness; and his carnations were life itself. His genuine works are always distinguishable by the true, round, lively imitation of flesh, visible in all his portraits, and also by the amazing delicacy of his finishing.

It is observed by most authors, that Holbein always painted with his left hand; though Walpole objects against that tradition, (what he considers as a proof), that in a portrait of Holbein painted by himself, which was in the Arundelian collection, he is represented holding the pencil in the right hand. But that evidence cannot be sufficient to set aside so general a testimony of the most authentic

writers on this subject: because, although habit and practice might enable him to handle the pencil familiarly with his left hand, yet, as it is so unusual, it must have had but an unseemly and awkward appearance in a picture; which probably might have been his real inducement for representing himself without such a particularity. Besides, the writer of Holbein's life, at the end of the treatise by De Piles, mentions a print by Hollar, still extant, which describes Holbein drawing with his left hand. Nor is it so extraordinary or incredible a circumstance; for other artists are remarked for the very same habit; particularly Mozzo of Antwerp, who worked with the left; and Amico Aspertino, as well as Ludovico Cangiagio, who worked equally well with both hands. This great artist died of the plague at London in 1554; some think at his lodgings in Whitehall, where he had lived from the time that the king became his patron, but Vertue rather thought at the Duke of Nor-

folk's house, in the priory of Christ church near Aldgate, then called Duke's-place. Strype says that he was buried in St. Catherine Cree church ; but this seems doubtful.

an unsteady and awkward appearance in a picture, which probably might have been his real inducement for representing himself without such a particularity. Besides, the writer of Holbein's life, at the end of the treatise by De Piles, mentions a print by Holbein still extant, which describes Holbein drawing with his left hand. Nor is it so extraordinary or incredible a circumstance; for other artists are remarked for the very same habit; particularly Marco of Anvers, who worked with the left; and Amico Aspertino, as well as Ludovico Caraglio, who worked equally well with both hands. This great artist died of the plague at London in 1551; some think at his lodgings in Whitehall, where he had fled from the time that the king became his patron, but Ver- the father thought at the Duke of Nor-

THE

**DANCE OF DEATH.**

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**THE** celebrity of a subject which has been distinguished by the labours of such artists as Holbein and Hollar, seems necessarily to demand some investigation of its origin\*.

In the dark ages of monkish bigotry and superstition, the deluded people, terrified into a belief that the fear of death was acceptable to the great Author of their existence, had placed

\* It would be a piece of injustice not to mention, that this has already been done in a very able manner, by a respected friend of the compiler of the present essay, in a little work, intitled "Emblems of Mortality," ornamented with copies in wood, of the Dance of Death, by J. Bewick, the brother of the admirable artist who executed the cuts to a history of quadrupeds, lately published. The work was printed for T. Hodgson, Clerkenwell, in 1789, 12mo. The editor of it will immediately perceive that no rivalry is here intended; that in the pursuit of a subject of this nature many of the same authorities must have naturally presented themselves, and in order to connect it properly, must again be of course adopted. Independently of these, the rest of this slight performance is only designed as supplemental.

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one of their principal gratifications in contemplating it amidst ideas the most horrid and disgusting: hence the frequent descriptions of mortality in all its shapes amongst their writers, and the representations of this kind, in their books of religious offices, and the paintings and sculptures of their ecclesiastic buildings. They had altogether lost sight of the consolatory doctrines of the Gospel, which regard death in no terrific point of view whatever; a discovery reserved for the discernment of modern and enlightened Christians, who contemplate scenes which excited gloom and melancholy in the minds of their forefathers, with the gratification of philosophic curiosity. Some exceptions, however, to this remark are not wanting, for we may yet trace the imbecility of former ages in the decorations of many of our monuments, tricked out in all the silly ornaments of deaths' heads and marrow-bones.

The most favourite subject of the kind, however, was what is usually denominated the Dance of Death, or a representation of Death in the act of leading all ranks and conditions of men to the grave; with gesticulations not a little bordering upon the grotesque, though probably without any view to provoke the mirth of the spectator in those times. One of the most ancient still existing, is that at Basil in Switzer-



land, in the church-yard formerly belonging to the convent of Dominicans, which is said to have been painted at the instance of the fathers and prelates assisting at the grand council at Basil, in 1431, in memory of a plague which happened soon afterwards, and during its continuance. The name of the painter is unknown, and will probably ever remain so, for no dependence can be had upon vague conjectures of those who, without any authority, or even the smallest probability, have attempted to ascertain it. To refute, or even to mention the blunders which have been committed by most of the travellers who have described the town of Basil, when they discuss this subject, would fill a volume: it will be sufficient to notice an assertion of Keysler, that the painting was executed by Hans Bok, a celebrated painter of this place, who, however, from the testimony of Scheutzer, in his Itinerary, was not born till 1584. From some inscriptions on the spot it appears to have been retouched, or perhaps renewed, in 1566 and 1616; the first time probably by Hans Klauber, whose name occurs in the lines addressed by Death to the Painter.

It has been frequently supposed that the Basil painting was the first of the kind; but this is extremely doubtful, from the knowledge we have of many others of apparently equal antiquity.

Many of the bridges in Germany and Switzerland were ornamented in this manner, a specimen of which is still to be seen at Lucerne; and it is probable that almost every church of eminence was decorated with a Dance of Death. In the cloisters of St. Innocent's church at Paris, in those belonging to the old cathedral of St. Paul at London\*, and in St. Mary's church at Berlin, these paintings were to be seen. At Klingenthal, a convent in the Little Basil, are the remains of a Dance of Death, differently designed from that at the Dominicans, and thought to be more ancient. The figures remaining till very lately in Hungerford's chapel, in the cathedral at Salisbury, and known by the title of Death and the Young Man, were undoubtedly part of a Death's Dance, as might be further insisted on from the fragment of another compartment which was close to them. In the church at Hexham, in Northumberland, are the remains of a Death's Dance; and at Feschamps, in Normandy, it is carved in stone, between the pillars of a church; the figures are about eighteen inches high. Even fragments of painted glass,

\* On the walls of a cloister on the north side of St. Paul's, called *Pardon-church-haugh*, was painted the Machabre, or Dance of Death, a common subject on the walls of cloisters or religious places. This was a single piece, a long train of all orders of men, from the Pope to the lowest of human beings; each figure has as his partner, Death; the first shaking his

whereon this subject has been depicted, with old English verses over the figures, may contribute to shew how very common it has been in our own country. P. C. Hilcher, in a tract printed at Dresden in 1705, has taken notice of other Dances of Death at Dresden, Annaberg, Leipzig, and Berne. Dr. Nugent has described one in St. Mary's church at Lubeck, which he states to have been painted in 1463.

The origin of all these is perhaps to be sought for in an ancient pageant, or religious farce, invented by the clergy, for the purpose of at once amusing and keeping the people in ignorance. In this all ranks and conditions of life were personated and mixed together in a general dance, in the course of which every one in his turn vanishes from the scene, to shew that none were exempted from the stroke of death. This dance was performed in the churches, and can be traced back

remembering hour-glass. Our old poet Lydgate, who flourished in the year 1430, translated a poem on the subject, from the French verses which attended a painting of the same kind about St. Innocent's cloister, at Paris. The original verses were made by Macaber, a German, in his own language. This shews the antiquity of the subject, and the origin of the hint from which Holbein composed his famous painting at Basil.

This cloister, the dance, and innumerable fine monuments, (for here were crowded by far the most superb) fell victims to the sacrilege of the Protector Somerset, who demolished the whole, and carried the materials to his palace then erecting in the Strand.—*Pennant's London*, vol. ii. p. 135.

as far as the year 1424\* ; it was called the Dance of Macaber, from a German poet of that name, who first composed some verses under the same title. Of this person very little is known, but Fabricius thinks the poem more ancient than the paintings†. His work has been translated into Latin and French, in the last of which languages there are some very ancient and very modern editions.

The earliest allusion to the subject, but whether to the above-mentioned farce or to the paintings seems uncertain, is in the following lines, from the Visions of Pierce the Plowman, who wrote about 1350.

Death came drivynge after, and all to dust pashed,  
 Kynges and kaysers, knightes and popes  
 Learned and lewde, he ne let no man stande  
 That he hitte even, he never stode after.  
 Many a lovely ladie, and lemman of knights  
 Swonned and sweltd, for sorrow of death dyntes.

When the arts of printing and engraving became established, various copies of the Dance of Macaber made their appearance, particularly in the Hours, Breviaries, Missals, and other service books of the church, few of which were unaccompanied with a Dance of Death ; and in these the designs sometimes varied. Many of our own service books for the use of Salisbury were thus

\* Glossar. Carpentier, tom. ii, 1103.

† Bibl. med. & infim, Ætat.

decorated, and the fashion at length terminated in a book of Christian prayers, printed more than once during the reign of Elizabeth, since which time nothing of the kind has appeared. In all these are to be found the same dull and uniform representation of Death leading a single figure, without much attempt at character or execution, until at length there appeared, in 1538, a book, entitled "Les simulachres & historiees faces de la Mort, autant elegamment pourtraictes, que artificiellement imaginees." It was printed at Lyons by Melchior and Gasper Trechsel, and is accompanied with forty-one of the most beautiful groups of figures that can be well conceived, both for their composition and execution, being most delicately cut on wood, and surpassing in this branch of art almost every thing of the kind that has appeared before or since. This work was often republished, as well in the French, as in the Latin and Italian languages\*, and has been

\* The following is presumed to be a tolerably correct list of the various editions of this book :

"Simulachres & Historiees faces de la Mort, &c." Lugd. 1538, 4to.

"Imagines de Morte." Lugd. 1542, 12mo.

"Imagines Mortis." Lugd. 1545, 12mo.

"Imagines Mortis." Lugd. 1547, 12mo.

"Les Images de la Morte." Lyon, 1547, 12mo.

"Simolachri, Historie, e Figure de la Morte." Lyone, 1549, 12mo. with an address from the printer, in which he complains of some attempts having been made in other countries to imitate the cuts to his book, and informs the reader that he

usually denominated by most of the writers upon the arts of painting and engraving, as well as by many travellers, *Holbein's Dance of Death*. It is extremely clear, however, that Holbein did not *invent* these subjects, for it appears in a dedication, which is only to be found in the first edition of this work, that the painter was then dead, and that he had not lived to finish some of the designs, which, however, afterwards appeared in a subsequent edition. The painter must therefore have died before 1538, and it is well known that Holbein was at this time living, and continued so until 1555. Unluckily no evidence whatever, nor even tradition, has been preserved relating to this great artist, and it is feared that he will ever remain undiscovered.

had caused many more cuts to be added to this edition than had appeared in any other; a declaration not a little extraordinary, for both the editions of 1547, which were also published by this person, have the same number of cuts, and contain twelve more than the three first editions. These additional cuts were probably executed from the unfinished designs spoken of in the dedication to the first edition. Four of them, being groups of children playing, are rather foreign to the subject, but are evidently done by the same artist who executed the others.

"*Icones Mortis*." Basil, 1554, 12mo.

"*Les Images de la Mort, auxquelles sont adjoustees dix sept figures*." Lyon, 1562, 12mo. There are but five additional figures to this edition, the other twelve being what had already appeared, making in the whole seventeen more than in the first edition. Of these five cuts, which have all the delicacy of the others, three are groups of boys.

"*De Doodt vermaskert*," &c. Antwerp, 1654, 12mo.

After what has been said, it becomes necessary to attempt at least to give some reason for the almost universal opinion, that these designs were the offspring of Holbein's pencil. Most of those writers who have described the town of Basil, as well as the compilers of the lives of the painters, speak of a Dance of Death by Holbein, some referring to the old Dance of Macaber, and others to the more modern one; but it is not difficult to see, that they have but transcribed from each other, without taking any pains to examine the subject. Certain it is, however, that Holbein did paint a Death's Dance in its improved state, and likewise more than once. Bishop Burnet, in his travels in Switzerland, speaks of a Dance of Death, painted by Holbein, "on the walls of a house where he used to drink," which was then so worn out, that very little was to be seen except shapes and postures. He then mentions the old Death's Dance at the Dominicans' convent\*, which, he says, was "so worn out some time ago, that they ordered the best painter they had to lay new colours on it; but this is so ill done, that one had rather see the dead shadows of Holbein's pencil, (*i. e.* on the walls of the house), than this coarse work."

This account is corroborated by Keysler, who adds, that the painting on the house was then *entirely* obliterated. Patin, in his travels, also

\* By mistake called the convent of the Augustinians.

speaks of a house at Basil, curiously painted by Holbein, but does not mention the subject; it was probably the same as Burnet saw. These are the only travellers who have spoken upon this subject with any degree of accuracy, and fortunately their testimony throws much light upon it.

To the book already mentioned to have been published by the Trechsels, at Lyons, they sometimes annexed another, which was in some degree connected with it, and appears to have been printed by them the following year. This was entitled, "Historiarum veteris testamenti icones," the cuts of which are in some instances much inferior to the others, and apparently by a different artist. The designs of these are indisputably by Holbein, as appears from some verses before the book, composed by Nicolas Bourbon, a cotemporary poet, who also wrote some lines upon a Dance of Death painted by Holbein\*. To these cuts to the Bible, are prefixed the first four which occur in the Dance of Death, as they likewise belong to the subject, and represent the creation and fall of man; but they are different in size, and were added, not only from the analogy of the subjects, but from the circumstance of their being already in the hands of the printer; and thus, from an odd coincidence of things, as well as a palpable confusion of the respective verses of Bourbon, seems to have originated an

\* Borbonii Nugarum libri octo. Basil 1540, 12mo. p. 445.



opinion, that Holbein *invented* the Dance of Death.

But it has not only been asserted that Holbein designed, but that he *engraved*, or rather *cut* this Dance of Death on wood. That he practised this art, nay, that he excelled in it, there is reason to believe, from some specimens that have been preserved, and which bear on them the unequivocal marks of H. H. & HANS. HOLBEN\*. A set of cuts with the latter mark occurs in Archbishop Cranmer's Catechism, printed by Walter Lyne in 1548; and although the composition of these is extremely good, their execution is not only inferior to the Dance of Death, but entirely different in its manner: and the mark of HB which is to be seen upon one of the cuts in this latter work, has been ascribed without any authority to Holbein, upon the strength of the vague opinions concerning his interference with the Dance of Death †.

The great popularity and success of these cuts very soon excited many imitations of them both in copper and on blocks. In 1541, Aldegrever engraved eight of them, but with very material alterations. Other editions of the *Imagines Mortuorum*

\* It is not however impossible that Holbein, in putting his mark upon these cuts, might only intend to shew that he designed them, or drew the subject upon the blocks.

† This mark is also given by Professor Christ, in his *Dictionnaire des Monogrammes*, to Hans Lautensack, and Hans Lederer, persons of whom absolutely nothing is known.

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tis, which had been first published under that title in 1545, appeared in 1555, 1566, 1573, and probably at many other times; these were also accompanied with cuts in wood by a very eminent but unknown artist, whose mark is *A*. This mark is also to be found in some of the Emblems of Sambucus and Lejeune, in some initial letters to Grafton's Chronicle, and in other cuts executed during the sixteenth century\*. It is not a little remarkable, that so late as the year 1654, there appeared a Dutch book, printed

\* The inaccurate Papillon, who in matters of historical discussion is hardly ever to be trusted, has asserted in his "Traité de la gravure en bois," that this is the mark of Silvius Antonianus, or Antoniano. Having found it upon some cuts, in an edition of Faerno's fables, printed at Antwerp in 1567, with a dedication to Cardinal Borromeo, by Silvius Antoniano, he instantly conceived that he had discovered the name of the artist in that of the author of the dedication. The fact is, that Antoniano was no engraver, but a professor of belles lettres at Rome, afterwards secretary to Pope Pius V. and at length a Cardinal. His dedication had already appeared in the first edition of these fables in 1564, which has a different set of cuts engraved on copper. Another of Papillon's blunders is equally curious. He had seen an edition of the Emblems of Sambucus with cuts, on which the same mark occurs. In this book is a fine portrait of the author, with his dog, under whom is the word BOMBO, which Papillon gravely informs us is the name of the engraver, and again refers to it on another cut of one of the Emblems under a dog also. Had he read the verses belonging to this particular Emblem, he would have immediately seen that it was nothing more than the *dog's* name, as Sambucus himself declares, whilst he pays a laudable tribute to the attachment of the faithful companion of his travels.

at Antwerp, where this artist worked, entitled, "Doodt vermaskert, or Death masked," accompanied with eighteen cuts of the Dance of Death, which in the title page are ascribed to Holbein. They are all, except three, impressions from the identical blocks of the beautiful and original cuts of this subject; but the above-mentioned artist has had the effrontery to put his mark, together with the figure of a graving tool or knife, upon several of them. It is, however, possible that he might have repaired them, as some of the smaller lines, which in former impressions seem to have been injured, are here much stronger.

It might be tedious to describe *all the imitations* of the Dance of Death which have appeared at different times, as they are exceedingly numerous; but it would be unpardonable not to notice an alphabet of initial letters with this subject, which for humour, and excellence of design, are even superior to the celebrated one; and with respect to execution, especially when their minuteness is considered, being less than an inch square, absolutely wonderful. Their composition is entirely different from that of any of the others, and one of them is extremely indecent. They appear to have been done at Basil; for in the public library there is preserved a *sheet*, whereon are printed three alphabets, viz. the one above-mentioned, another of boys at play, and the third, a dance of peasants, &c. The designs of some of the last are the same as those in a similar Dance

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by Holbein, formerly painted on a house at Basil, and of which some drawings are still preserved; and it is therefore not improbable that he also designed the Dance of Death for these initials. They have apparently been struck off as proofs or patterns for some bookseller\*, and at the bottom of the sheet is the mark HL with the words "Hans Lützelburger Formschneider, (*i. e.* block-cutter), in Basel." In this manner has been preserved the name of a most exquisite artist, whom, from the similarity of style and subject, there is every reason to suppose the person who executed the fine cuts of the first Dance of Death. As he worked after the designs of Holbein, it is also probable that the painter might have invented *some* of the seventeen subjects which appeared in continuation of the original work, and that Lützelburger also cut them for the subsequent editions. From the extreme delicacy with which the initials with the Dance of Death are executed, there is reason to suppose that they were not cut upon blocks of wood, but of metal, as was probably the larger work of the same subject; and in support of this conjecture it may be observed, that blocks of this kind are still preserved in the cabinets of the curious.

\* They were actually used by Cratander, a printer at Basil; and other initial letters, with Dances of Death, are to be seen in books printed at Zurich, Strasburg, and Vienna, in the sixteenth century. All the alphabets are in the possession of the compiler of this essay, but they have not the monogram.

In 1780, Chretien de Mechel, a well-known artist and printseller at Basil, published forty-five engravings of a Death's Dance, as part of the works of Holbein, of which he intends to give a series. Mr. Coxe, in his travels, has given some account of this work, and informs us that they are done after some small drawings by Holbein, sketched with a pen, and slightly shaded with Indian ink; that these drawings were purchased by Mr. Fleischman, of Strasburg, at Crozat's sale at Paris, and are now in the collection of Prince Gallitzin, Minister from the Empress of Russia to the court of Vienna, at which last place he had frequent opportunities of seeing and admiring them. He further adds, that Hollar copied these drawings, an opinion which will admit of some doubt. Mons. De Mechel's remark, that from the dresses and character of several of the figures, it is probable the drawings were sketched in England, as well as Mr. Coxe's conjecture that they were in the Arundelian collection, will appear but slightly founded to any one conversant in the dresses of the French and German nations at that period, to which they bear at least an equal resemblance: again, one of the cuts represents a King sitting at table under a canopy, powdered with Fleurs de lis, whose figure has a remarkable affinity to the portraits of Francis I. If these drawings were copied from the celebrated wooden cuts, they must have

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been done after the year 1547, as eight of them did not appear till that time.

But it has entirely escaped the knowledge of all the biographers of Holbein, that he painted a Dance of Death in fresco, upon the walls of the palace of Whitehall, which was consumed by fire in 1697. This curious fact is ascertained from two sets of nineteen very indifferent etchings from the wooden cuts, by one Nieuhoff; they were never published, but copies of them presented to the artist's friends, with manuscript dedications in the Dutch language, in which he speaks of the above-mentioned paintings at Whitehall. The book has the following title engraved in a border: "Imagines Mortis, or the Dead Dance of Hans Holbeyn, Painter of King Henry the VIIIth." The author, in one of these dedications, addressed to the Right Honourable William Benting, informs him, that "he had met with the scarce little work of H. Holbeyn in wood, which he had himself painted as large as life in fresco, on the walls of Whitehall; that he had followed the original as nearly as possible, and had presumed to lay his copy before him as being born in the same palace; that he considered the partiality which every one has for the place of his nativity, and that therefore an account of what was curious and remarkable therein, and of what was then no more, as being destroyed by a fatal fire, must of course prove acceptable, particularly as there were hardly any more re-

mains of the palace left than his own dwelling." He then states, that the design of the painter resembled that of the founder of the Greek monarchy, who ordered these words to be written, to remind him of his mortality: "Remember, Philip, that thou art a man!" and proceeds to describe in a very quaint manner the different subjects of his work. The dedication to the other copy is nearly in similar words, and addressed to Mynheer Heymans, who appears, in consideration of his singular merits, to have had a dwelling assigned him in the palace at Whitehall. From the hand-writing and Dutch names in this work, it is evidently of the time of William III. but of the artist no memorial is preserved; however, the importance of the fact which he has recorded, will render him a valuable personage in the opinion of the lovers of the arts.

After what has been said then, it is to be hoped that no additional evidence will be requisite to shew that Holbein did not invent the subjects, nor execute the cuts belonging to the Dance of Death, which is usually ascribed to him; that he painted it, however, and most assuredly more than once, seems to be beyond the possibility of doubt.

It only remains to give some account of the prints which are the immediate object of this publication, and to which it is hoped the preceding introduction will not have appeared uninteresting. It has been commonly supposed that Hollar copied these prints from the original cuts; but Mr.

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Coxe\* thinks he followed the drawings engraved by De Mechel, which he imagines to have been in the Arundelian collection. Both these opinions seem erroneous; for many of Hollar's prints are materially different, as well from the cuts as the drawings; and are, with two or three exceptions, very close copies of the cuts already mentioned to have been first published in 1555, with the mark of *A* †. He must therefore have either had before him both the sets of wooden cuts, or have copied the paintings at Whitehall; for his acknowledged fidelity would have hardly suffered him to depart from his originals, whatever they were, and as they now remain, they are not correct copies of any single existing model.

Hollar's prints were first published in 1651 ‡, with borders designed by Abraham à Diepenbeke, and afterwards without the borders. In this latter impression the letters *B. i.* occur upon every print, and are intended for "Holbein invenit," as ap-

\* Travels in Switzerland.

† It is not a little remarkable, that almost the same variations from the original cuts, are to be found in those of the edition of 1555, in De Mechel's prints, and in Hollar's etchings; a circumstance which renders it probable that these last were all copied from the same originals, which might have been the work of Holbein, to whom the variations may be likewise attributed.

‡ In 1682 there appeared engraved copies of the Dance of Death, in a work entitled "Theatrum mortis humanæ," by J. Weichard. These engravings are within borders of fruit, flowers, and animals, which are executed with an uncommon degree of elegance.



pears from some other of Hollar's prints, which have upon them these words at length. No panegyric is here wanting upon the works of this admirable artist; they are sufficiently known and esteemed by every collector of taste, and particularly his Dance of Death. The plates, which appear to have been but little used, have been till lately preserved in a noble family, and impressions from them are once more presented to the public, without the least alteration\*.

Vertue, in his description of Hollar's works, mentions that he engraved a reverse of the first print, an additional one without a border, representing the rich man disregarding the prayers of the poor; and three others from the *set after Holbein*, with four Latin verses at bottom. He also engraved the six first letters of the alphabet, adorned with small figures of a Death's Dance, and one large plate of the same subject for Dugdale's St. Paul's, and the Monasticon; but this last plate is only a copy from an old wooden cut prefixed to Lydgate's Dance of Macaber, at the end of his Fall of Princes, printed by Tottell in 1554, and was not intended to represent the Dance of Death at St. Paul's, as Mr. Warton has supposed†, but only as an emblematical frontispiece to the verses.

\* In the present edition, however, it was found requisite that the plates should be retouched, and it has been done with the utmost attention to the preservation of their original spirit and character.

† Observ. on Spencer, vol. ii. 117.

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† Observ. on Spenser, vol. II. 117.

DESCRIPTIONS

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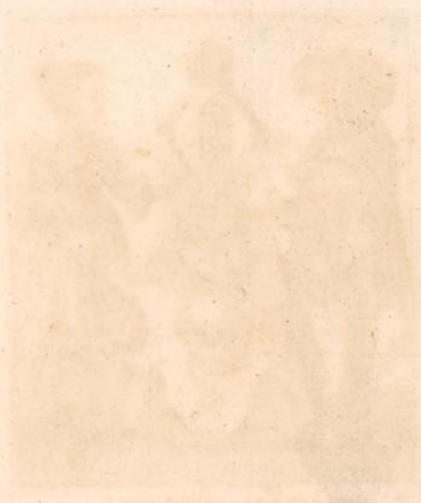
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DESCRIPTIONS  
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MORTALIVM NOBILITAS  
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## PLATE I.—THE FRONTISPIECE.

IT has been supposed by Papillon, without the least authority, or even probability, that the two figures represent the persons for whom Holbein painted this work. It has been already shewn that Holbein did not design this plate. It is altogether emblematical, and appears to be an heraldical representation of mortality, viz. a tattered shield, surmounted with a death's head; the crest, an hour-glass between two arms of a skeleton, holding part of a skull. The two figures are probably intended for supporters, and represent the dress of the Swiss Nobility of the sixteenth century. The "MORTALIVM NOBILITAS" was added by Hollar, and is a very concise and admirable explanation of the subject.

PLANCHE I.—LE FRONTISPIECE.

Hollair a commenté ces scènes de la vie par celle qui eut tant d'influence sur toutes les autres. La Mère du genre humain, tient dans sa main droite, la pomme fatale qu'elle vient de recevoir du serpent à tête de jeune homme. Adam en cueille en même tems une autre, excitée par les sollicitations de la trop crédule Eve, qui lui montre celle qu'elle a reçue.

## PLATE II.—SIN.

Because thou hast harkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake, &c. GEN. iii. 17.

HOLBEIN has begun the scenes of life by that which had such influence on all the rest. The Mother of the human race holds in her right hand, the fatal apple, which she has just received from the serpent with a young man's head; and Adam, at the same time, is plucking another, enticed by the solicitations of the too credulous Eve, who shews him the one she has received.

## PLANCHE II.—LE PECHE.

HOLBEIN a commencé ces scènes de la vie par celle qui eut tant d'influence sur toutes les autres. La Mère du genre humain, tient dans sa main droite, la pomme fatale qu'elle vient de recevoir du serpent à tête de jeune homme, & Adam en cueille en même tems une autre, excité par les sollicitations de la trop crédule Eve, qui lui montre celle qu'elle a reçue.



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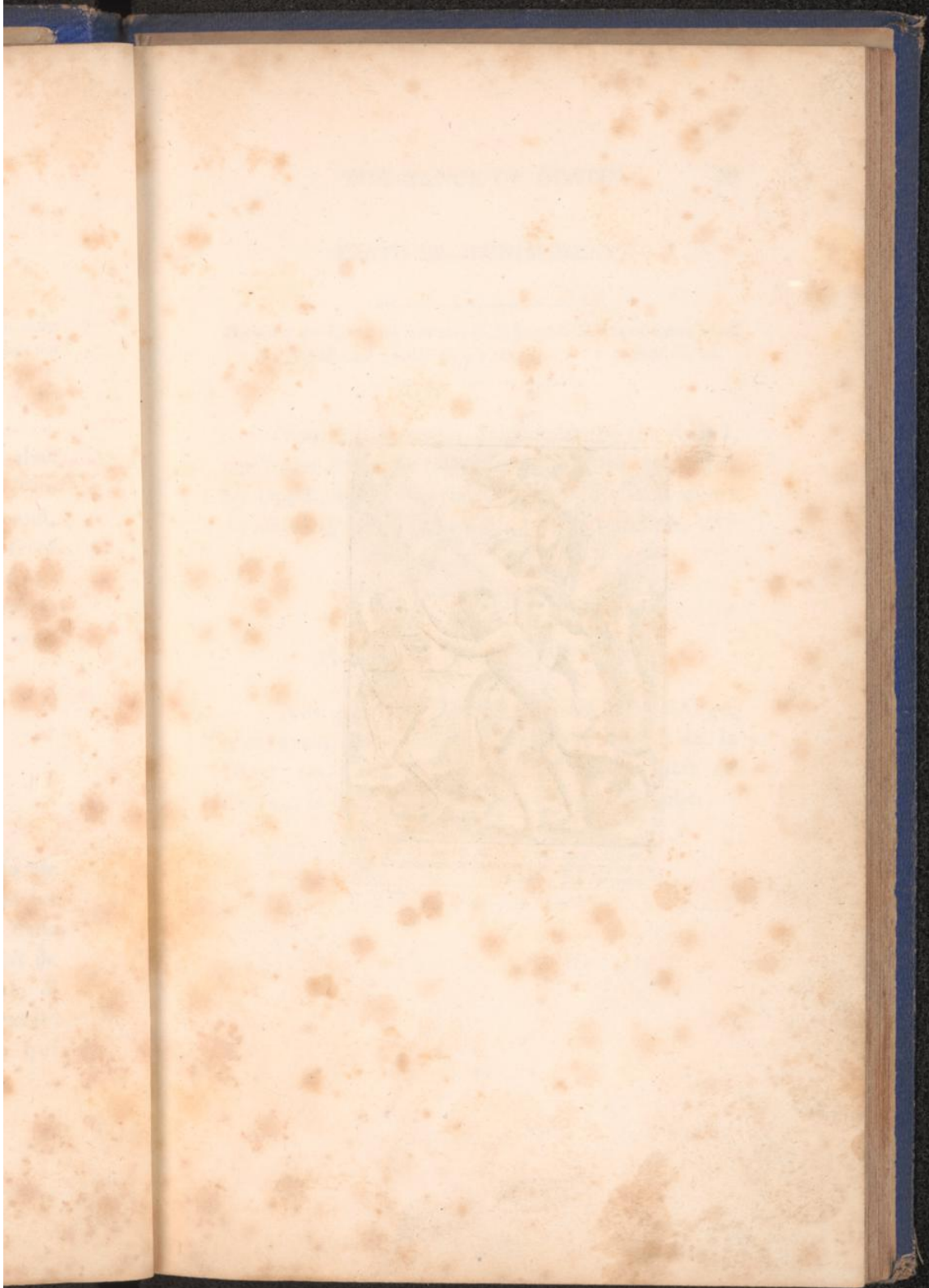
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Emitit eum Dominus Deus de paradiso voluptatis, ut operaretur terram, de qua inaptus est. Geni. 3.

## PLATE III.—PUNISHMENT.

Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till  
the ground from whence he was taken. GEN. iii. 23.

Our first Parents, driven out by the Angel,  
are flying from the terrestrial Paradise, preceded  
by Death, who is playing on the fiddle, and shews  
by dancing, the joy he feels for his triumph.

## PLANCHE III.—LA PUNITION.

Nos premiers Parens chassés par l'Ange,  
s'enfuient du Paradis terrestre précédés de la  
Mort, qui joue de la guitare, & démontre en  
dansant la joie qu'elle ressent de son triomphe.

## PLATE IV.—CONDEMNATION TO LABOUR.

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Cursed is the earth for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. GEN. iii. 17.

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HOLBEIN, to mark at once the species of labour which is the lot of man, and that which falls to the share of the woman, represents Adam employed in rooting up a tree, along with Death, who helps him with all his might; and at a little distance Eve suckling her child, and holding a distaff.

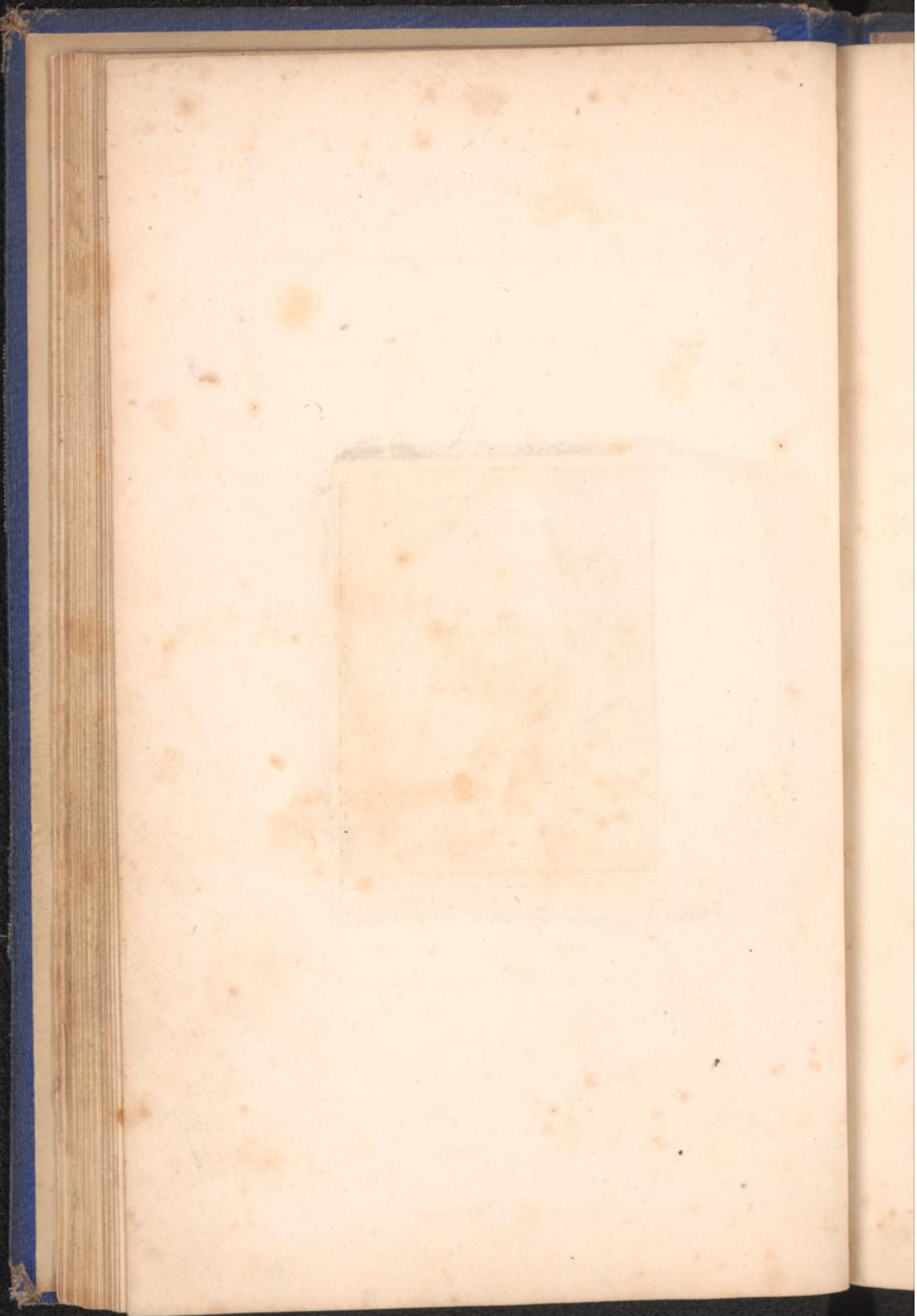
PLANCHE IV.—LA CONDEMNATION AU TRAVAIL.

HOLBEIN, pour marquer en même tems le genre de travail qui est le partage de l'homme, & celui qui est le partage de la femme, représente Adam occupé à déraciner un arbre, avec la Mort qui l'aide de toutes ses forces; & un peu plus loin, Eve allaitant son enfant & tenant une quenouille.

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Maledicta Terra in opere suo, in laboribus comederit  
cunctis diebus vite huius, donec revertatur, Gen. 3.  
4









Moriatur Sacerdos magnus. Isuc. 20.  
5 Et Episcopatum eius accipiat alter. Gal. 108.

PLATE V.—THE POPE CROWNING AN  
EMPEROR.

To bind his Princes at his pleasure, and teach his Senators wisdom.

PSALM CV. 22.

A CARDINAL and three bishops are assisting at the ceremony: Death is there also under the figure of two skeletons, one of which is dressed in cardinal's robes, the other embraces the Holy Father, with the right hand, and is leaning on a crutch with the left.

PLANCHE V.—LE PAPE COURONNANT UN  
EMPEREUR.

UN cardinal & trois évêques assistent à cette cérémonie: la Mort s'y trouve aussi sous la figure de deux squelettes, dont l'un est revêtu des habits de cardinal; l'autre embrasse le St. Père de la main droite, et s'appuie de la gauche sur une béquille.

## PLATE VI.—THE EMPEROR.

Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live.

ISAIAH, xxxviii. 1.

SEATED on a throne, and holding in his hand the sword of state, he is attentively listening to an advocate pleading in a soothing tone, against an unfortunate peasant, who trembling waits, in the most suppliant posture, the decree that is to determine his fate. Death at this moment displays all his power; he proudly takes possession of the bottom of the throne, and is carelessly leaning his arm on the Monarch's crown. The angry aspect with which the Emperor views the advocate and his two clients, who are seen standing with their heads uncovered, is a happy presage for the poor oppressed peasant.

## PLANCHE VI.—L'EMPEREUR.

ASSIS sur son trône, & tenant dans sa main le glaive de l'empire, il écoute attentivement un avocat qui plaide d'un ton doux contre un malheureux paysan, tandis que celui-ci attend en tremblant, & dans la posture la plus suppliante, l'arrêt qui doit décider de son sort. La Mort développe en ce moment toute sa puissance; elle occupe fièrement la fond du trône, & appuie nonchalemment son bras sur la couronne du Monarque. L'air irrité avec lequel le Chef de l'Empire regarde l'avocat & ses deux cliens qu'on voit, la tête découverte, à côté de leur défenseur, est d'un heureux présage pour le pauvre opprimé.

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Dispone domini sui, morieris cum tu, &  
non viues. *Mat. 23.* *Tu morieris.*  
& ibi erit ultra gloria tua. *Mat. 22.* 6







Gradiētes in superbis potest DEVS  
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## PLATE VII.—THE EMPRESS.

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And all the inhabitants of the Earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of Heaven, and among the inhabitants of the Earth. DANIEL, iv, 35.

---

In the midst of a pompous march, in the court of a great palace, Death, who seems here to do the office of gentleman-usher, leads this Princess to the brink of a grave, and shews her the bounds within which all her grandeur is to be confined.

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PLANCHE VII.—L'IMPERATRICE.

Au milieu d'une marche pompeuse, dans la cour d'un vaste palais, la Mort qui paroît faire ici l'office d'écuyer, amène cette Princesse jusqu'au bord d'une fosse sépulcrale, pour lui faire voir le terme auquel ses grandeurs viendront aboutir.

## PLATE VIII.—THE QUEEN.

---

Rise up, ye women that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters; give ear unto my speech. DANIEL, xxxii. 9.

---

DEATH, arrayed in the habits of folly, drags away violently this young Princess, just as she is coming out of her palace to enjoy the pleasure of walking. With terror painted in her countenance, she is making the air resound with mournful cries; the maid of honour, who accompanies her, agitated with the most violent despair, is imploring the aid of Heaven, while the buffoon is making vain efforts to defend her against Death, who holds aloft his glass, to shew that the fatal hour is come.

## PLANCHE VIII.—LA REINE.

LA Mort revêtue des habits de la folie, entraîne avec violence cette jeune Princesse, au moment qu'elle sort de son palais pour jouir du plaisir de la promenade; la terreur peinte sur le visage elle fait réentendre les airs de ses cris douloureux; la dame d'honneur qui l'accompagne, agitée du plus violent désespoir, implore le secours du Ciel, tandis que le bouffon de la Reine fait de vains efforts pour la défendre contre la Mort, qui tient son sable élevé pour faire voir que l'heure fatale est arrivée.

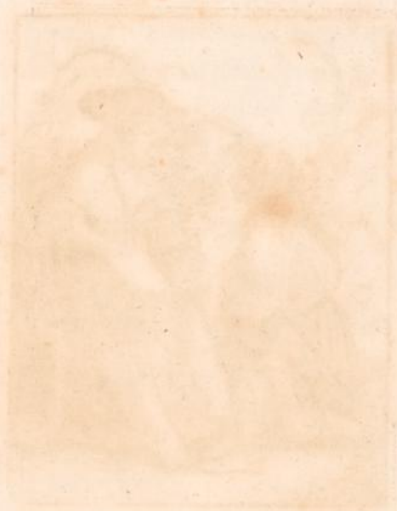


Mulier opulenta surgit, & audit Vocem me-  
am: Post dies & Annum, & vos conturbavit.

18

Loc. 32.







Ve qui iustificatis Impiuz pro muneribus  
& iustitiam iusti auferitis ab eo. Ier. 5.

## PLATE IX.—THE CARDINAL.

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Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness  
of the righteous from him. ISAIAH, v. 23.

---

A MESSENGER has just presented to him, on his knees, the bull that constitutes him a cardinal. Death seizes this moment to make his appearance, and seems to want to turn his hat upon his head. The messenger is holding in his right hand a tin box, hung by a strap, in which he had, no doubt, carried the bull, which the new-made cardinal holds in his right hand with the seals appended to it.

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 PLANCHE IX.—LE CARDINAL.

UN messenger vient de lui remettre, en faisant une gémflexion, la bulle qui le fait cardinal. La Mort saisit ce moment pour paroître, et semble vouloir lui faire tourner son chapeau sur la tête. Le messenger tient de la main droite une boîte de fer-blanc, pendue à une courroie, et dans laquelle il avoit sans doute apporté la bulle, que le cardinal nouvellement créé tient à la main droite avec les sceaux y affixés.

## PLATE X.—THE ELECTOR.

---

The King shall mourn, and the Prince shall be clothed with desolation,  
and the hands of the people of the land shall be troubled.

EZEKIEL, vii. 27.

---

THIS prince, as he is coming out of his palace with his courtiers, is accosted by a poor woman, who implores his help for herself and the infant she holds by the hand; but he, insensible to the distresses of the widow and orphan, refuses to listen, and is turning aside with a disdainful air to his courtiers. Death at this instant appears; and his severe aspect announces, that he is just about to make him repent his hard-heartedness.

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 PLANCHE X.—L'ELECTEUR.

CE prince sortant de son palais avec ses courtisans, est abordé par une pauvre femme qui implore son secours, pour elle & pour l'enfant qu'elle tient par la main; mais insensible aux besoins de la veuve & de l'orphelin, il refuse de l'écouter, & se tourne d'un air dédaigneux du côté de ses courtisans. La Mort paroît dans cet instant, & son air sévère annonce qu'elle va le faire repentir de la dureté.





Princeps induitur morore. Et quiesces  
re faciam superbiam potentium. *Castelli 7*







Peruciam Pastorem, & dispergen-  
tur oues gregis. Mat. 26. Luc. 14.

## PLATE XI.—THE BISHOP.

---

I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered  
abroad. MATT. xxvi, 31.

---

WITH an air of tranquillity and resignation, this worthy Pastor follows Death, who is leading him away laughing and dancing, whilst some shepherds, forgetting their flocks, are wandering here and there through the country, in despair for the loss of their chief. The sun, now ready to set, is just about to leave in darkness the ill-fated flocks, who, having no longer a conductor, will soon become the prey of wolves and other ravenous animals.

## PLANCHE XI.—L'ÉVÊQUE.

D'UN air de tranquillité & de résignation ce bon Pasteur suit la Mort, qui l'emmène en riant et en dansant, tandis que quelques bergers, oubliant leur troupeau, errent çà & là dans la campagne, désespérés de la perte de leur chef. Le soleil prêt à se coucher, va laisser dans les ténèbres ce malheureux troupeau, qui n'ayant plus de conducteur, sera bientôt la proie du loup & des autres bêtes féroces.

## PLATE XII.—THE COUNT.

---

Rebuke the company of spearmen; scatter thou the people that delight in war. PSALM lxxviii. 30.

---

DEATH here adds to his usual employment that of avenger of oppressed vassals. He is throwing with violence at the head of this Lord, his coat of arms, the dear object of his pride, under the weight of which he is ready to make him fall. He appears trampling under foot a flail, to mark his inhumanity to labourers, a class of society so necessary and respectable. On the ground also are to be seen the remains of the helmet which formed the crest of his arms, with the other ornaments that decorated them.

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PLANCHE XII.—LE COMTE.

LA Mort ajoute ici à l'exercice de son emploi accoutumé celui de vengeur de vassaux opprimés; elle jette avec violence à la tête de ce Seigneur ses armoiries, l'objet chéri de son orgueil, sous le poids desquelles elle va le faire périr. On le voit fouler à ses pieds un fléau, pour désigner son inhumanité envers les laboureurs, cette classe de la société si nécessaire & si respectable; on peut encore remarquer à terre, les débris du casque dont ses armoiries étoient surmontées avec d'autres ornemens qui les décoroient.

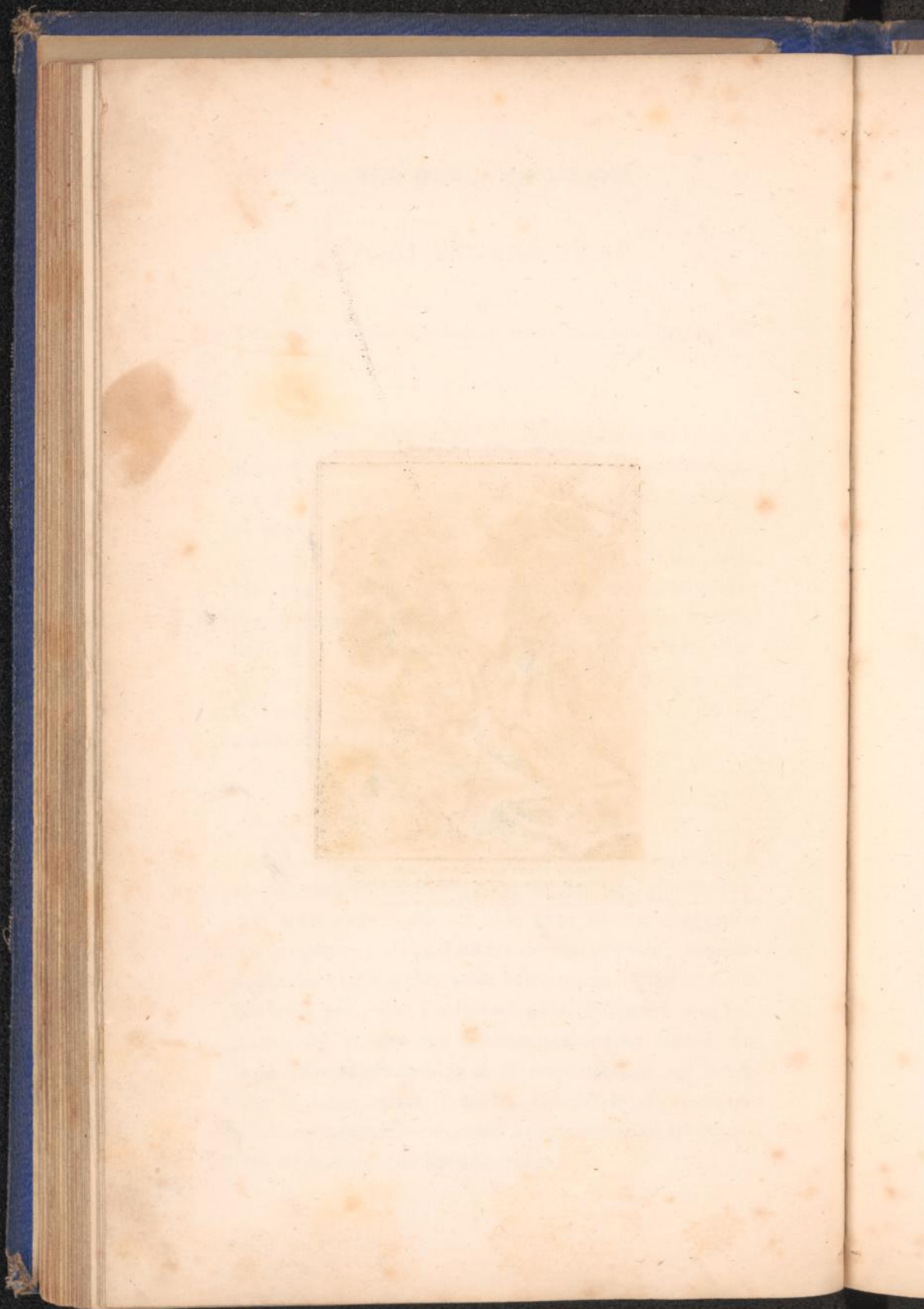
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Quoniam cum intulerit non sumet  
locum omnia, neque cum eo descendet  
gloria eius. *Eccl. 12.*









Iste morietur, quia non habuit disci-  
plinam, & in multitudinis stultitiis sua  
decipietur, Proverb. 12.

## PLATE XIII.—THE ABBE.

His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden  
by the cords of his sins. Prov. iv. 22.

DEATH, not contented with stripping this fat Prelate of his crosier, which he is carrying in triumph on his shoulder, and his mitre, with which he is dressing himself, is dragging him away without pity. He raises his breviary with one hand, and with the other is making some vain efforts to push him off.

## PLANCHE XIII.—L'ABBE.

LA Mort, non contente d'avoir arraché à ce gros Prélat sa crosse, qu'elle porte en triomphe sur son épaule, & sa mitre, dont elle s'est affublée, le tire encore impitoyablement après elle; il élève d'une main son bréviaire, & fait de l'autre de vains efforts pour la repousser.

## PLATE XIV.—THE ABBESS.

---

Wherefore I praised the dead, which are already dead, more than the living, which are yet alive. Eccl. iv. 2.

---

DEATH ludicrously hooded with several flowing plumes, and robed in a kind of gown, carries out of her convent an Abbess, whom he is dragging with all his might by her scapulary. The reverend Mother with regret is leaving life and the honours she enjoys; and expresses, by the alteration of her features and by her cries, the fright that Death has produced in her soul. Behind her, under the gate of the convent, appears a young Nun, strangely agitated with terror and grief.

## PLANCHE XIV.—L'ABBESSE.

LA Mort ridiculement coiffée de diverses plumes flottantes, & vêtue d'une espèce de mante, emmène hors de son couvent une Abbessè qu'elle tire de toutes ses forces par son scapulaire. La révèrendissime Mère quitte à regret la vie & les honneurs dont elle jouit, & exprime par l'altération de ses traits & par ses cris, l'effroi que la Mort a jeté dans son ame. On voit derrière elle, sous la porte de l'abbaye, une jeune Nonne, vivement agitée par la crainte & par la douleur.



Laudavi magis mortuos quam viuentes  
Eccle. 4

14

THE WANCE OF BRACHIL

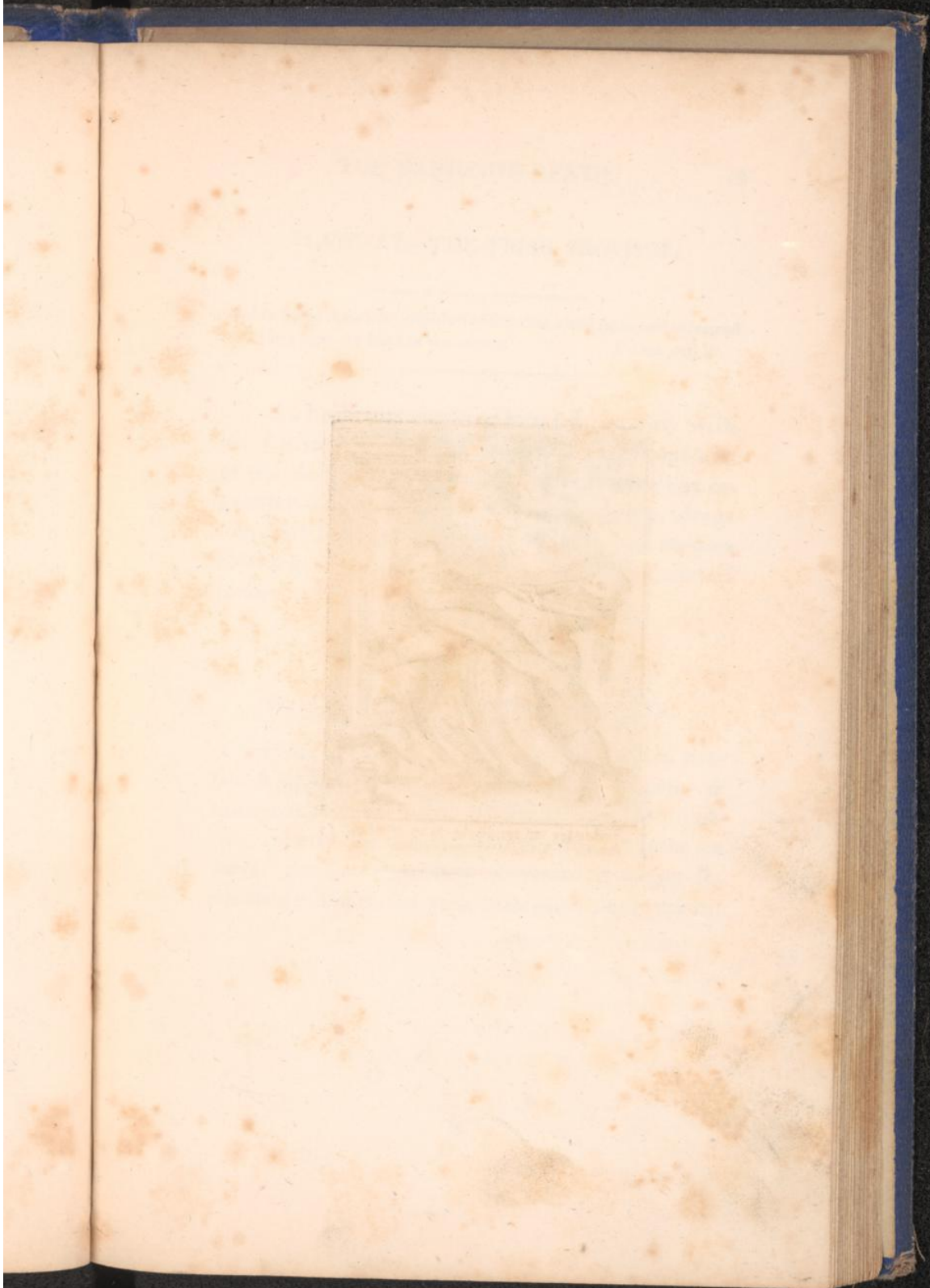
PLATE XIV. THE ABBISS

Abbeys in general had much of the same spirit, and the same  
policy, with the present one.

The abbey here is depicted with several figures  
in the foreground, and a large building in the  
background. The figures appear to be engaged in  
some religious or domestic activity. The style is  
characteristic of the 17th or 18th century.



The abbey here is depicted with several figures  
in the foreground, and a large building in the  
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some religious or domestic activity. The style is  
characteristic of the 17th or 18th century.





*Sedentes in tenebris & in Umbra  
Mortis Vinctos in mendicitate. Psal. 106*

75



## PLATE XV.—THE FRIAR PROVISOIR.

And he saved them from the hand of him that hated them, and redeemed  
 them from the hand of the enemy. PSALM cvi. 10.

As he is just stepping into his convent, with  
 his Christmas-box and wallet, Death stops him  
 at the door; and deaf to his cries, as well as re-  
 gardless of the fright he throws him into, drags  
 him with all his might by the cloak, and renders  
 all the good Friar's attempts to disengage himself  
 ineffectual.

## PLANCHE XV.—LE FRERE QUETEUR.

PRET à rentrer dans son couvent avec sa tire-  
 lire & sa besace, la Mort l'arrête à la porte, &  
 toute aussi sourde à ses cris, qu'insensible à l'ef-  
 froi qu'elle lui cause, elle le tire de toutes ses  
 forces par son capuchon, & rend impuissans les  
 efforts du bon Frère pour se dérober de ses mains.

## PLATE XVI.—THE CANONESS.

---

Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not into the way of evil men. Prov. iv. 14.

---

THERE appears in this young and beautiful recluse, a striking mixture of gallantry and devotion. On her knees before a little altar, with her rosary in her hand, she is amorously listening to the songs which a young man, seated on a bed, addresses to her, accompanying them with his lute. Death comes to put out the tapers burning on the altar, and to change into sadness the pleasures of this conversation.

---

PLANCHE XVI.—LA CHANOINESSE.

L'ON voit dans cette jeune & belle recluse un mélange frappant de galanterie & de dévotion. Agenouillée devant un petit autel, son rosaire à la main, elle écoute amoureusement les chansons qu'un jeune homme, assis sur son lit, lui adresse en les accompagnant de son luth. La Mort vient éteindre les cierges allumés sur l'autel, & changer en amertume les douceurs de ce tête-à-tête.



Et via que videtur hominibus vita: novissi-  
ma autem eius deducunt homines ad mortem.

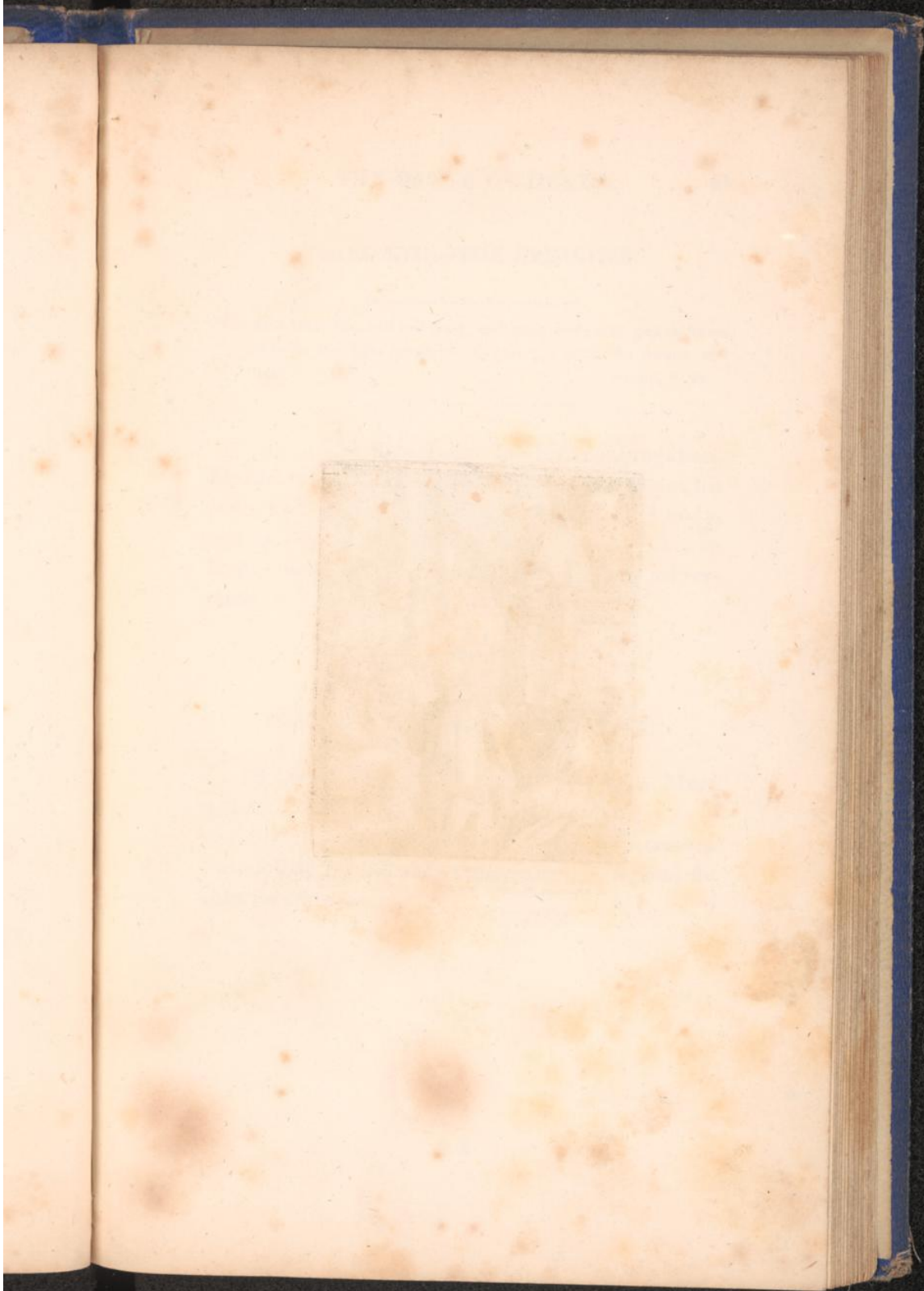
16. Luc. 4.

EXCERPTA  
PAPAE ALEXANDRINENSIS

De ...



De ...





17  
Vt qui docet malum bonum, & bonum malum,  
potabitur sententijs pœnæ, & lucem tenebras ponent.  
Vt amarum in dulce, & dulce in amarum. *1. Cor. 15.*

## PLATE XVII.—THE PREACHER.

---

Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

ISAIAH, v. 20.

---

As he is preaching to his congregation, Death, who is behind him with a stole about his neck, holds over his head the bone of a dead body, and by shewing it to the assembly, preaches to them, undoubtedly, the most eloquent of all sermons.

---

PLANCHE XVII.—LE PREDICATEUR.

TANDIS qu'il prêche son auditoire, la Mort qui est derrière lui, une étole au cou, élève par-dessus sa tête un os de mort, & en la montrant à l'assemblée lui fait sans doute le plus éloquent de tous les sermons.

## PLATE XVIII.—THE PHYSICIAN.

Physician, heal thyself.

LUKE, iv. 23.

DEATH is leading to him a sick old man, whose urine he is presenting to him in a phial, and appears saying, in a jeering manner, Dost thou think that thou art able to save a man whom I have already in my power ?

## PLANCHE XVIII.—LE MEDECIN.

LA Mort lui amène un vieillard malade dont elle lui présente l'urine dans une phiole, & paroît lui dire d'un air moqueur; Crois-tu pouvoir sauver un homme que je tiens déjà en ma puissance ?





Medice, cura te ipsum. • Linc. 4.







Cum fortis armatus custodit solum suum, ne  
si artem fortior eo inspectorem viderit, cum vi  
sura eius ante oculos, in quibus confidat. Luc. 11

18

## PLATE XIX.—THE SWISS SOLDIER.

But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth the spoils. LUKE, xi. 22.

ON a field of battle, covered with dead carcasses, Death, armed with a buckler and a huge dart, attacks this warrior, in the bosom of victory, escaped alone from the carnage of the day, and is giving him some terrible blows. It is in vain that this brave Soldier, whose courage seems invincible, is obstinately attempting to dispute the victory with an irresistible adversary. In the background appears another Death, running, and beating on a drum, who is followed by several soldiers.

## PLANCHE XIX.—LE SOLDAT SUISSE.

SUR un champ de bataille jonché de cadavres, la Mort armée d'un bouclier & d'un grand javelot, attaque dans le sein de la victoire ce guerrier échappé seul au carnage, & lui porte des coups terribles. C'est en vain que ce brave Soldat dont la valeur sembloit indomptable, s'acharne à disputer la victoire à un adversaire auquel rien ne sauroit résister. Dans le lointain on aperçoit une autre Mort qui bat du tambour en courant, & qui est suivie de quelques soldats.

## PLATE XX.—THE ADVOCATE.

---

A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished. PROV. xxii. 3.

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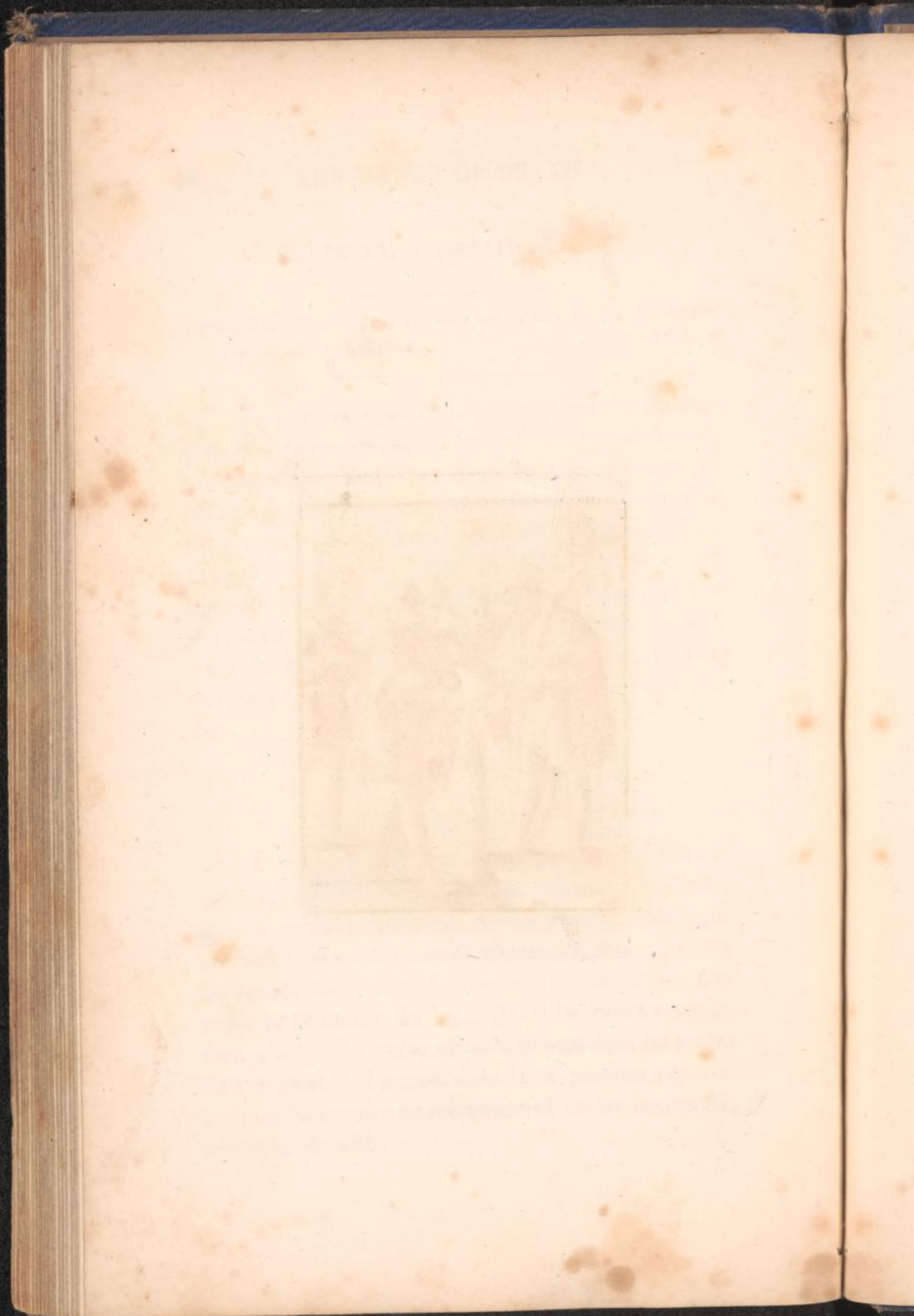
THE example of the Judge seems to authorize the Advocate to get himself well paid for his prevarication, and that even in the presence of his poor client, whose wretched condition would raise compassion in any breast less obdurate than that of the lawyer. But Death will avenge the oppressed; he is pouring into the hands of the Advocate money in abundance, of which he will have little use, for he is, at the same instant, shewing him, with an air of insult, his sand run out.

## PLANCHE XX.—L'AVOCAT.

L'EXEMPLE du Juge semble autoriser l'Avocat à se faire payer chèrement ses prévarications, & cela même en présence de son pauvre client qui se tient dans un certain éloignement, & dont l'état misérable feroit pitié à une ame moins dure que celle de l'homme de loi. Mais la Mort vengera l'opprimé; elle verse abondamment dans les mains de l'Avocat de l'argent dont il ne profitera guère, car elle lui montre en même tems d'un air moqueur, son sable écoulé.



Caliceus viciat malum, & abiconat le: immo  
osum peruenit, & allietur est dextero. *See 20*









Me & te sola Mors separabit, Ruth. 1  
21

## PLATE XXI.—THE NEW-MARRIED PAIR.

---

Where thou diest, will I die. RUTH, i. 17.

---

IN the first transports of an happy union, this tender couple appear so wholly taken up with each other, and so inebriated with their mutual happiness, that they neither see nor hear. Death, who is marching before them, beating furiously on a little drum, is soon to give a cruel interruption to their enjoyments.

## PLANCHE XXI.—LES NOUVEAUX MARIÉS.

DANS les premiers transports d'une douce union, ces deux tendres époux paroissent tellement occupés l'un de l'autre, ils sont si enivrés de leur bonheur mutuel, qu'ils ne voient ni n'entendent la Mort qui marche devant eux, en frappant vigoureusement sur un petit tambour, & qui va leur donner bientôt un cruel trouble-fête.

## PLATE XXII.—THE COUNTESS.

---

What! shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? Job, ii. 10.

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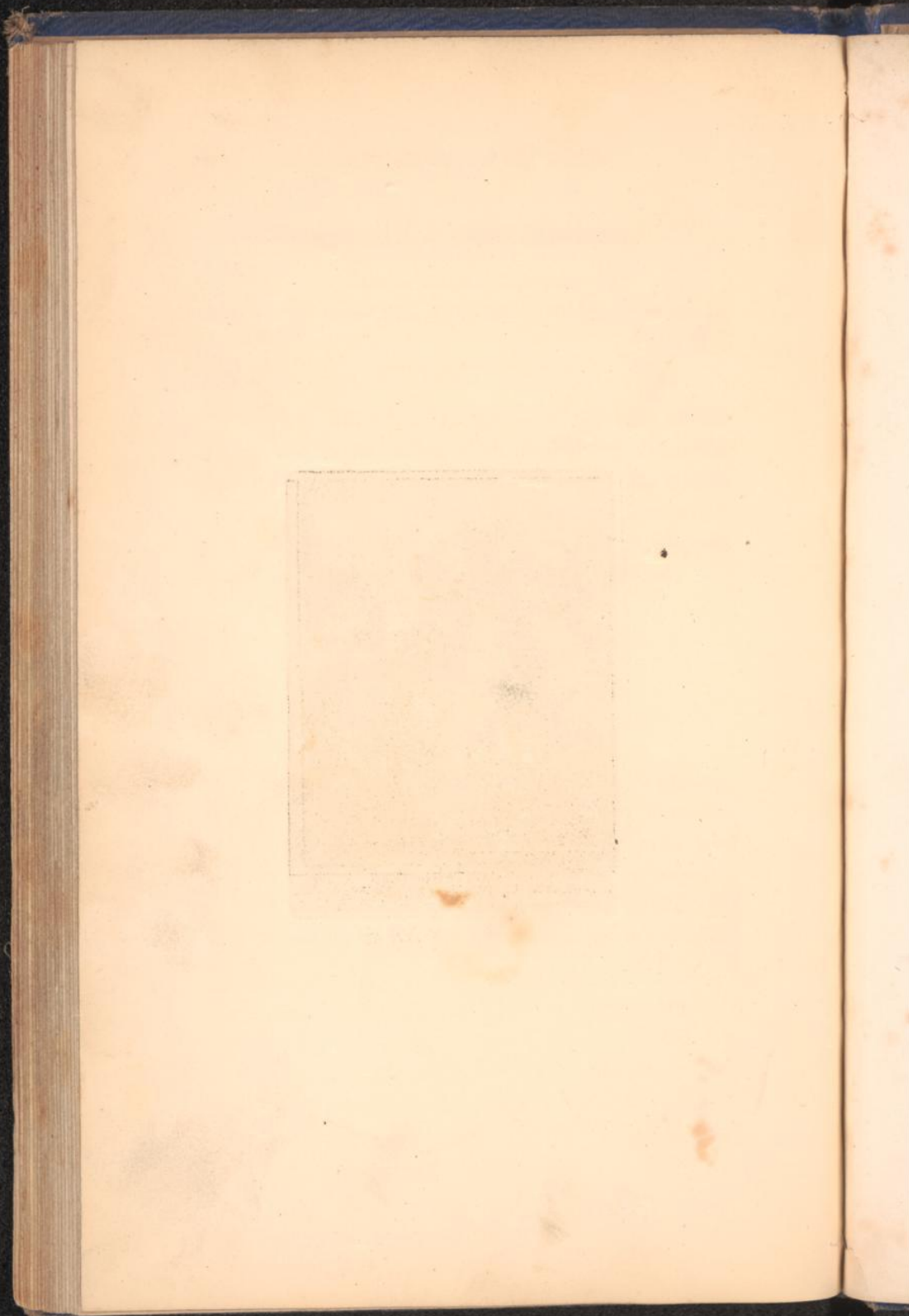
SHE is wholly taken up with the care of her dress, and is receiving with eagerness, from the hands of one of her maids, a very rich robe with a gold chain. Death comes to derange her toilet, and has already, without being perceived, slipped round her neck a collar made of small bones.

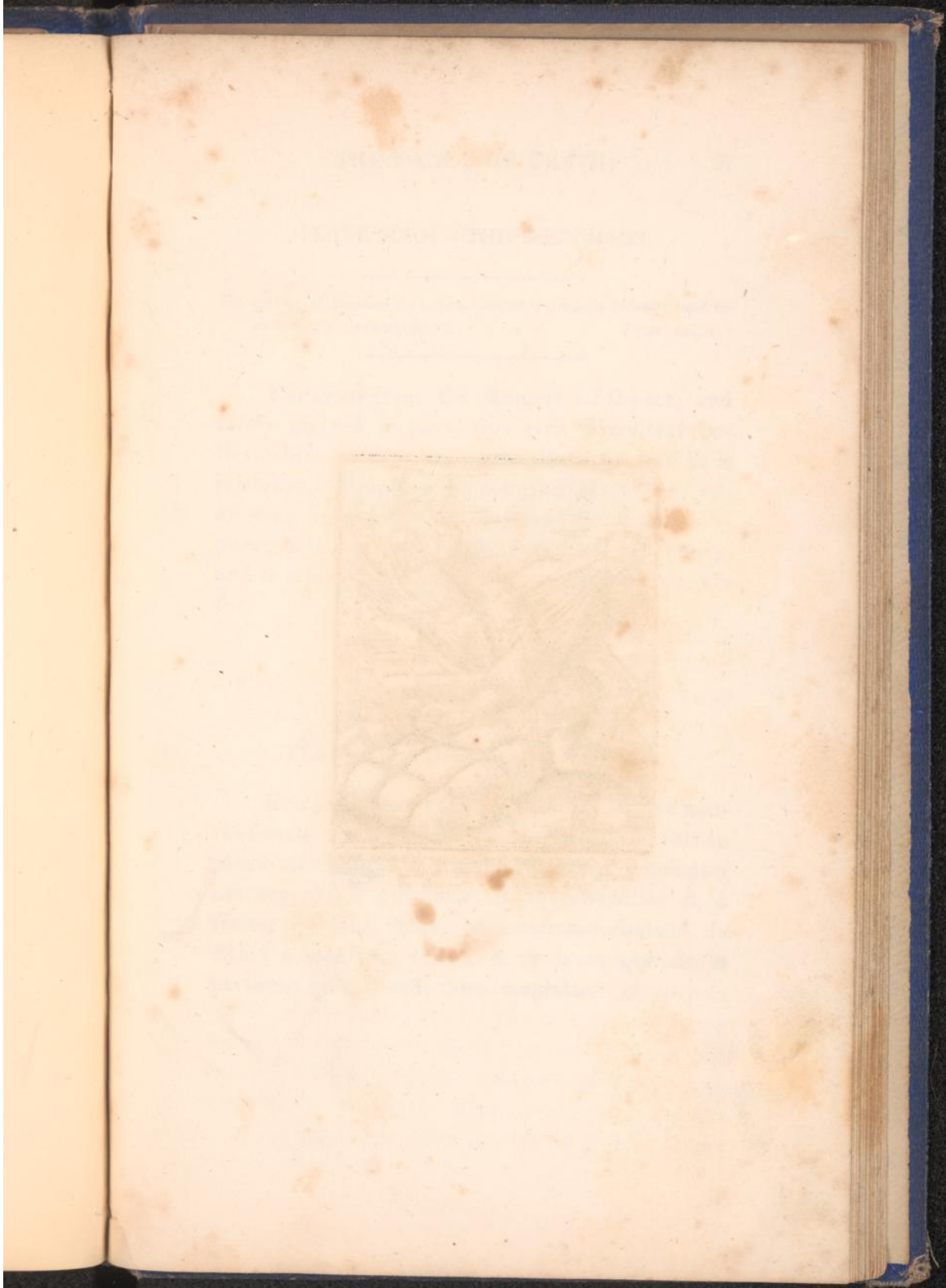
## PLANCHE XXII.—LA COMTESSE.

ELLE n'est occupée que du soin de sa parure, & reçoit avec empressement, des mains d'une de ses femmes, un habillement très-riche avec une chaîne d'or. La Mort vient troubler sa toilette, & lui a déjà passé autour du cou, sans qu'elle s'en soit encore aperçue, un collier fait de petits os de mort.



23. *Ducant in bonis dies suos, & in puncto ad inferna descendunt. Job.*







Qui congregat thesauros lingua mer-  
daci. vana & exors est, & impingetur  
ad leuor mortis. *Proverbs. 23. 23.*



## PLATE XXIII.—THE MERCHANT.

The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro  
of them that seeketh death. Prov. xxi. 6.

ESCAPED from the dangers of the sea, and safely arrived in port, this rich Merchant believes himself now in perfect safety; but he is mistaken. Employed in counting his money, examining his goods, and treating about their disposal, a bad customer, Death himself, comes up, and it is his person only that he wants to bargain for.

## PLANCHE XXIII.—LE MARCHAND.

ECHAPPE aux périls de la mer, arrivé heureusement au port, ce riche Marchand se croit en pleine sécurité; il se trompe. Occupé à compter son argent, à examiner ses marchandises & à traiter de leur vente, un mauvais chaland, la Mort elle-même, arrive, & ce n'est que de sa personne qu'elle veut faire emplette.

## PLATE XXIV.—THE HAWKER.

---

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give  
you rest. MATT. xi. 28.

---

BENDING under the weight of his load, he is advancing, with a quick pace, to the neighbouring town, comforting himself with thinking on the gain he is to make there; but Death, in the form of two skeletons, is come to put a sudden end to his labours and his hopes. One of the skeletons is dragging him forcibly by the arm, while the other behind him is playing on a marine trumpet. It is in vain that the poor Hawker points with his finger to the place where his business calls him; this disagreeable company appear desirous of making him take another road.

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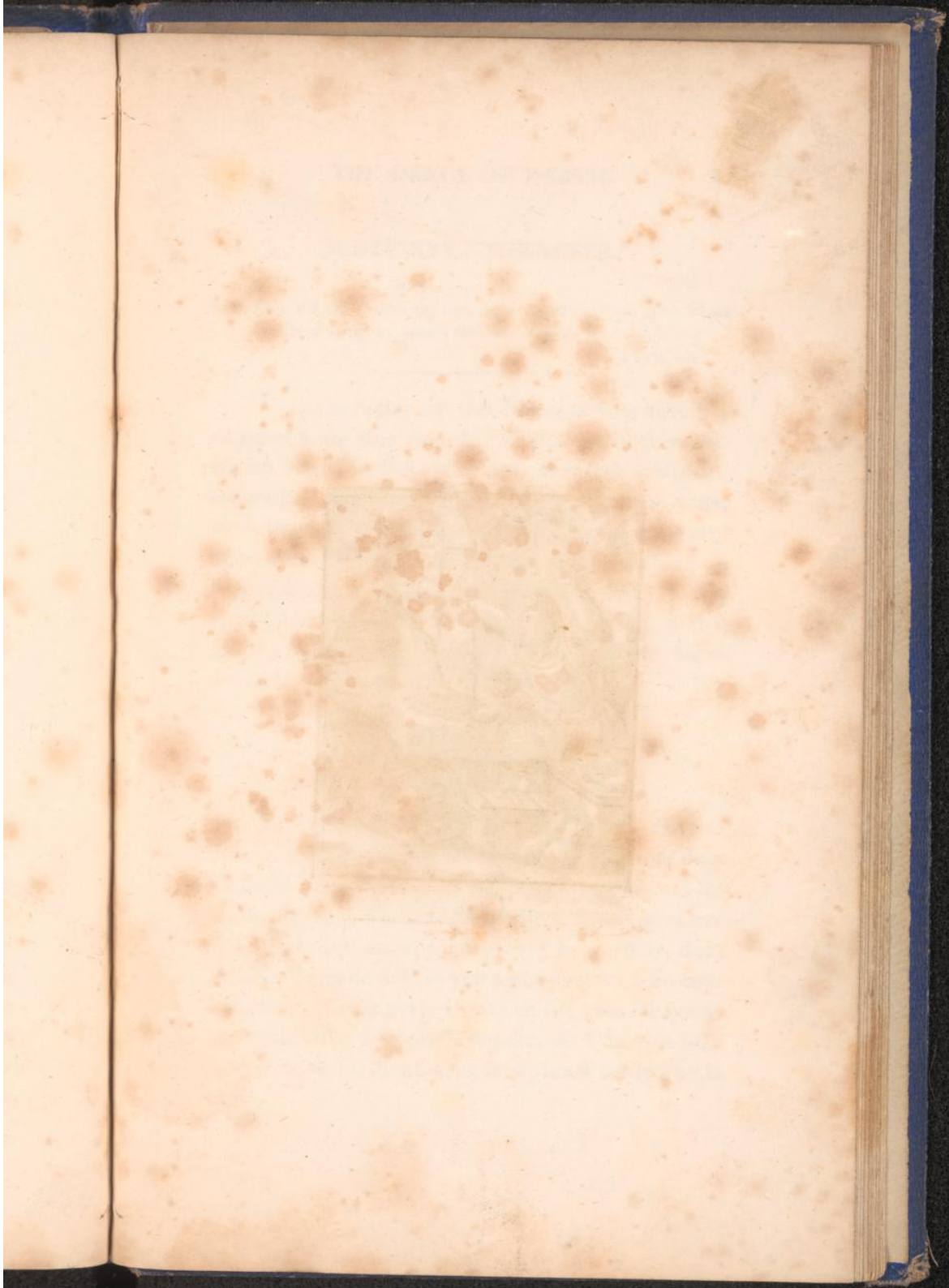
 PLANCHE XXIV.—LE COLPORTEUR.

COURBÉ sous le poids de sa charge, il avance à grands pas vers le lieu voisin, & trouve du soulagement en rêvant au gain qu'il pourroit y faire; mais la Mort, sous la figure de deux squelettes, est venue subitement mettre fin à ses peines & à ses espérances. L'un des squelettes le tire avec force par le bras, tandis que l'autre joue derrière lui de la trompette marine. C'est en vain que le pauvre Colporteur montre des doigts l'endroit où ses affaires l'appellent, cette fâcheuse compagnie paroît vouloir lui faire prendre une autre route.



Venite ad me omnes qui laboratis &  
24. onerati estis. Matt. 11







Stulte, hac nocte repetunt animam  
tuam & quæ parasti citius erunt.

## PLATE XXV.—THE MISER.

Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?

LUKE, xi. 2.

THE character of the Miser is very forcibly expressed in this sketch. Shut up in a vault, which receives the light only through a wicket, secured with a double grate of thick iron bars, he is entirely taken up with his beloved treasure, a considerable part whereof Death is snatching up before his eyes. This loss excites in him all the symptoms of the most violent desperation, and it plainly appears that his gold is an hundred times dearer to his heart than his life.

## PLANCHE XXV.—L'AVARE.

LE caractère de l'Avare est rendu dans ce dessein avec beaucoup d'énergie. Renfermé dans un caveau qui ne reçoit du jour que par une lucarne garnie d'une double grille d'épais barreaux de fer, il n'est occupé que de son cher trésor, dont la Mort lui enlève à ses yeux une portion très-considérable. Cette perte excite en lui tous les symptômes du plus violent désespoir, & l'on voit bien que son or lui tient cent fois plus à cœur que la vie.

## PLATE XXVI.—THE WAGGONER.

---

But when they in their trouble did turn unto the Lord God of Israel,  
and sought him, he was found of them.

2 CHRON. xv. 4.

---

WE see Death here venting his capricious  
fury on a cart of wine that a poor Waggoner is  
conducting. Without doubt, the man himself  
will soon come, in his turn, to be the sport of his  
caprice; and the same cause that has now pro-  
duced, will ere long effectually finish his despair.

## PLANCHE XXVI.—LE VOITURIER.

ON voit ici la Mort exercer ses bizarres fu-  
reurs sur un char de vin que conduit un pauvre  
Voiturier. Sans doute que lui-même va devenir  
à son tour le jouet de ses caprices, & que la même  
cause qui vient d'occasionner son désespoir ne tar-  
dera pas à le terminer.

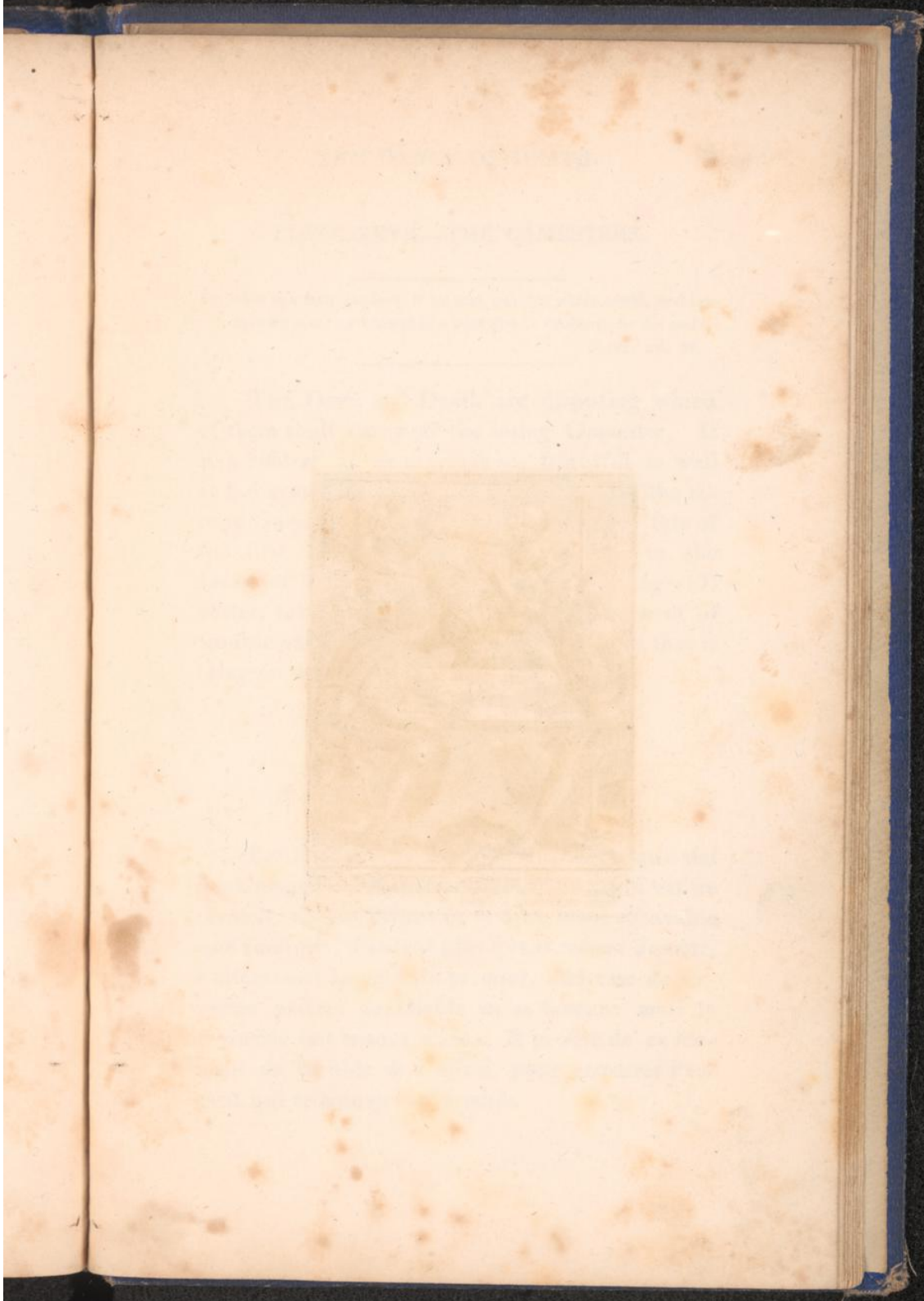




Corruit in curru suo *Chor. 22.*

20







Quid prodest homini, si vixerit, si  
dum lucretur, anima a se deprehen-  
sum petatur; *Matth. 16.* 27

## PLATE XXVII.—THE GAMESTERS.

---

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

MATT. xvi. 26.

---

THE Devil and Death are disputing which of them shall carry off the losing Gamester. It is a contest, if we may say so, frightful as well as ludicrous, so much the more so, that the second Gamester, interesting himself in the fate of the first, is addressing fervent prayers to the Devil on his behalf; but the third is doing still better, taking the advantage of this moment of trouble and terror, to gather in the money that is lying on the table.

PLANCHE XXVII.—LES JOUEURS.

---

LE Diable & la Mort se disputent qui des deux emportera le Joueur qui a perdu. C'est un combat, s'il est permis de le dire, aussi effroyable que comique, d'autant plus que le second Joueur, s'intéressant au sort du premier, adresse de ferventes prières au Diable en sa faveur; mais le troisième fait encore mieux, & profite de ce moment de trouble & d'effroi, pour ramasser l'argent qui se trouve sur la table.

## PLATE XXVIII.—THE OLD MAN.

---

My breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, the graves are ready for me.  
These will all be thy reward, as thou hast said, Job, xvii. 1.

---

HERE we see Death leading away, playing on a psaltery, an Old Man to the brink of the grave, bent under the load of years, and verging to the last degree of frailty. The Old Man allows himself to be carried off, with that calmness and tranquillity, which are the effects of wisdom, and the fruits of a good conscience.

---

## PLANCHE XXVIII.—LE VIEILLARD.

L'ON voit ici la Mort qui conduit sur le bord de sa fosse, en jouant du psaltérion, un Vieillard courbé sous le poids des années, & parvenu au dernier degré de la caducité. Le Vieillard se laisse emmener avec ce calme & cette tranquillité qui sont l'apanage de la sagesse, & les fruits d'une bonne conscience.



Spiritus meus attenuabitur, dies mei breuiabun-  
tur, & solum mihi superest Sepulchrum. Ps. 17

THE DANCE OF DEATH

THE DANCE OF DEATH

When we are dead, we shall be playing  
a waltz, as that was the name of the grave-  
yard where the dance was first performed.

Have we the Death for a play, playing on  
a waltz, as that was the name of the grave-  
yard where the dance was first performed.



When we are dead, we shall be playing  
a waltz, as that was the name of the grave-  
yard where the dance was first performed.

When we are dead, we shall be playing  
a waltz, as that was the name of the grave-  
yard where the dance was first performed.







Melior est Mors quam Vita. *Ecclesi 70.*

## PLATE XXIX.—THE OLD WOMAN.

---

Death is better than a bitter life, or continual sickness.

ECCLES. xxx. 17.

---

THE grim countenance of this good old Dame does not indicate the same resignation as appears in the former subject. Wholly occupied in mumbling her rosary, she pays no attention to the sound of a dulcimer, on which one of her conductors is playing. The other skeleton, impatient of the slowness of the Old Woman's march, is employing menaces and blows to make her advance.

---

PLANCHE XXIX.—LA VIEILLE.

LE visage rechigné de cette bonne Vieille n'annonce pas la même résignation que dans le sujet précédent. Toute occupée à marmotter son rosaire, elle ne prête aucune attention au son du timpanon dont joue l'une de ses conductrices. L'autre squelette, impatient de la lenteur que la bonne Vieille met dans sa marche, emploie les menaces & les coups pour la faire avancer.

## PLATE XXX.—THE CHILD.

---

Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. Job, xiv. 1.

---

If under the roof of poverty there is any comfort, it is in having children, by whom we may hope one day to be solaced. This is the case with this poor widow; but Death is of a different opinion, and is come to carry off her youngest Child, unmoved by her prayers and lamentations.

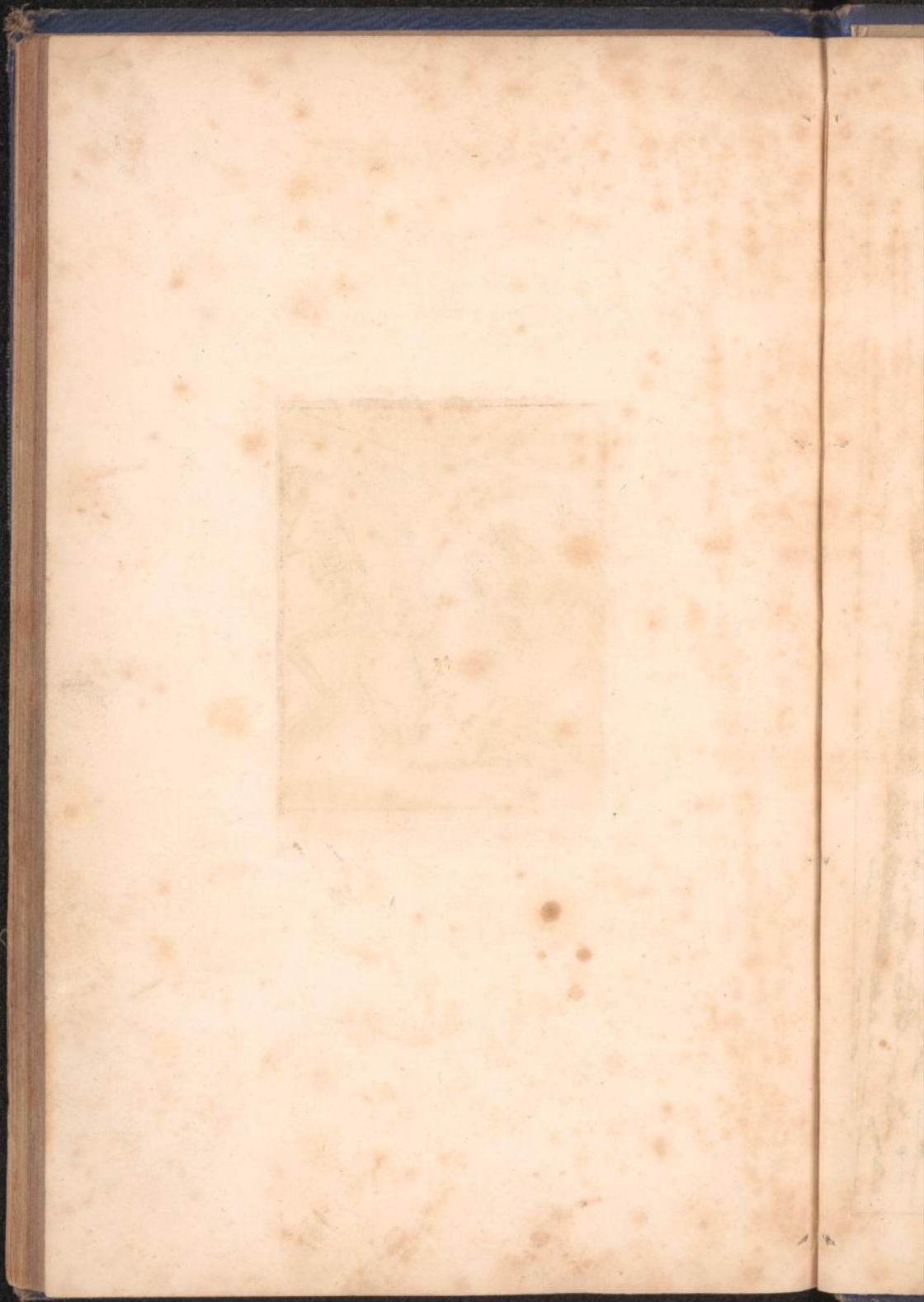
## PLANCHE XXX.—L'ENFANT.

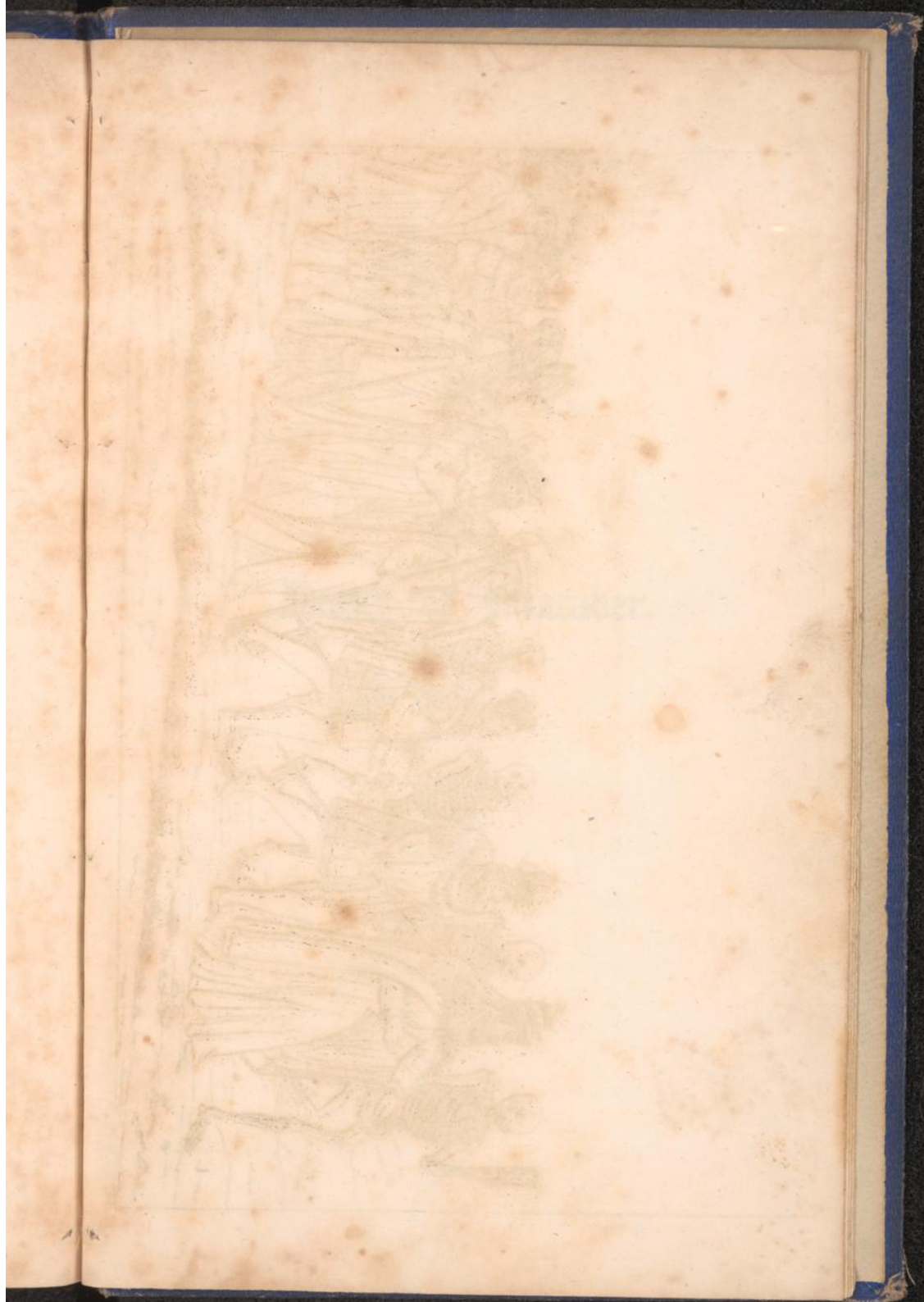
Si sous le toit de la pauvreté il y a quelque consolation, c'est d'avoir des enfans dont on peut espérer d'être un jour soulagé. C'est le cas de cette pauvre veuve, mais la Mort n'est point de cet avis, & vient de lui enlever le plus petit sans se laisser fléchir, ni par ses prières ni par ses lamentations.

END OF THE DANCE OF DEATH.



Hom. natus de muliere, breui vivens tempo-  
re, repletur malis iustis: qui quali flos  
effloruit & contectur & sicut vult vabra 441









DANCE OF MACABER.

THE  
**Dance of Macaber.**

JOHN LYDDELL, Esq. of the Benedictine Order, who is the author of the following description of the Dance of Macaber, which is a highly valuable work, and is published by the Rev. John St. Pauline, who has acknowledged this as a genuine copy. After a short education at Oxford, he returned to his native country, and engaged in the study of the sciences and the literature of his country. He chiefly studied the History and Poetry, particularly Dante, Spenser, and Milton. He had a profound knowledge of the learning, that is, of the Latin and Greek languages, and was distinguished by his knowledge of the history and literature of his country. Yet although he was a man of letters, he was not familiar with the Dance of Macaber; he was not only ignorant of the name, but of the description, as well as of the nature and significance of the subject. He was, however, well acquainted with the application

THE  
Dance of the Shepherd.

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THE

**DANCE OF MACABER.**

**JOHN LYDGATE**, a monk of the Benedictine Abbey of Bury in Suffolk, flourished in the reign of Henry VI. He was an uncommon ornament of his profession, his genius being so lively, and his accomplishments so numerous, that it is hardly probable the holy father St. Benedict would have acknowledged him for a genuine disciple. After a short education at Oxford, he travelled into France and Italy, and returned a complete master of the language and the literature of both countries. He chiefly studied the Italian and French poets, particularly Dante, Boccaccio, and Alain Chartier; and became so distinguished a proficient in polite learning, that he opened a school in his monastery for teaching the sons of the nobility the arts of versification, and the elegancies of composition. Yet although philology was his object, he was not unfamiliar with the fashionable philosophy; he was not only a poet and a rhetorician, but a geometrician, an astronomer, a theologian, and a disputant. He made considerable addition to those amplifications



of our language, in which Chaucer, Gower, and Occleve led the way, and is the first of our writers whose style is clothed with that perspicuity in which the English phraseology appears at this day to an English reader. His muse was of universal access, and he was not only the poet of his monastery, but of the world in general. If a disguising was intended by the Company of Goldsmiths, a mask before his Majesty at Eltham, a Maygame for the Sheriffs and Aldermen of London, a mumming before the Lord Mayor, a procession of pageants from the creation, for the festival of Corpus Christi, or a carrol for the coronation, Lydgate was consulted, and gave the poetry.

Mr. Warton, from whose elegant History of English Poetry the above account of Lydgate is extracted, further informs us, that he translated Macaber's Dance of Death from the French, *at the request of the Chapter of St. Paul's*, to be inscribed under the painting of that subject in their cloister; but it appears from the verses themselves, that he undertook the translation at the instance of a French clerk. Lydgate's poem is neither a literal or complete translation of the French version from Macaber\*: and this he himself confesses,

“ Out of the French I drough it of intent

“ Not word by word, but following in substance.”

\* This French translation has been erroneously given to Michael Marot, who was not born at the time when it was first

Again, the number of the characters in Lydgate is much less than in the French, being only thirty-five, whilst the other contains seventy-six, and he has not only omitted several, but supplied their places with others; so that if these lines were inscribed under the painting at Saint Paul's, it must have differed materially from that at Saint Innocent's at Paris. Stowe, upon whose sole authority all the information concerning this painting depends, says, that on the north side of Saint Paul's church was a great cloister, environing a plot of ground, of old time called Pardon Church-yard, whereof Thomas More, Dean of Saint Paul's, was either the first builder, or a great benefactor, and was buried there. About this cloister was artificially and richly painted the Dance of Machabray, a Dance of Death commonly called the Dance of Paul's; *the like whereof was painted about St. Innocent's cloister at Paris.* The metres or poetry of this Dance were translated out of the French into English, by John Lydgate, Monk of Bury. He adds, that this was done at the expence of Jenken Carpenter\*, in the reign of Henry the VIth, so that the poem and the painting appear to have been finished about the same time.

printed. See De Bure Bibliog. Instruct. No. 3109, and Warton's Correct. and Add. to Vol. II. of Hist. of Engl. Poetry.

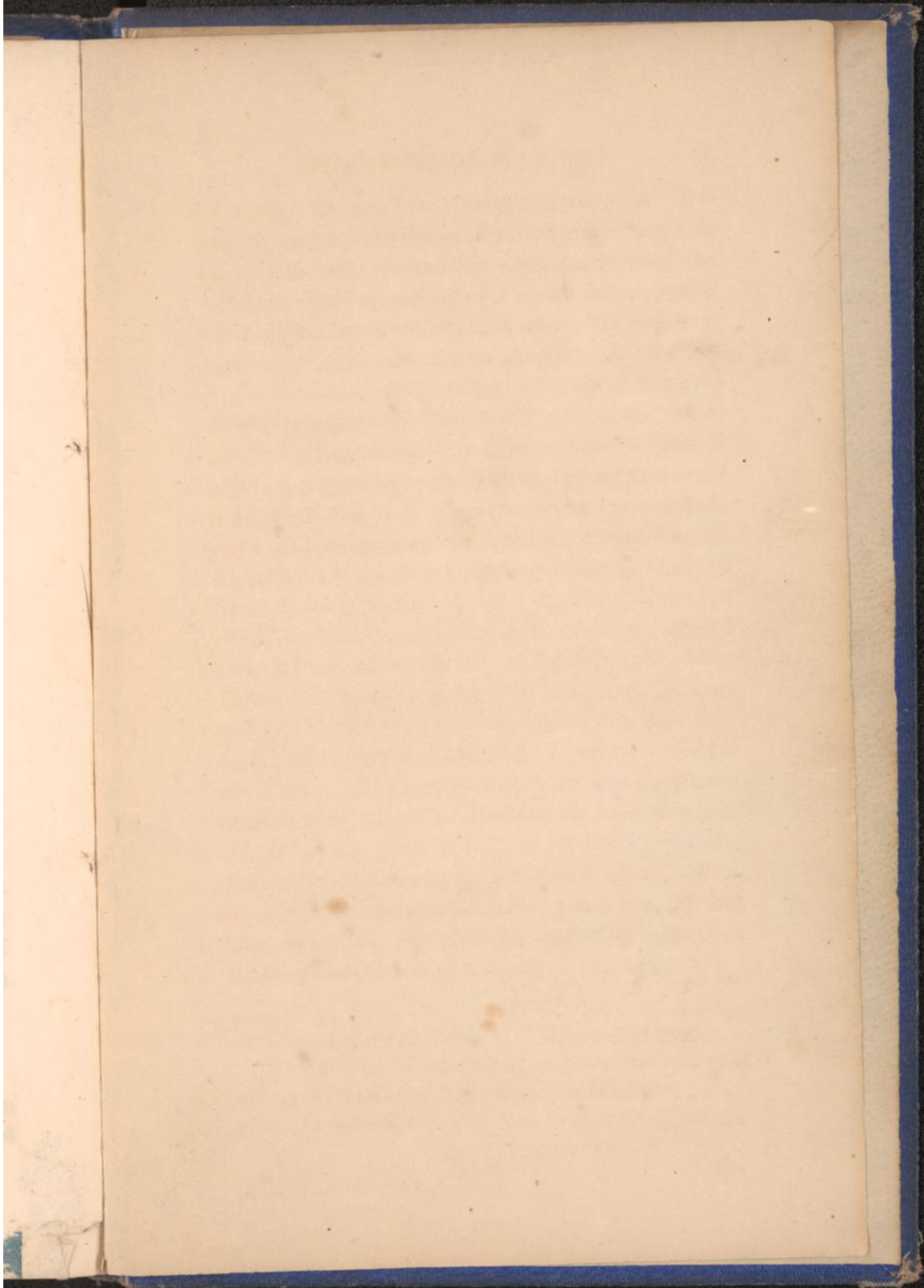
\* This Jenken Carpenter was town-clerk of London, 1430, and executor of Richard Whittington. Weever's Funeral Monum. p. 379, fo. edition.

In the year 1549, on the tenth of April, the whole of this cloister, together with the Dance of Death, the tombs, and monuments, was begun to be pulled down by command of the Duke of Somerset, so that nothing thereof was left but the bare plot of ground, which was afterwards converted into a garden for the petty Canons\*.

All the ancient Dances of Death, though evidently to be deduced from one original, differed very materially in the number and design of the characters. They uniformly appear to have been accompanied with Macaber's verses, or more probably with imitations of them.

\* Stowe's Survey.

FINIS.



70. THE DANCE OF MACABRE.

In the year 1543, on the tenth of April, the whole of the choir, together with the Deputy of Death, the fowls, and instruments, was begun to be pulled down by command of the Duke of Somerset, and that notwithstanding Macabre's the late plot of ground, which was converted into a garden for the year 1543.

All the scenes of the play appear evidently to be deduced from our original, differed very essentially in the number and design of the characters. They uniformly appear to have been accompanied with Macabre scenes, and are probably with imitations of them.

It is not possible to determine the exact time when the play was first performed, but it is probable that it was first acted in the year 1543, when the Duke of Somerset was executed.

The play is now preserved in the library of the University of Oxford, and is one of the most valuable pieces of our dramatic literature.

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