

CHAPTER III.

Macaber not a German or any other poet, but a non-
entity.—Corruption and confusion respecting this
word.—Etymological errors concerning it.—How
connected with the Dance.—Trois mors et trois vifs.
—Orgagna's painting in the Campo Santo at Pisa.—
Its connection with the trois mors et trois vifs, as well
as with the Macaber dance.—Saint Macarius the real
Macaber.—Paintings of this dance in various places.
—At Minden; Church-yard of the Innocents at Pa-
ris; Dijon; Basle; Klingenthal; Lubeck; Leipsic;
Anneberg; Dresden; Erfurth; Nuremberg; Berne;
Lucerne; Amiens; Rouen; Fescamp; Blois; Stras-
burg; Berlin; Vienna; Holland; Italy; Spain.



THE next subject for investigation is the
origin of the name of Macaber, as con-
nected with the Dance of Death, either
with respect to the verses that have
usually accompanied it, or to the
paintings or representations of the Dance itself; and
first of the verses.

It may, without much hazard, be maintained that,
notwithstanding these have been ascribed to a German
poet called Macaber, there never was a German, or any
poet whatever bearing such a name. The first mention
of him appears to have been in a French edition of the
Danse Macabre, with the following title, "Chorea ab
eximio Macabro versibus Alemannicis edito, et à Petro
Desrey emendata. Parisiis per Magistrum Guidonem
Mercatorem pro Godefrido de Marnef. 1490, folio."
This title, from its ambiguity, is deserving of little con-

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sideration as a matter of authority; for if a comma be placed after the word *Macabro*, the title is equally applicable to the author of the verses and to the painter or inventor of the Dance. As the subject had been represented in several places in Germany, and of course accompanied with German descriptions, it is possible that Desrey might have translated and altered some or one of these, and, mistaking the real meaning of the word, have converted it into the name of an author. It may be asked in what German biography is such a person to be found? how it has happened that this famous *Macaber* is so little known, or whether the name really has a Teutonic aspect? It was the above title in Desrey's work that misled the truly learned Fabricius inadvertently to introduce into his valuable work the article for *Macaber* as a German poet, and in a work to which it could not properly belong.³⁹

M. Peignot has very justly observed that the *Danse Macabre* had been very long known in France and elsewhere, not as a literary work, but as a painting; and he further remarks that although the verses are German in the Basil painting, executed about 1440, similar verses in French were placed under the dance at the *Innocents* at Paris in 1424.⁴⁰

At the beginning of the text in the early French edition of the *Danse Macabre*, we have only the words "la danse *Macabre* sappelle," but no specific mention is made of the author of the verses. John Lydgate, in his translation of them from the French, and which was most probably adopted in many places in England where the painting occurred, speaks of "the *Frenche Machabrees daunce*," and "the daunce of *Machabree*." At the end, "*Machabree the Doctoure*," is abruptly and unconnectedly introduced at the bottom of the page. It is not in the French printed copy, from the text of

³⁹ *Bibl. Med. et Inf. Etat.* tom. v. p. 1.

⁴⁰ *Recherches sur les Danses de Mort*, pp. 79 80.

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which Lydgate certainly varies in several respects. It remains, therefore, to ascertain whether these words belong to Lydgate, or to whom else; not that it is a matter of much importance.

The earliest authority that has been traced for the name of "Danse Macabre," belongs to the painting at the Innocents, and occurs in the MS. diary of Charles VII. under the year 1424. It is also strangely called "Chorea Machabæorum," in 1453, as appears from the before cited document at St. John's church at Besançon. Even the name of one *Maccabrees*, a Provençal poet of the 14th century, has been injudiciously connected with the subject, though his works are of a very different nature.

Previously to attempting to account for the origin of the obscure and much controverted word *Macaber*, as applicable to the dance itself, it may be necessary to advert to the opinions on that subject that have already appeared. It has been disguised under the several names of *Macabre*,⁴¹ *Maccabees*,⁴² *Maratre*,⁴³ and even *Macrobius*.⁴⁴ Sometimes it has been regarded as an epithet. The learned and excellent M. Van Praet, the guardian of the royal library at Paris, has conjectured that *Macabre* is derived from the Arabic *Magbahrah*, *magbourah*, or *magabir*, all signifying a churchyard. M. Peignot seems to think that M. Van Praet intended to apply the word to the Dance itself,⁴⁵ but it is impossible that the intelligent librarian was not aware that personified sculpture, as well as the moral nature of the subject, cannot belong to the Mahometan religion. Another etymology extremely well calculated to disturb the gravity of the present subject, is that of M. Villaret, the French historian, when adverting to the

⁴¹ Passim.

⁴² Modern edition of the *Danse Macabre*.

⁴³ *Journal de Charles VII.*

⁴⁴ *Lansd. MS. No. 397—20.*

⁴⁵ *Peignot Recherches*, p. 109.

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spectacle of the Danse Macabre, supposed to have been given by the English in the church-yard of the Innocents at Paris. Relying on this circumstance, he unceremoniously decides that the name of the dance was likewise English; and that *Macabrée* is compounded of the words, to *make* and to *break*. The same silly etymology is referred to as in some historical dictionary concerning the city of Paris by Mons. Compan in his *Dictionnaire de Danse*, article *Macaber*; and another which is equally improbable has been hazarded by the accomplished Marquis de Paulmy, who, noticing some editions of the Danse Macabre in his fine library, now in the arsenal at Paris, very seriously states that Macaber is derived from two Greek words, which denote its meaning to be an *infernal dance*;⁴⁶ but if the Greek language were to be consulted on the occasion, the signification would turn out to be very different.

It must not be left unnoticed that M. De Bure, in his account of the edition of the Danse Macabre, printed by Marchant, 1486, has stated that the verses have been attributed to Michel Marot; but the book is dated before Marot was born.⁴⁷

Again,—As to the connexion between the word Macaber with the Dance itself.

In the course of the thirteenth century there appeared a French metrical work under the name of “*Li trois Mors et li trois Vis*,” *i. e.* *Les trois Morts et les trois Vifs*. In the noble library of the Duke de la Valliere, there were three apparently coeval manuscripts of it, differing, however, from each other, but furnishing the names of two authors, Baudouin de Condé and Nicolas de Marginal.⁴⁸ These poems relate that three noble youths when hunting in a forest were intercepted by the

⁴⁶ *Mélange d'une Grande Bibliothèque*, tom. vii. p. 22.

⁴⁷ *Bibl. Instruc.* No. 3109.

⁴⁸ *Catal. La Valliere* No. 2736—22.

like number of hideous spectres or images of Death, from whom they received a terrific lecture on the vanity of human grandeur. A very early, and perhaps the earliest, allusion to this vision, seems to occur in a painting by Andrew Orgagna in the Campo Santo at Pisa; and although it varies a little from the description in the above-mentioned poems, the story is evidently the same. The painter has introduced three young men on horseback with coronets on their caps, and who are attended by several domestics whilst pursuing the amusement of hawking. They arrive at the cell of Saint Macarius an Egyptian Anachorite, who with one hand presents to them a label with this inscription, as well as it can be made out, "Se nostra mente fia ben morta tenendo risa qui la vista affitta la vana gloria ci sara sconfitta la superbia e sara da morte;" and with the other points to three open coffins, in which are a skeleton and two dead bodies, one of them a king.

A similar vision, but not immediately connected with the present subject, and hitherto unnoticed, occurs at the end of the Latin verses ascribed to Macaber, in Goldasti's edition of the *Speculum omnium statuum à Roderico Lamorensi*. Three persons appear to a hermit, whose name is not mentioned, in his sleep. The first is described as a man in a regal habit; the second as a civilian, and the third as a beautiful female decorated with gold and jewels. Whilst these persons are vainly boasting of their respective conditions, they are encountered by three horrible spectres in the shape of dead human bodies covered with worms, who very severely reprove them for their arrogance. This is evidently another version of the "Trois mors et trois vifs" in the text, but whether it be older or otherwise cannot easily be ascertained. It is composed in alternate rhymes, in the manner, and probably by the author of Philibert or Fulbert's vision of the dispute between the soul and the body, a work ascribed to S. Bernard,

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and sometimes to Walter de Mapes. There are translations of it both in French and English.

For the mention of S. Macarius as the hermit in this painting by Orgagna, we are indebted to Vasari in his life of that artist; and he had, no doubt, possessed himself of some traditionary information on the subject of it. He further informs us, that the person on horseback who is stopping his nostrils, is intended for Andrea Uguzzione della fagivola. Above is a black and hideous figure of Death mowing down with his scythe all ranks and conditions of men. Vasari adds that Orgagna had crowded his picture with a great many inscriptions, most of which were obliterated by time. From one of them which he has preserved in his work, as addressed to some aged cripples, it should appear that, as in the Macaber Dance, Death apostrophizes the several characters.⁴⁹ Baldinucci, in his account of Orgagna, mentions this painting and the story of the Three Kings and Saint Macarius.⁵⁰ Morona, likewise, in his Pisa illustrata, adopts the name of Macarius when describing the same subject. The figures in the picture are all portraits, and their names may be seen, but with some variation as to description, both in Vasari and Morona.⁵¹

Now the story of *Les trois mors et les trois vifs*, was prefixed to the painting of the Macaber Dance in the church-yard of the Innocents at Paris, and had also been sculptured over the portal of the church, by order of the Duke de Berry in 1408.⁵² It is found in numerous manuscript copies of Horæ and other service books prefixed to the burial office. All the printed

⁴⁹ Vasari vite de Pittori, tom. i. p. 183, edit. 1568, 4to.

⁵⁰ Baldinucci Disegno, ii. 65.

⁵¹ Morona Pisa Illustrata, i. 359.

⁵² Du Breul Antiq. de Paris, 1612, 4to. p. 834, where the verses that accompany the sculpture are given. See likewise Sandrart Acad. Picture, p. 101.

editions of the Macaber Dance contain it, but with some variation, the figure of Saint Macarius in his cell not being always introduced. It occurs in many of the printed service books, and in some of our own for the use of Salisbury. The earliest wood engraving of it is in the black book of the "15 signa Judicii," where two of the young men are running away to avoid the three deaths, or skeletons, one of whom is rising from a grave. It is copied in *Bibliotheca Spenceriana*, vol. i. p. xxx.

From the preceding statement then there is every reason to infer that the name of Macaber, so frequently, and without authority, applied to an unknown German poet, really belongs to the Saint, and that his name has undergone a slight and obvious corruption. The word *Macabre* is found only in French authorities, and the Saint's name, which, in the modern orthography of that language, is *Macaire*, would, in many ancient manuscripts, be written *Macabre* instead of *Macaure*, the letter *b* being substituted for that of *u* from the caprice, ignorance, or carelessness of the transcribers.

As no German copy of the verses describing the painting can, with any degree of certainty, be regarded as the original, we must substitute the Latin text, which may, perhaps, have an equal claim to originality. The author, at the beginning, has an address to the spectators, in which he tells them that the painting is called the Dance of Macaber. There is an end, therefore, of the name of Macaber, as the author of the verses, leaving it only as applicable to the painting, and almost, if not altogether confirmatory of the preceding conjecture. The French version, from which Lydgate made his translation, nearly agrees with the Latin. Lydgate, however, in the above address, has thought fit to use the word *translator* instead of *author*, but this is of no moment, any more than the words *Machabrée the Doctour*, which, not being in the French text, are most

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likely an interpolation. He likewise calls the work *the daunce*; and it may, once for all, be remarked, that scarcely any two versions of it will be found to correspond in all respects, every new editor assuming fresh liberties, according to the usual practice in former times.

The ancient paintings of the Macaber Dance next demand our attention. Of these, the oldest on record was that of Minden in Westphalia, with the date 1383, and mentioned by Fabricius in his *Biblioth. med. et infimæ ætatis*, tom. v. p. 2. It is to be wished that this statement had been accompanied with some authority; but the whole of the article is extremely careless and inaccurate.

The earliest, of which the date has been satisfactorily defined, was that in the church-yard of the Innocents at Paris, and which has been already mentioned as having been painted in 1434.

In the cloister of the church of the Sainte Chapelle at Dijon the Macaber Dance was painted by an artist whose name was Masonçelle. It had disappeared and was forgotten a long time ago, but its existence was discovered in the archives of the department by Mons. Boudot, an ardent investigator of the manners and customs of the middle ages. The date ascribed to this painting is 1436. The above church was destroyed in the revolution, previously to which another Macaber Dance existed in the church of Notre Dame in the above city. This was not a painting on the walls, but a piece of white embroidery on a black piece of stuff about two feet in height and very long. It was placed over the stalls in the choir on grand funeral ceremonies, and was also carried off with the other church moveables, in the abovementioned revolution.⁵³ Similar exhibitions, no doubt, prevailed in other places.

The next Macaber Dance, in point of date, was the

⁵³ Peignot Recherches, xxxvii—xxxix.

celebrated one at Basle, which has employed the pens and multiplied the errors of many writers and travellers. It was placed under cover in a sort of shed in the church-yard of the Dominican convent. It has been remarked by one very competent to know the fact, that nearly all the convents of the Dominicans had a Dance of Death.⁵⁴ As these friars were preachers by profession, the subject must have been exceedingly useful in supplying texts and matter for their sermons. The present Dance is said to have been painted at the instance of the prelates who assisted at the Grand Council of Basle, that lasted from 1431 to 1443; and in allusion, as supposed, to a plague that happened during its continuance. Plagues have also been assigned as the causes of other Dances of Death; but there is no foundation whatever for such an opinion, as is demonstrable from what has been already stated; and it has been also successfully combated by M. Peignot, who is nevertheless a little at variance with himself, when he afterwards introduces a conjecture that the painter of the first Dance imitated the violent motions and contortions of those affected by the plague in the dancing attitudes of the figures of Death.⁵⁵ The name of the original painter of this Basle work is unknown, and will probably ever remain so, for no dependance can be had on some vague conjectures, that without the smallest appearance of accuracy have been hazarded concerning it. It is on record that the old painting having become greatly injured by the ravages of time, John Hugh Klauber, an eminent painter at Basle, was employed to repair it in the year 1568, as appears from a Latin inscription placed on it at the time. This painter is said to have covered the decayed fresco with oil, and to have succeeded so well that no difference between his

⁵⁴ Urtisii epitom. Hist. Basiliensis, 1522, 8vo.

⁵⁵ Peignot Recherches, xxvi—xxix.

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work and the original could be perceived. He was instructed to add the portrait of the celebrated Oecolampadius in the act of preaching, in commemoration of his interference in the Reformation, that had not very long before taken place. He likewise introduced at the end of the painting, portraits of himself, his wife Barbara Hallerin, and their little son Hans Birich Klauber. The following inscription, placed on the painting on this occasion, is preserved in Hentzner's Itinerary, and elsewhere.

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Sebastiano Doppenstenio, Casparo Clugio Coss.
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 Hunc mortales chorum fabulæ, temporis injuria vitiatum
 Lucas Gebhart, Iodoc. Pfister. Georgius Sporlinus
 Hujus loci Ædiles.
 Integritati suæ restituendum curavere
 Ut qui vocalis picturæ divina monita securius audiunt
 Mutæ saltem poëseos miserab. spectaculo
 Ad seriam philosophiam excitentur.
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 ΑΡΧΗΝ ΟΡΑΜΑΚΑΡΙΟΥ.
 CIO IO LXIIX.

In the year 1616 a further reparation took place, and some alterations in the design are said to have been then made. The above inscription, with an addition only of the names of the then existing magistrates of the city, was continued. A short time before, Mathew Merian the elder, a celebrated topographical draftsman, had fortunately copied the older painting, of which he is supposed to have first published engravings in 1621, with all the inscriptions under the respective characters that were then remaining, but these could not possibly be the same in many respects that existed before the Reformation, and which are entirely lost. A proof of this may be gathered from the lines of the Pope's answer to Death, whom he is thus made to apostrophize: "Shall it be said that I, a God upon earth, a successor of St. Peter, a powerful prince, and a learned doctor, shall

endure thy insolent summons, or that, in obedience to thy decree, I should be compelled to ascertain whether the keys which I now possess will open for me the gates of Paradise?" None of the inscriptions relating to the Pope in other ancient paintings before the Reformation approach in the least to language of this kind.

Merian speaks of a tradition that in the original painting the portrait of Pope Felix V. was introduced, as well as those of the Emperor Sigismund and Duke Albert II. all of whom were present at the council; but admitting this to have been the fact, their respective features would scarcely remain after the subsequent alterations and repairs that took place.

That intelligent traveller, Mons. Blainville, saw this painting in January, 1707. He states that as it had been much injured by the weather, and many of the figures effaced, the government caused it to be retouched by a painter, whom they imagined to be capable of repairing the ravages it had sustained, but that his execution was so miserable that they had much better have let it alone than to have had it so wretchedly bungled. He wholly rejects any retouching by Holbein. He particularizes two of the most remarkable subjects, namely, the fat jolly cook, whom Death seizes by the hand, carrying on his shoulder a spit with a capon ready larded, which he looks upon with a wishful eye, as if he regretted being obliged to set out before it was quite roasted. The other figure is that of the blind beggar led by his dog, whom Death snaps up with one hand, and with the other cuts the string by which the dog was tied to his master's arm.⁵⁶

The very absurd ascription of the Basle painting to the pencil of Hans Holbein, who was born near a century afterwards, has been adopted by several tourists, who have copied the errors of their predecessors, with-

⁵⁶ Travels, i. 376.

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out taking the pains to make the necessary enquiries, or possessing the means of obtaining correct information. The name of Holbein, therefore, as combined with this painting, must be wholly laid aside, for there is no evidence that he was even employed to retouch it, as some have inadvertently stated; it was altogether a work unworthy of his talents, nor does it, even in its latest state, exhibit the smallest indication of his style of painting. This matter will be resumed hereafter, but in the mean time it may be necessary to correct the mistake of that truly learned and meritorious writer, John George Keysler, who, in his instructive and entertaining travels, has inadvertently stated that the Basle painting was executed by Hans Bock or Bok, a celebrated artist of that city;⁵⁷ but it is well known that this person was not born till the year 1584.

The Basle painting is no longer in existence; for on the 2d of August, 1806, and for reasons that have not been precisely ascertained, an infuriated mob, in which were several women, who carried lanterns to light the expedition, tumultuously burst the inclosure which contained the painting, tore it piecemeal from the walls, and in a very short space of time completely succeeded in its total demolition, a few fragments only being still preserved in the collection of Counsellor Vischer at his castle of Wildensheim, near Basle. This account of its destruction is recorded in Millin's *Magazin Encyclopédique* among the *nouvelles littéraires* for that year; but the *Etrenne Helvétique* for the above year has given a different account of the matter; it states that the painting having been once more renovated in the year 1703, fell afterwards into great decay, being entirely peeled from the wall—that this circumstance had, in some degree, arisen from the occupation of the cloister by a ropemaker—that the wall having been found to

⁵⁷ Travels, i. 138, edit. 4to.

stand much in the way of some new buildings erected near the spot, the magistrates ventured, but not without much hesitation, to remove the cloister with its painting altogether in the year 1805—and that this occasioned some disturbance in the city among the common people, but more particularly with those who had resided in its neighbourhood, and conceived a renewed attachment to the painting.

Of this Dance of Death very few specific copies have been made. M. Heinecken⁵⁸ has stated that it was engraved in 1544, by Jobst Denneker of Augsburg; but he has confounded it with a work by this artist on the other Dance of Death ascribed to Holbein, and which will be duly noticed hereafter. The work which contained the earliest engravings of the Basle painting, can on this occasion be noticed only from a modern reprint of it under the following title: “Der Todten-Tantz wie derselbe in der weitberuhmten Stadt Basel als ein Spiegel menschlicher beschaffenheit gantz kuntlich mit lebendigen farben gemahlet, nicht ohne nutzliche verwunderung zu sehen ist. Basel, bey Joh. Conrad und Joh. Jacob von Mechel, 1769, 12mo.” that is, “The Dance of Death, painted most skilfully, and in lively colours, in the very famous town of Basel, as a mirror of human life, and not to be looked on without useful admiration.”

The first page has some pious verses on the painting in the church-yard of the Predicants, of which the present work contains only ten subjects, namely, the cardinal, the abbess, the young woman, the piper, the jew, the heathen man, the heathen woman, the cook, the painter, and the painter's wife. On the abbess there is the mark D. R. probably that of the engraver, two cuts by whom are mentioned in Bartsch's work.⁵⁹ On the cut

⁵⁸ Heinecken Dictionn. des Artistes, iii. 67, et iv. 595. He follows Keysler's error respecting Hans Bock.

⁵⁹ Peintre graveur, ix. 398.

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of the young woman there is the mark G S with the graving knife. They are coarsely executed, and with occasional variations of the figures in Merian's plates. The rest of the cuts, thirty-two in number, chiefly belong to the set usually called Holbein's. All the cuts in this miscellaneous volume have German verses at the top and bottom of each page with the subjects. If Jansen, who usually pillages some one else, can be trusted or understood, there was a prior edition of this book in 1606, with cuts having the last-mentioned mark, but which edition he calls the Dance of Death at Berne;⁶⁰ a title, considering the mixture of subjects, as faulty as that of the present book, of which, or of some part of it, there must have been a still earlier edition than the above-mentioned one of 1606, as on the last cut but one of this volume there is the date 1576, and the letters G S with the knife. It is most probable that this artist completed the series of the Basle Dance, and that some of the blocks having fallen into the hands of the above printers, they made up and published the present mixed copy. Jost Amman is said to have engraved 49 plates of the Dance of Death in 1587. These are probably from the Basle painting.⁶¹

The completest copies of this painting that are now perhaps extant, are to be found in a well-known set of engravings in copper, by Matthew Merian, the elder, the master of Hollar. There are great doubts as to their first appearance in 1621, as mentioned by Fuessli and Heineken, but editions are known to exist with the respective dates of 1649, 1696, 1698, 1725, 1744, 1756, and 1789. Some of these are in German, and the rest are accompanied with a French translation by P. Viene. They are all particularly described by Peignot.⁶² Merian states in his preface that he had copied

⁶⁰ Essai sur l'Orig. de la Gravure, i. 120.

⁶¹ Heineken Dictionn. des Artistes, i. 222.

⁶² Recherches, &c. p. 71.

the paintings several years before, and given his plates to other persons to be published, adding that he had since redeemed and retouched them. He says this Dance was repaired in 1568 by Hans Hugo Klauber, a citizen of Basle, a fact also recorded on the cut of the painter himself, his wife, Barbara Hallerin, and his son, Hans Birich, by the before-mentioned artist, G. S. and that it contained the portraits of Pope Felix V. the Emperor Sigismund, and Albert, King of the Romans, all of whom assisted at the Council of Basle in the middle of the 15th century, when the painting was probably executed.

A greatly altered and modernised edition of Merian's work was published in 1788, 8vo. with the following title, "La Danse des Morts pour servir de miroir à la nature humaine, avec le costume dessiné à la moderne, et des vers à chaque figures. Au Locle, chez S. Girardet libraire." This is on an engraved frontispiece, copied from that in Merian. The letter-press is extracted from the French translation of Merian, and the plates, which are neatly etched, agree as to general design with his; but the dresses of many of the characters are rather ludicrously modernised. Some moral pieces are added to this edition, and particularly an old and popular treatise, composed in 1593, intitled "L'Art de bien vivre et de bien mourir."

A Dance of Death is recorded with the following title "Todtentantz durch alle Stande der Menschen," Leipsig, durch David de Necker, formschneider. 1572, 4to.⁶³ Whether this be a copy of the Basle or the Berne painting, must be decided on inspection, or it may possibly be a later edition of the copy of the wood-cuts of Lyons, that will be mentioned hereafter.

In the little Basle, on the opposite side of the Rhine, there was a nunnery called Klingenthal, erected towards

⁶³ Heller Geschichte der holtzchein kunst. Bamberg, 1823, 12mo. p. 126.

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the end of the 13th century. In an old cloister, belonging to it there are the remains of a Dance of Death painted on its walls, and said to have been much ruder in execution than that in the Dominican cemetery at Basle. On this painting there was the date 1312. In the year 1766 one Emanuel Ruchel, a baker by trade, but an enthusiastic admirer of the fine arts, made a copy in watercolours of all that remained of this ancient painting, and which is preserved in the public library at Basle.⁶⁴

The numerous mistakes that have been made by those writers who have mentioned the Basle painting have been already adverted to by M. Peignot, and are not, in this place, worthy of repetition.⁶⁵ That which requires most particular notice, and has been so frequently repeated, is the making Hans Holbein the painter of it, who was not born till a considerable time after its execution, and even for whose supposed retouching of a work, almost beneath his notice in point of art, there is not the slightest authority.

In the small organ chapel, or, according to some, in the porch, of the church of St. Mary at Lubeck in Lower Alsace, there is, or was, a very ancient Dance of Death, said to have been painted in 1463. Dr. Nugent, who has given some account of it, says, that it is much talked of in all parts of Germany; that the figures were repaired at different times, as in 1588, 1642, and last of all in 1701. The verses that originally accompanied it were in low Dutch, but at the last repair it was thought proper to change them for German verses which were written by Nathaniel Schlott of Dantzick. The Doctor has given an English translation of them, made for him by a young lady of Lubeck.⁶⁶ This painting has been

⁶⁴ Basle Guide Book.

⁶⁵ Recherches, 11 et seq.

⁶⁶ More on the subject of the Lubeck Dance of Death may be found in 1. An anonymous work, which has on the last leaf, "Dodendantz, anno domini mccccxvi. Lubeck." 2. "De Dodendantz fan Kaspar Scheit, na der utgave fan, 1558, unde de Lubecker fan, 1463." This is

engraved, and will be again mentioned. Leipsic had also a Dance of Death, but no particulars of it seem to have been recorded.

In 1525 a similar dance was painted at Anneberg in Saxony, which Fabricius seems alone to have noticed. He also mentions another in 1534, at the palace of Duke George at Dresden.⁶⁷ This is described in a German work written on the subject generally, by Paul Christian Hilscher, and published at Dresden, 1705, 8vo. and again at Bautzen, 1721, 8vo. It consisted of a long frieze sculptured in stone on the front of the building, containing twenty-seven figures. A view of this very curious structure, with the Dance itself, and also on a separate print, on a larger scale, varying considerably from the usual mode of representing the Macaber Dance, is given in Anthony Wecken's Chronicle of Dresden, printed in German at Dresden 1680, folio. It is said to have been removed in 1721 to the churchyard of Old Dresden.

Nicolai Karamsin has given a very brief, but ludicrous, account of a Dance of Death in the cross aisle of the Orphan House at Erfurth;⁶⁸ but Peignot places it in the convent of the Augustins, and seems to say that it was painted on the panels between the windows of the cell inhabited by Luther.⁶⁹ In all probability the same place is intended by both these writers.

There is some reason to suppose that there was a

a poem of four sheets in small 8vo. without mention of the place where printed. 3. Some account of this painting by Ludwig Suhl. Lubeck, 1783, 4to. 4. A poem, in rhyme, with wood-cuts, on 34 leaves, in 8vo. It is fully described from the Helms. library in Brun's Beitrage zu krit. Bearb. alter handschr. p. 321 et seq. 5. Jacob à Mellen Grundliche Nachricht von Lubeck, 1713, 8vo. p. 84. 6. Schlott Lubikischers Todtentantz. 1701. 8vo. 7. Berkenmeyer, le curieux antiquaire, 8vo. p. 530; and, 8. Nugent's Travels, i. 102. 8vo.

⁶⁷ Biblioth. Med. et inf. ætat. v. 2.

⁶⁸ Travels, i. 195.

⁶⁹ Recherches, xlii.

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Dance of Death at Nuremberg. Misson, describing a wedding in that city, states that the bridegroom and his company sat down on one side of the church and the bride on the other. Over each of their heads was a figure of Death upon the wall. This would seem very like a Dance of Death, if the circumstance of the figure being on both sides of the church did not excite a doubt on the subject.

Whether there ever was a Macaber Dance at Berne of equal antiquity with that of Basle has not been ascertained: but Sandrart, in his article for Nicolas Manuel Deutch, a celebrated painter at Berne, in the beginning of the 16th century, has recorded a Dance of Death painted by him in oil, and regrets that a work materially contributing to the celebrity of that city had been so extremely neglected that he had only been able to lay before the readers the following German rhymes which had been inscribed on it:

Manuel aller welt figur,
Hastu gemahlt uf diese mur
Nu must sterben da, hilft kun fund:
Bist nit sicher minut noch stund.

Which he thus translates:

Cunctorum in muris pictis ex arte figuris.
Tu quoque decedes; etsi hoc vix tempore credes.

Then Manuel's answer:

Kilf eineger Heiland! dru ich dich bitt:
Dann hic ist gar kein Bleibens nit
So mir der Tod mein red wird stellen
So bhut euch Gott, mein liebe Gselln.

That is, in Latin:

En tibi me credo, Deus, hoc dum sorte recedo
Mors rapiat me, te, reliquos sociosque, valete!

To which account M. Fuseli adds, that this painting, equally remarkable for invention and character, was retouched in 1553; and in 1560, to render the street in

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which it was placed more spacious, entirely demolished. There were, however, two copies of it preserved at Berne, both in water colours, one by Albrecht Kauw, the other a copy from that by Wilhelm Stettler, a painter of Berne, and pupil of Conrad Meyer of Zurich. The painting is here said to have been in *fresco* on the wall of the Dominican cemetery.⁷⁰

The verses that accompanied this painting have been mentioned as containing sarcastical freedoms against the clergy; and as Manuel had himself undergone some persecutions on the score of religion at the time of the Reformation, this is by no means improbable. There is even a tradition that he introduced portraits of some of his friends, who assisted in bringing about that event.

In 1832, lithographic copies of the Berne painting, after the drawings of Stettler, were published at Berne, with a portrait of Manuel; and a set of very beautiful drawings in colours, made by some artist at Berne, either after those by Stettler or Kauw, in the public library, are in the possession of the writer of this essay. They, as well as the lithographic prints, exhibit Manuel's likeness in the subject of the painter.

One of the bridges at Lucerne was covered with a Macaber Dance, executed by a painter named Meglinger, but at what time we are not informed. It is said to have been very well painted, but injured greatly by injudicious retouchings; yet there seems to be a difference of opinion as to the merit of the paintings, which are or were thirty-six in number, and supposed to have been copied from the Basle dance. Lucerne has also another of the same kind in the burial ground of the parish church of Im-hof. One of the subjects placed over the tomb of some canon, the founder of a musical society, is Death playing on the violin, and

⁷⁰ Pilkington's Dict. of Painters, p. 307, edit. Fuseli, who probably follows Fuesli's work on the Painters. Merian, Topogr. Helvetiæ.

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summoning the canon to follow him, who, not in the least terrified, marks the place in the book he was reading, and appears quite disposed to obey. This Dance is probably more modern than the other.⁷¹ The subject of Death performing on the above instrument to some person or other is by no means uncommon among the old painters.

M. Maurice Rivoire, in his very excellent description of the cathedral of Amiens, mentions the cloister of the Machabees, originally called, says he, the cloister of Macabré, and, as he supposes, from the name of the author of the verses. He gives some lines that were on one of the walls, in which the Almighty commands Death to bring all mortals before him.⁷² This cloister was destroyed about the year 1817, but not before the present writer had seen some vestiges of the painting that remained on one of the sides of the building.

M. Peignot has a very probable conjecture that the church-yard of Saint Maclou, at Rouen, had a Macaber Dance, from a border or frieze that contains several emblematical subjects of mortality. The place had more than once been destroyed.⁷³ On the pillars of the church at Fescamp, in Normandy, the Dance of Death was sculptured in stone, and it is in evidence that the castle of Blois had formerly this subject represented in some part of it.

In the course of some recent alterations in the new church of the Protestants at Strasburg, formerly a Dominican convent, the workmen accidentally uncovered a Dance of Death that had been whitewashed, either for the purpose of obliteration or concealment. This painting seems to differ from the usual Macaber Dance, not always confined like that to two figures

⁷¹ Peignot Recherches, xlv. xlvii.

⁷² Rivoire descr. de l'église cathédrale d'Amiens. Amiens, 1806. 8vo.

⁷³ Recherches, xlvii.

only, but having occasionally several grouped together. M. Peignot has given some more curious particulars relating to it, extracted from a literary journal by M. Schweighæuser, of Strasburg.⁷⁴ It is to be hoped that engravings of it will be given.

Chorier has mentioned the mills of Macabrey, and also a piece of land with the same appellation, which he says was given to the chapter of St. Maurice at Vienne in Dauphiné, by one Marc Apvril, a citizen of that place. He adds, that he is well aware of the Dance of Macabre. Is it not, therefore, probable, that the latter might have existed at Vienne, and have led to the corruption of the above citizen's name by the common people.⁷⁵

Misson has noticed a Dance of Death in St. Mary's church at Berlin, and obscurely referred to another in some church at Nuremberg.

Bruckmann, in his *Epistolæ Itinerariæ*, vol. v. Epist. xxxii. describes several churches and other religious buildings at Vienna, and among them the monastery of the Augustinians, where, he says, there is a painting of a house with Death entering one of the windows by a ladder.

In the same letter he describes a chapel of Death in the above monastery, which had been decorated with moral paintings by Father Abraham à St. Clara, one of the monks. Among these were, 1. Death demolishing a student. 2. Death attacking a hunter who had just killed a stag. 3. Death in an apothecary's shop, breaking the phials and medicine boxes. 4. Death playing at draughts with a nobleman. 5. Harlequin making grimaces at Death. A description of this chapel, and its painting was published after the good father's decease. Nuremberg, 1710, 8vo.

⁷⁴ Recherches, xlvi.

⁷⁵ Recherches sur les antiquités de Vienne. 1659. 12mo, p. 15.

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The only specimen of it in Holland that has occurred on the present occasion is in the celebrated *Orange-Salle*, which constitutes the grand apartment of the country seat belonging to the Prince of Orange in the wood adjacent to the Hague. In three of its compartments, Death is represented by skeletons darting their arrows against a host of opponents. ⁷⁶

Nor has Italy furnished any materials for the present essay. Blainville has, indeed, described a singular and whimsical representation of Death in the church of St. Peter the Martyr, at Naples, in the following words. "At the entrance on the left is a marble with a representation of Death in a grotesque form. He has two crowns on his head, with a hawk on his fist, as ready for hunting. Under his feet are extended a great number of persons of both sexes and of every age. He addresses them in these lines :

Eo sò la morte che caccio
 Sopera voi jente mondana,
 La malata e la sana,
 Di, e notte la percaccio ;
 Non fugge, vessuna intana
 Per scampare dal mio laccio
 Che tutto il mondo abbraccio,
 E tutta la jente humana
 Perchè nessuno se conforta,
 Ma prenda spavento
 Ch'eo per comandamento
 Di prender à chi viene la sorte.
 Sia vi per gastigamento
 Questa figura di morte,
 E pensa vie di fare forte
 Tu via di salvamento.

Opposite to the figure of Death is that of a man dressed like a tradesman or merchant, who throws a bag of money on a table, and speaks thus :

Tutti ti volio dare
 Se mi lasci scampare.

⁷⁶ Dr. Cogan's Tour to the Rhine, ii. 127.

To which Death answers :

Se mi potesti dare
Quanto si pote dimandare
Non te pote scampare la morte
Se te viene la sorte.⁷⁷

It can hardly be supposed that this subject was not known in Spain, though nothing relating to it seems to have been recorded, if we except the poem that has been mentioned in p. 25, but no Spanish painting has been specified that can be called a regular Macaber Dance. There are grounds, however, for believing that there was such a painting in the cathedral of Burgos, as a gentleman known to the author saw there the remains of a skeleton figure on a whitewashed wall.

⁷⁷ Travels, iii. 328, edit. 4to.