

class of ideographic moralities, executed chiefly in the 15th and 16th centuries.

This solemn and yet satirical pageant was often painted on the church-yard walls, and even in the Church itself, as at Hexham, in Northumberland, where the choir screen of the Abbey Church is adorned with a painting of the "Dance of Death," executed in the reign of Richard the Third, or early in that of his immediate successor. In other examples it is preserved in a more enduring form by means of the sculptor's art, as in the celebrated and beautiful Roslyn Chapel, near Edinburgh. Among the eccentric and bewildering variety of ornaments pertaining to that gorgeous specimen of the arts of the fifteenth century, (A. D., 1446,) the *plurima mortis imago* predominates, in some cases, with ludicrously incongruous adjuncts, but in others, with gentle and more suggestive symbols, as when flowers are seen sprouting from the empty sockets of a skull. Within the mouldings of two of the arches, or rather stone beams of the north aisle, the sculptor's allegories expand into more elaborate and coherent detail. There are two series of clustered figures in relief, the one representing the ancient allegory of "the Seven Deadly Sins," and the other "the Dance of Death."

The majority of these singular representations of death's universal sway; these

"Lessons for every heart, a Bible for all eyes,"

are replete with satirical assaults against the clergy and the priest-craft of the times; constituting in this respect an echo of the contemporary satires of the poets, just as Michael Angelo's altar-piece in the Sistine Chapel reproduces the satirical picturings of Dante's "Inferno."

Doubtless the poets in like manner reproduced the pictorial scenic moralities which appealed to their eyes, and suggested with fresh evidences the quaint incongruities of life and death which form so inexhaustible a theme for the satiric muse.

The Scottish poet Dunbar, who must have looked upon the rich devices of Roslyn Chapel when fresh from the sculptor's chisel, reproduces one of its "sermons in stone" in his "Dance of the Seven Deidly Synnis;" and it may not be thought improbable that the more popular "Dance of Death," either as represented in the Roslyn aisle, or in the same style of art, with an angel playing on the bagpipes bringing up the rear, as figured over the entrance to the cemetery of the ancient Collegiate Church of St. Giles at Edinburgh, may have