

The carrion in the bush, with throat ycorve,
 A thousand slain and not of qualme ystorve;
 The tyrant with the prey by force yrest,
 The town destroyéd, there was nothing left.
 There saw I burnt the shipés hopésteres,
 The hunter strangled with the wildé bears;
 The Sow freting the child right in the cradle;
 The Cook yscalded, for all hi's long ladle.
 Nought was forgot by the infortune of Mart;
 The Carter over-ridden with his cart,
 Under the wheel full low he lay adown."

Many of the scenes and characters depicted by the poet,—including some of those which appear the least poetical among the figures introduced,—are directly borrowed from familiar allegorical paintings, in examples of the "Dance of Death" which have been preserved; and are no doubt derived from some well known picture of the time, which the poet knew to be familiar to his readers. Several of them are reproduced among the curious wood-cuts of Mr. Bohn's publication. There was a famous representation of this ancient suggestive Morality, on the cloister walls of old St. Paul's, London, and if that existed, as is by no means improbable, in the time of Chaucer, its mortal pageantry would be readily recognised by his readers.

Stowe tells us, in his "Survey of London," printed in 1618, that there was a great cloister on the north side of St. Paul's Church, surrounding a plot of ground, known of old as Pardon Churchyard. He then states that about this cloister was artificially and richly painted the Dance of Machabray, or 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 poesie of this Dance were translated from French into English, by John Lydgate, Monk of Bury; the picture of Death leading all estates being executed at the expense of Jenkin Carpenter, in the reign of Henry VI. Again we learn from the same authority, of the destruction of this curious relic of Medieval Art. "On the 10th of April, 1549, the cloister of St. Paul's Church, called Pardon Churchyard, with the Dance of Death, commonly called the Dance of Paul's, about the same cloister, costly and cunningly wrought, and the chapel in the midst of the same churchyard, were all begun to be pulled down." This destruction was the work, as we learn, of the Protector Somerset, in order to obtain materials for building his own palace in the Strand.