



Paul Gustave Dore.

The best-known artist of modern times, Paul Gustave Dore, died on the 25th of January, 1883. He had survived his extraordinary popularity, which was due rather to fertility and daring originality of genius than to that superiority of conception and thorough work which give enduring value to artistic productions. During his short life he made about 50,000 designs, founded on a remarkable diversity of subjects. He developed surprising capacity in various departments of art, but did not attain an enduring distinction in either. His work was too diffuse, his undertakings too numerous, to give him more than an ample income and an evanescent eminence. That chapter in the history of art covering Dore's period of activity will not record his name among the immortal masters.

Dore was born at Strasbourg, January 6, 1832. He was taken to Paris before his school-boy days, and educated in the capital at the Lycee Charlemagne. The bent of his genius was disclosed early in life. His first lithographs were produced when he was only eleven years of age. When he was fifteen his series of sketches entitled "The Labors of Hercules," was exhibited in Paris. His earliest efforts as an artist yielded him but a precarious income, made chiefly by illustrating cheap books and illustrated periodicals. In 1848, certain sketches made by him in pen and ink were exhibited in the Salon, Paris. Six years later his designs for "The Wandering Jew" gave him a reputation in other countries besides France. In the same year, 1864, he produced the most powerful designs originated by him throughout his whole career, namely, those for Balzac's "Contes Drolatiques." His pictures illustrating Milton's "Paradise Lost" were made in 1866, in which and the subsequent year he illustrated the Bible. In 1869 and the two subsequent years he illustrated Tounyson's "Iliad of the King." "Christ Leaving the Frontium," a gigantic picture, was exhibited at the Salon, 1870, and in the same year and place his "Entrance of Christ into Jerusalem." His last seven years of the prodigious activity, which terminated only with his death, were in part bestowed on the illustration of Shakespeare. The disease which carried him off was inflammation of the throat, the result of a severe cold.

The deceased artist lived a simple, quiet life with his mother. He was a bachelor, married, as he expressed it to his mother and his art. He would facetiously ask his friends, when they spoke of his wifeless condition: "Must a man to a Turk to prove that he is of a domestic turn?" The two wives he had were enough for him. He was a strongly-built, athletic man, and in his youth excelled in feats of strength and agility. His complexion and eyes were exceedingly dark, and his hair raven black. Visitors to his studio, which was the best-provided in all Paris, found him in one of two contrasting moods—either the frolicsome, frank, childlike Dore who was irresistibly amiable, or a saturnine, morbid being, ashamed of himself and an affliction to his friends. In a review of his life the necessity is to deplore the fact, that Dore's attainments as an artist were vastly disproportioned to the originality, versatility and power of his genius.

Doré obituary, Louisville ky, The Courier Journal

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