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THE LAST JUDGMENT BY MICHELANGELO.

Frontispiece to The Open Court.
DIES IRAE.

BY BERNHARD PICK.

THE TEXT.

The Liturgical Text...

The text of this grand hymn which is variously called Prosa de mortuis, De die judicii, In commemoratione defunctorum, and which is used in the Latin Church regularly on the day of All Souls (November 2) and, at the discretion of the priest, in masses for the dead and on funeral solemnities, reads as follows:

1 "Dies irae, dies illa,
Solvet saeculum in favilla,
Teste David cum Sibylla.

2 "Quantus tremor est futurus,
Quando judex est venturus,
Cuncta stricte discussurus!

3 "Tuba, mirum spargens sonum,
Per sepulchra regionum,
Coget omnes ante thronum.

4 "Mors stupebit et natura,
Cum resurget creatura,
Judicanti responsura.

5 "Liber scriptus proferetur,
In quo totum continentur,
Unde mundus judicetur.

6 "Judex ergo quem sedebit
Quidquid latet apparebit,
Nil inultum remanebit.

7 "Quid sum miser tunc dicturus,
Quem patronum rogaturus,
Quum vix justus sit securus?

8 "Rex tremendae majestatis,
Qui salvandos salvas gratis,
Salva me, fons pietatis.

9 "Recordare, Jesu pie,
Quod sum causa tuae viae;
Ne me perdas illa die.

10 "Quaerens me sedisti lassus,
Redemisti crucem passus,
Tantus labor non sit cassus.

11 "Justae judex utlioniis,
Donum fac remissionis
Ante diem rationis.

12 "Ingemisco tamquam reus,
Culpà rubet vultus meus:
Suplicanti parce, Deus.

13 "Qui Mariam absolvisti,
Et latronem exaudisti,
Mihi quoque sper dedisti.

14 "Preces meae non sunt dignae,
Sed Tu, bone, fac benigne,
Ne perenni cremer igne.
15 "Inter oves locum praesta,
Et ab haedis me sequestra,
Statuens in parte dextra.

16 "Confutatis maledictis,
Flammis acribus addictis;
Voca me cum benedictis.

17 "Oro supplex et acclinis,
Cor contritum, quasi cinis:
Gere curam mei finis.

18 "[Lacrymosa dies illa,
Qua resurget ex favilla,
Judicandus homo reus,
Huic ergo parce, Deus!"

19 "Pie Jesu, Domine,
Dona eis requiem. Amen."

This is the marvelous Dies Irae, according to the received text in the Roman Missal. The last six lines in brackets are no part of the original poem. Besides this liturgical text we have two other recensions; one, the so-called text of the Marmor Mantuanum; the other by Haemmerlin.

The Marmor Mantuanum Text.

In an old Lutheran hymnbook published at Koenigsberg in 1650, entitled Neu Preussisches vollständiges Gesangbuch Lutheri und anderer geistreicher Männer samt den Fest-Begräbniss-Liedern und Kirchencollecten für die Kirchen, Schulen und Häuser im Herzogthum Preussen, we find the Dies Irae in a Latin text and German translation with the remark that these ancient rhymes were found near a crucifix at Mantua, in the church of St. Francis. In a manuscript of 1676 left by Charisius, a burgomaster of Stralsund, Mohnike found among other papers the Dies Irae in an enlarged form with the note that it is a copy of the Mantuan marble slab inscription. Mohnike published this text for the first time in modern times, as he supposed, in Kirchen- und literarhistorische Studien, Vol. I, pp. 1-100, Stralsund, 1824. But this notion must now be given up. In the Dublin Review (Vol. IX, 1883, p. 377) we read in a note that in a volume of an old and long forgotten religious periodical called the Orthodox Churchman's Magazine (March, 1806, X, 229) is printed the text of the Mantuan marble. The writer of that note asks whence it was taken. He is inclined to the view that it was copied from the original marble for the following reasons: it cannot have been taken from the Frankfort Florilegium, 1621, which has no title; nor from Charisius, otherwise the title would be the same as that given by Mohnike, who gives as heading Meditatio vetusta et venusta de novissimo judicio quae

1 Having in manuscript a collection of 75 translations made between 1646 and 1909, it is difficult to select any one. For this reason I give the text only.

2 Daniel (Thesaurus Hymnolog., II, 118) is of opinion that Charisius copied his text from the Florilegium, without any allusion to the Mantuan inscription.
Mantuae in aede S. Francisci in marmore legitur, whereas in the Orthodox Churchman’s Magazine of 1806 the heading is: Meditatio vetusta ac venusta, quae Mantuae in aede D. Francisci sub pictura extemii judicii legitur.

But the probability is that the text was derived from the first edition of Variorum in Europæ itinerum deliciae of Nathan Chytraeus of the year 1594, and this may have been the source for Charisius as well as for the editor of the Koenigsberg hymnbook and for the editor of the Orthodox Churchman’s Magazine. Chytraeus gives it simply as one of the inscriptions he found in Mantua, and as in the church of St. Francis. But as the church and convent of St. Francis were suppressed in 1797 (the year of the French occupation of Mantua), and as the church was desecrated in 1811 and the convent turned into a military arsenal, no trace of the slab can now be found either in the churches to which the monuments of St. Francis were removed, or in the royal or civic museums of the town.

The text according to Chytraeus (1594) p. 186, has the following stanzas, which are given before the opening stanza of the older form of the hymn, thus serving as an introduction and giving the poem the aspect of a solitary devotional meditation. The heading already given reads:

Meditatio vetusta et venusta de Novissimo judicio quae Mantuae in aede S. Francisci in marmore legitur.

1 “Cogita (quaeso) anima fidelis,
Ad quid respondere velis
Christo venturo de coelis.

2 “Cum deposcet rationem
Ob boni omissionem
Ob mali commissionem.

3 “Dies illa, dies irae,
Quam conemur praevenire.
Obviamque Deo irae.

4 “Seria contritione
Gratiae apprehensione
Vitae emendatione.”

[1 “Weigh with solemn thought and tender
What response, thou, soul, wilt render,
Then when Christ shall come in splendor.

2 “And thy life shall be inspected,
All its hidden guilt detected,
Evil done and good neglected.

3 “For that day of vengeance neareth;
Ready be each one that heareth
God to meet when He appeareth,

4 “By repenting, by believing,
By God's offered grace receiving,
By all evil courses leaving.”]
Then follows the *Dies irae, dies illa*, as we now have it from the first to the sixteenth stanza; but in place of the next verse, which forms the 17th of this, beginning: *Ora supplex et acclinis*, the Mantuan copy has the following for its 21st and concluding stanza:

21 "Consors ut beatitatis
Vivam cum justificatis
In aevum aeternitatis. Amen!"

["That in fellowship fraternal
With inhabitants supreme
I may live the life eternal. Amen!"]

The English translation here appended was published by Coles in the preface to his "Thirteen Original Versions," thus proving that he did not consider these stanzas as belonging to the original text. Judging from the first line of Joshua Sylvester's rendering:

"Dear, dear soul, awake, awake,"
published in *Divine Weekes of Du Bartas* (1621), it seems that he, the earliest translator of the *Dies irae*, also translated from the Mantuan text. The same was the case with William Drummond (died 1649), whose translation was first published in *Posthumous Poems* (1656).

Mohnike thinks that the Mantuan text is the original form of the hymn, or at least comes nearest to it. Of the same opinion is also Fink in his article "Celano" in Ersch and Gruber's *Encyclopedia* (Sect. I, Vol. XVI, p. 8). Lisco in his *Dies irae* (Berlin, 1840), p. 89, states that the original text is certainly the text which is found on that Mantuan marble slab. But as we have already stated no trace of the slab can now be found. The best authorities are in favor of the liturgical text as we have it, and consider the Mantuan text as an enlargement of the original.

*The Haemmerlin Text.*

A second rival of the received text is found among the poems of Felix Haemmerlein or Haemmerlin (Malleolus) of Zürich, a distinguished ecclesiastical dignitary of his age, a member of the councils of Constance and Basel, and a reformer of various abuses. He was born in 1389 and ended his life in 1457 in the prison of the Franciscan convent at Luzerne. Among several poems which he composed in prison was found a *Dies irae*, which was published from the manuscripts of the public library of Zürich, by Leonhard Meister. The text in 24 stanzas of three lines is given by Mohnike (pp. 39-42) and by Daniel (II, p. 103). It opens like the received text, which it presents with some verbal variations until the seventeenth stanza, and then adds the following stanzas, which we give with the translation of Dr. Coles.
18 "Lacrymosa die illa,
Cum resurget ex favilla,
Tanquam ignis ex scintilla.

19 "Judicandus homo reus;
Huic ergo parce, Deus,
Esto semper adjutor meus!

20 "Quando caeli sunt movendi,
Dies adsunt tunc tremendi,
Nullum tempus poenitendi.

21 "Sed salvatis laeta dies,
Et damnatis nulla quies,
Sed daemonum effigies.

22 "O tu Deus majestatis,
Alme candor trinitatis,
Nunc conjugecum beatis,

23 "Vitam meam fac felicem.
Proper tuam genetricem.
Jesse florem et radicem.

24 "Praesta nobis tune levamen,
Dulce nostrum fac certamen,
Ut clamemus omnes Amen."

In the French missals, e. g., that of Paris, 1738; and that of Metz, 1778, the opening lines read:

"Dies irae, dies illa,
Crucis expandens vexilla
Solvet seculum in favilla."

They are retained in the English translations of Williams, Alford, Irons, etc. The reading of the Mantuan text, "Teste Petro cum Sibylla," for "Teste David cum Sibylla" is retained e. g., in the popular German reproduction, "Es ist gewisslich an der Zeit" by Bartholomaeus Ringwaldt, 1582, the first stanza of which reads:

"Es ist gewisslich an der Zeit,
Dass Christ der Herr wird kommen
In seiner grossen Herrlichkeit,
Zu richten Bö's' und Fromme.
Da wird das Lachen werden theuer
Wenn Alles wird vergehn durchs Feuer,
Wie Petrus davon schreibet."

Concerning these variations in the text in the opening lines of our hymn, "Teste Petro cum Sibylla" and "Crucis expandens vexilla," the late Archbishop Trench writes: "An unwillingness to
allow a Sibyl to appear as bearing witness to Christian truth, has caused that we sometimes find this third line ‘Teste David cum Sibylla’ omitted, and in its stead ‘Crucis expandens vexilla’ as the second of this triplet. It rests on Matt. xxiv. 30, and on the expectation that the apparition of a cross in the sky would be this ‘sign of the Son of man in heaven.’ It is, however, a late alteration of the text; and the line ‘Teste David’ is quite in the spirit of the early and medieval theology. In those uncritical ages the Sibylline verses were not seen to be that transparent forgery which indeed they are; but were continually appealed to as only second to the sacred scriptures in prophetic authority; thus on this very matter of the destruction of the world, by Lactantius, Inst. Div., VII, 16-24; cf. Piper, Method. der christl. Kunst, pp. 472-507; these with other heathen testimonies of the same kind, being not so much subordinated to more legitimate prophecy as co-ordinated with it, the two being regarded as parallel lines of prophecy, the church’s and the world’s, and consenting witness to the same truths. Thus is it in a curious medieval mystery on the Nativity published in the Journal des Sacrans, 1846, p. 88. It is of simplest construction. One after another, patriarchs, prophets and kings of the Old Testament advance and repeat their most remarkable word about him that should come; but side by side with them a series of heathen witnesses, Virgil, on the ground of his fourth Eclogue, Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. iii. 25), and the Sibyl; and that it was the writer’s intention to parallelize the two series, and to show that Christ had the testimony of both, is plain from some opening lines of the prologue:

‘Et vos, gentes, non credentes
Peperisse virginem,
Vestrae gentis documentis
Pellite calligenem!’

‘O Judaei, Verbum Dei
Qui negatis, hominem
Vestrae legis, testem Regis
Audite per ordinem.

“And such is the meaning here—‘That such a day shall be has the witness of inspiration (of David) and of mere natural religion (of the Sibyl); Jew and Gentile alike bear testimony to the truths which we Christians believe.’ All this makes it certain that we ought to read Teste David, and not Teste Petro. It is true that 2 Pet. iii. 7-11, is a more obvious prophecy of the destruction of the world by fire than any in the Psalms; but there are passages enough in these (as Ps. xcvi. 12; xcvii. 3; xi. 6), to which the

3 See Pick, “The Sibylline Oracles in the Writings of the Church Fathers” in Lutheran Quarterly (Gettysburg, Pa.), July 1885, pp. 448-464.
poet may allude; and the very obviousness of that in St. Peter makes the reading which introduces his name, suspicious.4

THE AUTHORSHIP.

There are no less than nine persons to whom the authorship of the Dies Irae is ascribed. Of these two must be excluded as having lived too early to have written the poem, viz., Gregory the Great (died 604), and St. Bernard (died 1153). Besides these two names others are mentioned, viz., St. Bonaventura (died 1274); Latinus Frangipani, also called Malabranca, a Dominican (died 1296); Humbert, the fifth general of the Dominican Order (died 1276); Felix Hämmerlin5 or Malleolus, of Zürich (died 1457) etc.

The authorship of Dies Irae cannot be determined with absolute certainty. But the probability is that it belongs to Thomas à Celano, in Italy, a Franciscan friar of the thirteenth century, and the friend and biographer of St. Francis of Assisi, Superior of the Franciscan convents at Cologne, Mayence, Worms and Speier, who died after his return to Italy about A. D. 1255.

The first notice of the poem we find in a curious book, entitled Liber Conformitatum, written in 1385 by a Franciscan monk, Bartholomaeus Albizzi of Pisa (died 1401), setting forth the points in which St. Francis sought to imitate his divine Master. Having occasion to speak of Celano in this work, the author goes on to describe it as the place "de quo fuit frater Thomas, qui mandato apostolico scripsit sermone polito legendam primam beati Francisci, et prosam de mortuis quae cantatur in missa: Dies irae, dies illa etc. fecisse dicitur." This passage proves only the existence of a tradition in favor of the authorship of Thomas and the use of the Dies Irae in the mass toward the close of the fourteenth century.

The learned and painstaking Lucas Wadding in his Scriptores Ordinis Minorum, Romae, 1650, ascribes it to Thomas of Celano, mentioning that others assign the authorship to Bonaventura or to Matthaeus Aquaspastanus (d'Acquasparta). Wadding was followed by nearly all the modern writers on the subject and Mohnike comes to the conclusion: "Thomas of Celano must be regarded as the author of the Dies Irae until—which can scarcely be expected—it can be irrefragably proven that another composed it." E. Lempp in


his article “Thomas von Celano” (in the Herzog-Hauck, R. E., Vol. XIX, 1907, p. 719) thinks that if “Thomas composed the hymn, he is one of the greatest hymn-writers.”

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Whoever the author, it is certain that this hymn, which he wrote for his own edification, is one of the grandest and sublimest poetical productions. He composed it without dreaming that he would thereby edify unborn millions in languages and countries he never heard of. Like the cathedral builders, he forgot his own name in the grandeur of his theme. He felt that nothing is great but God, and nothing real but eternity.

The hymn is a soliloquy, a meditation on the terrible day of judgment, when all men shall be summoned before the throne of an infinitely holy God to answer for every thought, word, and deed. It brings before us the awful theme with a few startling words from the Scriptures, describes the collapse of the world, the resurrection of the dead, the appearance of the Judge, the opening of the books, the trembling of sinners, the award of eternal bliss and eternal woe. It expresses the sinner’s sense of guilt and dismay, and ends with a prayer for the mercy of the Saviour, who died for sinners, who pardoned Mary Magdalene and promised the penitent robber on the cross a seat in Paradise.

The author takes the beginning and the keynote of his poem from the prophetic description of the great day of Jehovah as described in Zephaniah i. 15, 16, where the text of the Vulgate reads: *Dies irae, dies illa,* dies tribulationis et angustiae, dies calamitatis et miseriae, dies tenebrarum et caliginis, dies nebulae et turbinis, dies tubae et clangoris super civitates munitas et super angelos excelsos,” which may be thus translated: “That day is the day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of waste and desolation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of the trumpet of alarm against fortified cities, and against high battlements.”

Besides the prophetic words of Zephaniah, the author has before him our Lord’s description of the judgment in Matt. xxv, and such passages as 2 Peter iii. 7-12, “The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up;” 1 Cor. xv. 52, “The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised”; 1 Thess. iv. 16; Dan. vii. 10; Rev. xx. 12; Job iv. 18; xv.
15; 1 Peter iv. 18; Eph. ii. 8; 2 Tim. i. 9. The poet took it for granted that the final judgment of the world is founded in reason as well as revelation, and was foretold by heathen sages as well as the Hebrew prophets. Hence he introduced alongside of David the fabulous Sibyl as the representative of the unconscious prophets of paganism. Michelangelo did the same in his famous frescoes in the Sistine Chapel of the Vatican, where he placed the Sibyls alongside of the prophets of Israel.

Which of the Psalms the author had in view is difficult to state. But he no doubt refers to those in which the judgment of the world is foretold, as Ps. xcvv. 13; cii. 26. In some copies and translations, however, "Peter" is substituted for "David" on account of 2 Pet. iii. 7-12.

With David is joined the Sibyl. Which passage in the Sibylline oracles the author had in view, is difficult to say. It is customary to think of the lines of the Sibylla Erythraea, which form an acrostic on the words ἵπποις ἠριστῶς Θεοὶ Ὡς Σωτήρ, i. e., "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour." This passage is quoted by Augustine in De Civitate Dei, XVIII, 23, where only twenty-seven lines of the thirty-four are given. The fuller form as contained in the Oracula Sibyllina, VIII, 217 ff. reads: "Jesus Christ, Son of God (the) Saviour, (the) cross (σταυρός). In this full form it is also given by Eusebius in The Life of the Blessed Emperor Constantine. The late Dr. Neale published a translation of the full form in the Christian Remembrancer of October 1861, which was published in The Open Court of June, 1911 (page 332) in connection with the writer's article on "The Cabala."

Verse 3. Here the words "tuba mirum spargens sonum" are no doubt in allusion to 1 Cor. xv. 52: "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised," and 1 Thess. iv. 16: "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God."

Verse 4. "Mors et natura" are personified, both are astonished at the resurrection of the dead. Daniel quotes with reference to this passage the words of Mephistopheles in Goethe's Faust:

"Wie Viele hab' ich schon begraben,
Und immer circulirt ein neues frisches Blut!
So geht es fort, man möchte rasend werden."

Some objected to the use of the word Sibyl in our poem, whereas they found no objection to Bernard's sequence beginning: "Laetabundus exultet," where we read: "Si non suis vatibus, credat vel gentilibus. Sibyllinis versibus haece praedicta."
Verse 5. The "liber scriptus" is the record of all human actions which will be opened on the judgment day, Dan. vii. 10; Rev. xx. 12.

Verse 6. The poet describes the judge on his seat before whom all is open. Daniel quotes as parallel the words of Schiller:

"Da gilt nicht falsche Kunst,
Nicht Freundschaft oder Gunst,
Kein frech Verneinen;
Was man hier noch versteckt,
Wird dort ganz aufgedeckt
Im Licht erscheinen."

Verse 7. Here the poet had undoubtedly in mind Job iv. 18; xv. 15, and especially 1 Pet. iv. 18: "If the righteous scarcely be saved (si justus vix salvabitur), where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

Verse 8. Here the second line expresses the idea of salvation by free grace as taught in Rom. iii. 24; Ephes. ii. 8; 2 Tim. i. 9, etc.

Verse 10. In the first line we have a touching allusion to Christ's fatigue on the journey to Samaria, John iv. 6: "Jesus fatigatus ex itinere, sedebat sic supra fontem." The Mantuan text reads venisti for sedisti which according to Mohnike would refer to the whole state of Christ's humiliation. But the correct reading is sedisti. It is related of the celebrated Dr. Samuel Johnson, that, rough and coarse as he was, he could never repeat this stanza in Latin without bursting into a flood of tears.

Verse 13. The Mary here is Mary Magdalene, or the sinful woman to whom Christ said: "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace" (Luke vii. 50). The Paris and Metz missals read for "Mariam absolvisti," "peccatricem absolvisti," following the reading "erat magna peccatrix," i. e., she was a great sinner (Luke vii. 37).

Verses 15 and 16 are suggested by the description of the judgment, in Matt. xxv. 33-46.

Verse 17. The last line in this verse: Gere curam mei finis, is usually considered as an appropriate close of the original poem, whereas the following six lines are considered an addition by another hand, probably from a funeral service already in public use. Nevertheless Mone (Lateinische Hymnen des Mittelalters, 1853, Vol. I, p. 408) thinks otherwise. He has suggested the idea that the Dies Irae did not arise, as was heretofore supposed, from the individual contemplation of a monk in his lonely cell, but was intended for the funeral service of the church, and was inspired by other eschatological hymns in public use. In one of these which he found
in a manuscript at Reichenau from the twelfth or thirteenth century, the passage occurs:

"Lacrymosa dies illa,
Qua resurgens ex favilla
Homo reus judicandus."

The closing prayer for the departed,

"Pie Jesu, Domine,
Dona eis requiem."

is likewise found in older hymns and missals. Mone conjectures that the author of Dies Irae himself appended these closing lines to his poem. Daniel (Vol. V, p. 110) and Philip Wackernagel (Das Deutsche Kirchenlied von der ältesten Zeit, etc., Vol. I, p. 138) are disposed to adopt this view. But says Schaff: "It seems to me much more probable that the original poem closed with Gere curam mei finis, and that the remaining six lines, with their different versification and the change from the first person to the third (huic and eis), were added from older sources by the compilers of medieval missals. Then we have a perfectly uniform production, free from any allusion to purgatory."

GENERAL ACCEPTANCE.

The hold which this sequence has had upon the minds of men of various nations and creeds has been very great. Goethe uses it with great effect in the cathedral scene of Faust to stir up the conscience of poor Margaret, who is seized with horror at the thought of the sounding trumpet, the trembling graves and the fiery torment:

"Horror seizes thee!
The trumpet sounds!
The grave trembles!
And thy heart
From ashy rest
To fiery torments
Now again requickened
Throbs to life!"

Justinus Kerner, the Swabian poet and mystic in his Lyrische Gedichte (5th ed., Stuttgart, 1854, pp. 23 ff.), makes good use of it in his poem Die vier wahnsinnigen Brüder, where four impious brothers enter a church to ridicule religion, but are suddenly brought to repent by hearing this judgment hymn. In the translation of the late S. W. Duffield (Latin Hymns, 497) the poem runs thus:7

7Another translation by James Clarence Mangan is found in The Dolphin (Philadelphia, April, 1905).
The Four Crazed Brothers.

"Shrivelled into corpse-like thinness
Four within the madhouse sit;
From their pallid lips no sentence
Tells of either sense or wit.
 Starkly there they face each other,
Each more gloomy than his brother.

"Hark! the hour of midnight striking
Lifts their very hair with fright;
Then at last their lips are open,
Then they chant with muffled might:
Dies irae, dies illa,
Solvet saeculum in favilla!

"Once they were four evil brothers,
Drunk and clamorous withal,
Who with lewd and ribald ditties
Through the holy night would brawl.
Heeding not their father's warning,
Even friend's remonstrance scorning.

"Gape their mouths for very horror,
But no word will issue thence;
God's eternal vengeance strikes them,
Chilled they stand without defence;
White their hair and pale their faces,
Madness every mind erases!

"Then the old man, dying, turned him
To his wicked sons and said:
Doth not that cold form affright you
Which shall lead us to the dead?
Dies irae, dies illa,
Solvet saeculum in favilla!

"Thus he spoke and thence departed,
But it moved them not at all;
Though he passed to peace unending,
While for them should justice call,
As their lives to strife were given,
Near to hell and far from heaven.

"Thus they lived and thus they revelled,
Until many a year had fled;
Others' sorrow cost them nothing,
Blanched no hair upon the head;
Jolly brothers! they were able
To hold God and sin a fable!

"But at last, as midnight found them
Drunkly reeling from the feast,
Hark! the song of saints was lifted
Through the church, and high increased;
'Cease your barking, hounds!' they shouted,
As with Satan's mouth undoubted.

"Then they rushed, those wicked brothers,
Roughly through the holy door;
But, as though at final judgment,
Down they heard that chorus pour:
Dies irae, dies illa,
Solvet saeculum in favilla."

It also furnishes a grand climax to Canto VI in Sir Walter Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstrel." In a letter to Crabbe he remarks: "To my Gothic ear, the Stabat Mater, the Dies Irae, and some of the other hymns of the Catholic church, are more solemn and affecting than the fine classical poetry of Buchanan; the one has the gloomy dignity of a Gothic church and reminds us constantly of the worship to which it is dedicated; the other is more like a pagan temple, recalling to our memory the classical and fabulous deities."

The Dies Irae has not only been translated into many languages, especially into the English and German where it has found a place in the hymn books of the church, but it has also given rise to some of the greatest musical compositions of Pales-
trina, Durante, Pergolese, Haydn, Vogler, Winter, Cherubini, Gottfried Weber, Neukomm, as well as Mozart’s famous Requiem, during the composition of which the musician died (1791).

It is interesting to hear what scholars say of this acknowledged masterpiece of Latin church poetry, and the greatest judgment hymn of all ages.

Daniel, the learned hymnologist, calls it “ecclesiæ Latinæ κα-μύλιον pretiosissimum” and adds: “Even those to whom the hymns of the Latin church are almost entirely unknown, certainly know this one; and if any can be found so alien from human nature as to have no appreciation of sacred poetry, yet certainly, even they would give their minds to this hymn, of which every word is weighty, yea, a veritable thunderclap.” (Thesaurus hymnor., II, p. 112.)

Frederick von Meyer, the author of a highly esteemed revision of Luther’s German Bible, in introducing two original translations of this Gigantenhymnus (i. e., “hymn of the giants”), calls it “an awful poem, poor in imagery, all feeling. Like a hammer it beats the human breast with three mysterious rhyme-strokes. With the unfeeling person who can read it without terror or hear it without awe, I would not live under one roof. I wish it could be sounded into the ears of the impenitent and hypocrites every Ash Wednesday, or Good Friday, or any other day of humiliation and prayer in all the churches.” (Der Lichtbote, Frankfort-on-the-Main, 1806.)

Albert Knapp, one of the greatest religious poets of Germany, compares the Latin original to a blast from the trumpet of the resurrection and declares its effect inimitable in any translation (Evangel. Liederschatz, 3d ed., p. 1347).

Archbishop Trench, author of one of the best translations of the Dies Irae, remarks: “Nor is it hard to account for its popularity. The meter so grandly devised, of which I remember no other example, fitted though it has here shown itself for bringing out some of the noblest powers of the Latin language—the solemn effect of the triple rhyme, which has been likened [by Frederick von Meyer] to blow following blow of the hammer on the anvil—the confidence of the poet in the universal interest of this theme, a confidence which has made him set out his matter with so majestic and unadorned a plainness as at once to be intelligible to all—these merits, with many more, have combined to give the Dies Irae a foremost place among the masterpieces of sacred song.” (Sacred Latin Poetry, 3d ed., p. 302.)

Abraham Coles, the author of thirteen distinct translations of Dies Irae, says of it among other things: “Every line weeps. Under-
neath every word and syllable a living heart throbs and pulsates. The very rhythm or that alternate elevation and depression of the voice which prosodists call the \textit{arsis} and the \textit{thesis}, one might almost fancy were synchronous with the contrition and the dilatation of the heart. It is more than dramatic. The horror and the dread are real, are actual, not acted!

"The \textit{Dies Irae}," to quote from the celebrated French philosopher V. Cousin, "recited only, produces the most terrible effect. In those fearful words, every blow tells, so to speak; each word contains a distinct sentiment, an idea at once profound and determinate. The intellect advances at each step, and the heart rushes on in its turn." \textit{(Lectures on the True, the Beautiful, and the Good, p. 177.)}

Mrs. Charles says of the \textit{Dies Irae}: "That hymn rose alone in a comparative pause, as if Christendom had been hushed to listen to its deep music, ranging as it does through so many tones of human feeling, from the trembling awe and the low murmurs of confession, to tender, pathetic pleading with One who, though the 'just, avenging Judge,' yet 'sate weary' on the well of Samaria, seeking the lost, trod the mournful way, and died the bitterest death for sinful men. Its supposed author, Thomas of Celano, in the Abruzzo, lived during the fourteenth century, was a Franciscan monk, and a personal friend of St. Francis himself, whose life he wrote. But so much doubt has hung about the authorship, and if Thomas of Celano was the author, so little is known of him—even the date of his birth and death not being ascertained—that we may best think of the \textit{Dies Irae} as a solemn strain sung by an invisible singer. There is a hush in the great choral service of the universal Church, when suddenly, we scarcely know whence, a single voice, low and trembling, breaks the silence; so low and grave that it seems to deepen the stillness, yet so clear and deep that its softest tones and words are heard throughout Christendom, and vibrate throughout every heart—grand and echoing as an organ, yet homely and human as if the words were spoken rather than sung. And through the listening multitudes solemnly that melody flows on, sung not to the multitudes, but 'to the Lord,' and therefore carrying with it the hearts of men, till the singer is no more solitary, but the selfsame tearful strain pours from the lips of the whole Church as if from one voice, and yet each one sings it as if alone, to God." \textit{(The Voice of Christian Life in Song, N.Y., 1864, p. 170.)}

The late Prof. Ph. Schaff in \textit{Christ in Song} (New York, 1870, p. 373) says: "The secret of the irresistible power of the \textit{Dies Irae}
lies in the awful grandeur of the theme, the intense earnestness and pathos of the poet, the simple majesty and solemn music of its language, the stately meter, the triple rhyme, and the vowel assonances chosen in striking adaptation to the sense—all combining to produce an overwhelming effect, as if we heard the final crash of the universe, the commotion of the opening graves, the trumpet of the archangel that summons the quick and the dead, and as if we saw 'the king of tremendous majesty' seated on the throne of justice and mercy, and ready to dispense eternal life and eternal woe.'

A PARODY.

In the writings of Leibnitz edited by G. E. Guhrauer (Berlin, 1840, Vol. II, pp. 371-372) is found a Latin parody by some Roman priest, who about the year 1700, gratified his hatred of Protestantism by perverting this hymn into a prophecy of the downfall of the reformed religion in Holland and England, which he hoped from the restoration of the Stuarts and the union of the French and Spanish crowns—the Bourbon family. This "Naenia Batavorum" or Dutchman's Ditty has been published by Lisco together with Guhrauer's German translation. The late A. Coles, whose translation we subjoin, remarks: "The skill and dexterity shown by the parodist in his manipulations of the original text are undeniable; but whatever may be thought of him as a poet, subsequent events have made it certain that he was no prophet; while the licentious irreverence amounting to blasphemy, which leads him to put the "Grand Monarque" in the place of Christ the Judge, is quite shocking to all right feeling and good taste. Still, as one of the curiosities of literature it possesses much interest. It is for this reason, and because it possesses an historical value, that we give it here."

The Latin Text.

"Dies irae, dies illa,
Solvet foedus in favilla,
Teste Tago, Scaldi, Scylla.

"Quantus tremor est futurus,
Dum Philippus est venturus,
Has Paludes aggressurus!

"Turba, mirum spargens sonum
Per unita regionum,
Coget omnes ante thronum.

"Mars stupebit et Bellona,
Dum Rex dicet: Redde bona,
Post haec vives sub corona.

"Miles scriptus adducetur,
Cum quo Gallus unietur
Unde leo subjugetur,

"Hic Rex ergo sum sedebit
Vera fides refugebit,
Nil Calvino remanebit.

"Quid sum miser tunc dicturus
Quem Patronum rogaturus
Cum nec Anglus sit securus?

"Rex invictae pictatis
Depressisti nostros satis.
Si cadendum, cedo fatis.
"Posthac colam Romam pie,
Esse nolo causa viae,
Ne me perdas illa die.

"Pro Leone multa passus,
Ut hic staret eras lassus,
Tantus labor non sit cassus.

"Magne Rector liliorum,
Amor, timor populorum,
Parce terris Batavorum

"Ingemisco tanquam reus,
Culpa rubet vultus meus,
Cadam, nisi juvat Deus.

"Dum Iberim domuistis,
Lusitanum eresisti,
Mihi quoque spem dedisti.

"Preces meae non sunt dignae,
Sed, Rex magne, fac benigne,
Ne bomborum cremer igne.

"Inter Tuos locum praeesta
Ut Romana colam festa,
Et ut tua canam gesta.

"Confutatis Calvi brutis,
Patre, nato, restitutis,
Redde mihi spem salutis!

"Oro supplex et acclinis
Calvinismus fiat cinis,
Lacrymarum ut sit finis!

The Translation.

"That day of wrath, how it shall burn
And shall the league to ashes turn,
From Tagus, Scheldt, and Scyella learn.

"What trembling multitudes afraid,
While Philip shall the land invade,
And through the marshes march and wade!

"The blare of trumpet making known
Through the united countries blown
Shall bring them all before the throne.

"Mars and Bellona dumb shall stand
What time the king shall give command:
‘Yield to my scepter, self and land.’

"His levied hosts he forth shall call,
And joined to these shall be the Gaul
Therewith the lion to enthrall.

"Then when this king shall sit and reign,
Lo! the true faith shall shine again,
And nought to Calvin shall remain.

"What shall I say forlorn and poor,
What patron sue then or procure,
When not the Englishman’s secure?

"King of unconquered piety!
Vexed hast thou ours sufficiently;
Falling, I yield to destiny.

* The League between England and Holland.
* Huguenots of France.
"Henceforth at Rome my vows I'll pay,  
Will not be cause more of the way,  
Lest thou destroy me on that day.

"Thou for the Lion much hast borne,  
That he might stand¹⁰ hast been much worn,  
Let not such toil of fruit be shorn!

"Great Ruler of the lilies,¹¹ hear!  
The people's love, the people's fear,  
Spare thou the Dutchman's lands and gear!

"Like one condemned, I make my plaint,  
Remember faults my visage paint—  
Unless God aid, I'll fall and faint.

"For that while thou hast conquered Spain,  
Hast Portugal upraised again,  
I too some hope may entertain.

"My worthless prayers no favor earn,  
But be, great King, benign, not stern,  
Lest that by blazing bombs I burn!

"Among thine own me reinstate,  
That I Rome's feasts may venerate,  
And thy achievements celebrate!

"When quelled the Bald-head's¹² stupid horde,  
The father¹³ and the son restored,  
Then hope of safety me afford.

"Do thou, I humbly supplicate,  
All Calvinism extirpate,  
That so our tears may terminate."

¹⁰ Formerly when France aided the Dutch.  
¹¹ Louis XIV, of France, in allusion to the lilies on his armorial shield.  
¹² William, Prince of Orange, who was bald.  
¹³ James II, of England, and his son, the Prince of Wales, expelled in December, 1688, by Parliament and the Protestant William of Orange.