

**ELIJAH THE
PROPHET,
AN EPIC POEM**

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Elijah the Prophet, an Epic Poem by G. Washington Moon

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G. WASHINGTON MOON

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The Translation of Elijah.

ETHERRAL yet visible; for, bright
 Unto intensity through purest light
 Indwelling, was that chariot of the skies.
 The horses, too, were creatures not of earth;
 Their necks were clothed with thunder; and their eyes
 Starry with beauty, told of heavenly birth.
 No harness fettered them; no curb nor girth
 Restrained the freedom of those glorious ones,
 Nor traces yoked the chariot at their heels;
 It followed them, as planets follow suns
 Through trackless space, in their empyreal courses;
 For lo! the fiery spirit of the horses
 Was as a mighty presence in the wheels,
 And in the dazzling whirlwind which behind them flew
 And caught Elijah up, as sunlight drinks the dew.
 Away, away to Heav'n those steeds upbore him;
 Leaving the clouds as dust beneath their feet.
 Wide open flashed the golden gates before him;
 And angel forms of splendour rose to greet
 The favoured prophet. Oh, the rapture sweet!
 The ecstasy most thrilling which came o'er him!
*But thoughts are voiceless when we soar thus high;
 And, like the lark that vainly strives to beat*

With little wings the air and pierce the sky,
 We fall again to earth. Ellsds there
 Wept o'er his loss, but wept not in despair.
 No; though a few regretful tear-drops fell,
 He knew that with Elijah all was well;
 For through the open gates of Heaven there rang
 Strains of the song of welcome that the angels sang.
 O who can picture that transcendent sight!
 Who fitly can relate the wondrous story!
 Who paint the aerial beauty of that night
 Or sing the fleetness of those steeds of glory
 And God's triumphant chariot of light
 Entering Heaven! Never in depth or height
 Had mortal gazed on such a scene before;
 Never shall years, how long soe'er their flight,
 The solemn grandeur of that hour restore
 Till the last thunder echoes "It is done!"
 And the archangel, dazzling as the sun,
 Descends to earth; and, standing on the shore
 Of ages, swears with upraised hand by ONE
 Who lived ere time its cycles had begun,
 That time shall be no more.

Elijah the Prophet.

^{AN}
Epic Poem,

^{BY}
G. WASHINGTON MOON,

Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, Author of "The Dean's English."



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“Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my
“heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my Strength
“and my Redeemer.”—PSALM XIX, 14.



PREFACE.

I HAVE undertaken a somewhat difficult task; perhaps an ambitious one.—I have chosen as the subject for a poem, the history of that prophet who has appropriately been styled “the grandest and most “romantic character Israel ever produced”;^{*} the stirring incidents of his life I have endeavoured to relate in the highest description of verse,—the sacred epic; and the stanza which I have selected as the vehicle for my thoughts, while it is the most beautiful, is also the most intricate we possess,—the Spenserian. But, remembering what the REV. CHARLES KINGSLEY wisely says should be the aim of every true poet; namely, not only “to write about that “which concerns all men,” but “to write in language which all “men can understand”; I have been studiously careful to employ the simplest forms of expression, consistent with the dignity of the

^{*} DR. STANLEY'S ‘Sinai and Palestine’, p. 325.

subject. Indeed, I shall not be surprised if, in the judgment of some of my readers, I shall be thought to have carried this simplicity of language a little too far. But this has to be said in its favour;—should the poem become a household book; as, from the general interest in the life of the mightiest of the prophets, I venture to hope it may; then, the very simplicity of its language will render it acceptable to a much larger portion of its readers than a more elevated style could possibly have done.

The student of verse will not fail to observe the alterations which I have occasionally made in the Spenserian stanza; particularly that of the Alexandrine in the first verse and elsewhere; an alteration which, when judiciously introduced in a long poem like the present, breaks, I think, the monotony of the ending of this noble stanza, and saves the line from the oft-repeated censure of POPE, who speaks of it as one

“ Which, like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along.”

With regard to the subject of the poem,—the life and times of the prophet ELIJAH,—the history has in it one incident which demands inquiry here. The translation of ELIJAH, and the transmission of the writing from him to JEHORAM;—in what order did these events occur? DR. MACDUFF, in his recent admirable work, ‘The Prophet of Fire’, is silent on this matter. Every other event