ELIJAH AND OTHER POEMS

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Elijah and Other Poems by B. M.

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Trieste

Elijah;

and Other Poems.

BY

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Contents.

ELIJAH.

BENEATH the silent stars I stand alone,
And hear the hollow murmur of the stream,
The whisper of the palm-trees faintly touched
And troubled by this wandering wind that woke
When the red sun went down: alone I stand,
And see as in a dream these bending skies,
And hear the wind go by. And every sound
Is sorrowful, and every star is dim;
For God has taken from my head this day
My Master, as He said.
They search for him,—
Now that the moon is rising on the hills
Beyond the river,—in each solemn pass,
In haunted caves, on lonely mountain sides;
A chosen band of fifty men, who know
The secret places of the wilderness

And fear no evil there; each seeker cheers
His brother in the quest.
And I alone
Wait idly here, and seek not for my lord;
Beside the wailing river I sit down,
I weep when I remember him: oh vain
That busy search on those pale hills that shine
Faint in the moonlight,—earth and heaven are faint,
Pale as a desert-dream, and changed,—my sight
Was dazzled by the glories I beheld
When he was taken, and before mine eyes
Still glow the fiery steeds, the chariot burns,
And those strange horsemen ride.
Oh vain this search,
And vain and wild the phantom of a hope
Which haunts my soul to-night, and will not sleep—
That once again, as in past days, the man
I loved and served is only gone from me
To dwell a little while alone with God,
And to return. How often have I watched,
With beating heart and eager eyes, to see
His distant form, beneath the sun or moon,
Descending stately from those lonely heights
Where God received him. Might some blessed hour
But once again restore him, with what joy
Would all my spirit wake and go to him,

And cleave to him more closely evermore:
But ah! I know, in my sad soul I know,
That never day nor night, nor man nor God
Will bring him back to me.
They think to find
The Master sleeping, with his lofty head
Low pillowed on the stones, his eagle glance
Veiled softly like a weary child's, his brow
Wet with the drops of night: or, if he wakes,
To hear once more that strange and solemn voice
Crying in the vast wilderness,—a cry
Lonely and terrible, to pierce the soul,
Dividing flesh and spirit: or afar
Upon some silent height to see him stand
Wrapped in celestial visions: or to find,
At least to find him dead, and bear him thence.

Then would they bring my Master back again,
And silent in that silent Presence stand,
Whilst I would rise and minister to him
With double reverence, and fold him close
As for eternal sleep; and when at length
Each solemn rite was ended, and my hands
Could find no further work to do for him,
Contented would I lay my head upon
His grave, and die. My life was hid in him.