

Elijah.

IT was the great Elijah in the chariot of heaven,
 With the horses of Jehovah, by a mighty angel driven,
 And the chariot wheels were rushing 'mid a mist of fiery spray,
 Through the glory of the night to higher glory of the day.

It was the great Elijah—but meek and still was he,
 For he trembled at the glory which his flesh was soon to see,
 Going, girdled in his sackcloth, as the prophets were arrayed,
 To the splendour of the Presence where the angels are dismayed.

Unwonted was the honour which his Master would accord
 To His true and faithful witness, bravest servant of the Lord;
 But better had he borne, I trow, the sad old human way
 Of entering by the gates of Death into eternal day.

Aye, better had he borne to turn his face unto the wall,
 With his kindred in their kindness gathered round him, one and all,
 And to lie down with his fathers in the dust for some brief space,
 For the death, he once had dreaded, now appeared a tender grace.

It was the great Elijah; and the form that would dilate
 In the presence of King Ahab, and his councillors of State,
 Now bowed its head in lowliness, as if it dared not cope
 With the terror of the glory and the wonder of the hope.

Away from earth they travelled; yet he somehow seemed to know
 The road, as if his weary steps had trod it long ago;
 And was not that the wilderness to which he once had fled?
 And that the lonely juniper where he had wished him dead?

And was not that the cave where he had sat in sullen mood,
 Until he heard the "still small voice" that touched his heart with good?
 And was not that the road by which from Carmel he had run
 Before the chariot of the king about the set of sun?

Yea, God was backward leading him to heaven along the path
 Which he erewhile had travelled o'er in fear of grief or wrath,
 That by its mingled memories his heart he might prepare
 For the grandeur of the glory and the crown he was to wear.

Now, as they drove, careering, with the fire-flakes round the wheels,
 And the sparks that rushed like shooting stars from the horses' flashing
 heels.

Lo! he was aware of a throng of men lay strewn along the road;
 And straight at them the angel drove the chariot of God.

"Stay, stay!" then cried Elijah, "rein up the fiery steeds;
 They will mangle those poor people lying there like bruised reeds;
 See, they stir not; they are sleeping; or their thoughts are far away,
 And they do not hear the wheels of God to Whom perchance they pray.