

ELIJAH.

The Author of this English version has endeavored to render it as nearly in accordance with the Scriptural Texts as the Music to which it is adapted will admit; the references generally are therefore to be considered simply as authorities.

PART THE FIRST.

RECITATIVE (a).—MR. SCOTT.

ELIJAH.—As God the Lord of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

1 Kings xvii. 1.

OVERTURE.

1. CHORUS (b).

THE PEOPLE.—Help, Lord! wilt Thou quite destroy us?

The harvest now is over, the summer days are gone, and yet no power cometh to help us! Will then the Lord be no more God in Zion?

Jer. viii. 20.

(a) Mendelssohn displays a thorough appreciation of the dramatic events to be described, by commencing his great Oratorio, not with the orthodox Overture, but with a startling Recitative, which gives the key to the incidents embraced in the Work.

The Overture follows—*D Minor—Moderato ma poco a poco piu agitato*, 4-4—one of the Composer's greatest instrumental Compositions—powerfully suggestive of the long-continued drought—the parched earth—the failing vegetation and ultimate famine.

Mendelssohn has been one of the greatest exponents, in modern days, of Bach's style, and this subject may have been suggested by the opening of Bach's *E Minor* fugue for the Organ, to which, in structure, it bears a close resemblance.

(b) By skillful preparation in the last few bars, the Overture leads directly into this movement *D Minor—Andante lento*, 4-4—in which, after thrilling exclamatory phrases by full Chorus, the Tenor introduces an exquisite subject on the words, "The harvest now is over," &c., afterwards wrought up with increasing intensity into passages of impassioned declamation, in the midst of which Chorus and Orchestra suddenly subside into *pp* on the words, "Will then the Lord be no more God in Zion?"

The succeeding Choral Recitative is a striking illustration of the dramatic use Mendelssohn sometimes made of the Chorus. Indications of Choral Recitative may be found in the works of earlier writers, as, for example, at the close of the Chorus in *Israel in Egypt*, "He sent a thick darkness;" but it was left for him to develop a field so rich in dramatic effects.

In the Duet and Chorus following, the melody is remarkably expressive, sustained by a delicate accompaniment, enriched by passages of great beauty for the Winds.

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