

schoolmen, have never ceased to perplex the ages, are made forever luminous in the clarified brains of omniscent Sophs. or Juniors. But hold—I sit recalling the scenes and incidents of days that are no more.

I shall endeavor, in this article, to relate the circumstances out of which sprang a poem as clear and beautiful as full-orbed Luna when slowly climbing the Eastern sky. From this poem I shall also give such quotations, and make such remarks upon the language and subject-matter of it as will serve to awaken, if nothing more, the curiosity of the readers of the *Athenæum*.

The scene is laid in the "Mustapha's" chamber—the time, a cool evening in November 185—. The "Powers" are congregated in said chamber, attracted largely, if not solely, by a fire made of material procured in no ordinary way. In those days questions as to source of supplies were burked with an astounding suddenness. The fire was cheering and attractive, and the "Powers" knew it. On this occasion the stove became the centre of a most interesting group. The "Mustapha," his ear supporting a quill which had been sadly abbreviated in forming his undecipherable hieroglyphics, is fast asleep in an arm-chair, worn out with his duties as secretary of a mighty empire. The "Grimvalde," always thoughtful—unusually so on this evening—is scraping together some thoughts on *poluphloisboio thalasses* of pedantry. He never sat upon a chair that did not receive my warm sympathy, but on this interesting occasion the supporter of the great "Power" creaked under the united burden of his thought-convulsed and gigantic frame. The "Mogul," too, is there, his head in the serene attitude of thought, his feet upon the inspiring stove. He is in quest of the great elixir which the old alchemists sought after in vain, and lo! he has obtained it. He sees immortality in the spoil and is satisfied. Two minor "Powers," growing garrulous under the inspiration of the quickening flame, are engaged—the one in conning some fascinating lines of a georgic—the other in punching the last section of a once shapely pie.

But the fire is now low and all have departed save the "Mustapha" and "Mogul." Only those who have no great purpose in life

can afford to spend much time in sleep. The guiding Powers, at least, must not do so. The "Mustapha" is now awake, and it was not difficult to see that through repose he had mewed his mighty youth. Yes, awake he surely was, and strange to say the room was electric with poetry. The whole being of the "Power" was quivering with the afflatus of the descending goddess. Even Calliope was startled to find such congenial soil, fully believing some hero would be made yet more heroic. The "Mogul," conscious that not a moment should be lost, brought to his illustrious colleague that Poem of Poems—that inimitable epic which ranges the latitude and longitude of all thought—which forms an organic and vital connection between all fragmentary and disjointed concepts—*Bailey's Mystic*. "Take it," said he, "and read to me once more those lines of exquisite beauty—of sounding cadence. My mental pangs are so exquisite that nought can chasten them save those wondrous and mysterious lines of thundering sound. Nay, more, I look to them for deliverance; by them and by them only will the great thoughts within me be made to take shape, and a poem come forth glowing upon the horizon of my intellectual firmament as perfect and divine as Minerva when she sprang full-armed from the brain of the astonished Jove." Thus spake the 'Mustapha,' and the 'Mogul' obeyed with an alacrity that could be secured only by the inspiration which was fast taking possession of his own being. As the words came forth clearly enunciated and emphasised, the face of the 'Mustapha,' previously cadaverous, became all aglow with an indescribable iridescence, and before ten lines of the memorable poem had conveyed their burden to the Power's sensitive soul, the words "Gudolphus in the Past" exploded from his lips like a pellet from a pop-gun. "The hero of the coming poem, as sure as fate," cried the 'Mogul,' springing for paper which he instantly placed before the face of the inspired 'Mustapha.' So whipping his pen from his ear, the 'Power' dashed off this magnificent introduction:

"Aghast the stars, with triple
Belts trilocular, horrescent
Gloamed thro' Heaven and Earth,
Orbific plunging.