

**THE MYSTIC AND
OTHER POEMS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649488599

The Mystic and Other Poems by Philip James Bailey

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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PHILIP JAMES BAILEY

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BY

PHILIP JAMES BAILEY

AUTHOR OF "PESTUS"

LONDON :

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.

1856.

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THE MYSTIC:

A POEM.

WHO holds not life more yearful than the hours
Since first into this world he wept his way,
Erreth much, may be. Called of God, man's soul
In patriarchal periods, cometlike,
Ranges perchance all spheres successive; and in each,
With nobler powers endowed and senses new,
Set season bideth. So with him, it seemed
Of whom I speak, the initiate of the light,
The adopted of the water and the sun.

TIME's sand-dry streamlet through its glassy straits
Flowed ceaseless; and he lived a threefold life
Through all the ages; yea, seven times his soul
Commingling, leavened with its light the world.
First in the feasts of life, and the sun's son,
Through all God's homely universe he roamed

Regenerant Truth ; from hall to hall pursue,
 As though from sphere to sphere the winged soul,
 Through all disguise the æternal unity ;
 Through all terrestrial ill celestial good ;
 Through triple darkness light ; through matter's
 marble veil
 The divine spirit, all parent of the sun,
 Queen of heaven's azure world-hive, celled with
 stars.

He at his birth the starry stamps received,
 For every limb held commune with its god,
 And planetary gifts plenipotent ;
 The moon dispensed him riches, and the sun
 Mind-wealth, that so before his dazéd eyne
 The splendid spectrum of immortal fame
 Perpetual danced ; soul-compulsory power,
 The god of psychopompous function, round
 Circling the sun with fourfold force ; love's star
 The joys that come with beauteous shapes and eyes
 Dewy and blue ; courage the god-star red ;
 Supremacy and justice they who held
 Successive, if usurped sway, o'er the skies.

Around him lay the great concerted whole ;

To ope the inner spirit by outward keys,
 Who while unclothing still can screen the truth,
 That inexpressive wisdom—silence known—
 Unless in this wise, lip them not aloud.

Initiate and perfect in mysteries,
 He graduated triumphant. Thrice he set
 His foot upon the mount of light divine
 And eyed the all beneath him. First, ere earth,
 Like the libation of a crownéd bowl,
 O'erspilled the depths of the unknown abyss,
 By Nile with honey flowing, that through soil
 Promethean, swift as eagle pouncing, drops
 Oceanwards, sun-beloved and primal land
 Of magic marvels; giant head of earth
 First looming from the flinty seed of fire
 And præsternal darkness—eldest ally
 Of lost Atlantis, lost ere Europe crept
 From Chaos' lap,—long time he wandered; (him
 His mother, child of royal priest, conceived
 Dreaming of Gods in visions of the night,
 Amid consphærate harmonies, and awaked
 Never until she clasped her dream-born) bent
 To snatch from labyrinthine secrecies,
 Wherein the holy mystics taught their rites,

Armed and impowered therewith, no foe he fears
Who seeks salvation in the heights of heaven.

Asp-crowned, gold shod (thus treat the abhorred
gold

Of false esteem) his breast bedight with gems—
Home of all virtues and the embrace of Truth—
He prayed, he prophesied, divined, and judged.

In granite graven, and on porphyry hall
And ceiling, with imperishable touch,
He wrought the rise of night, and chaos' growth,
The gross alluvium of time's turbid stream—
And birth of Love, that venerable babe,
The recreator he of deathless life ;
Wrought in that spirit awe-bound, wherewith, of old,
The workman chiselled some cherubic shape,
Nor knew but that the God who doth create,
And animate the whole—from whom the whole,
Like essenced, emanateth—might appear
In manifestive brightness, and array
His Being in the form the holy artist framed.

Close dogged by evil he the dateless hills,
Mountains of gems, of gold, of silver gained,

Within whose wombs he wonned ; but chased in
vain ;

For the more vanquished he, more power was his.
Him, naked ghosts of maddening beauty, lamped
By green and glistening gryphons' lidless eyes,
Led to alchemic vaults, where sat some seer
Great jewels minting, and from the refuse gold,
That nought be wasted, rounding royal crowns.
The costliest of all treasures, knowledge how
Like treasures to produce, he gathered there,
Nor cumbered him with perishable proofs.
Though by this tempted, and that warned, he took
The path of light, instinctive, and was saved.
For having fought his way through flood and flame,
Helped by good dæmons, hindered by the bad,
And closed the gates of thunder on the gods
Where they in their marmoreal heaven abode,
Dark as the hourless mansions of the dead,
And tested all things ; in the confined core
Of the heaven-wedding pyramid, at last
He fainted in perfection ; and discerned
How sweet was truth, for death in truth was life.

In that blest death the gods divided him,
And the stars claimed the portions erst their own ;