

with sprites and demons. The eerie, the fantastic, the horrible, had for Poe a most unnatural fascination. He strove to shake off the dull realities of this earthly existence to peer into the vast unknown and "dream dreams that no mortal ever dared to dream before."

The poems give us but a faint hint of the praeternatural gloom that enshrouds his 'Prose Tales.' The melancholic intenseness of these, in fact, forms the accepted basis of their classification into the semi-scientific, the illusive, the grotesque, and the simply horrible. The division of course, is only approximately correct, for the distinctive features of each merge at times. More than half however of the tales are based on the sentiment of horror, and for such topics as premature burials and abnormal crimes, our moody author developed an almost revolting penchant. It would appear as though his motive throughout is none other than in the words of Dicken's fat boy, 'to make your flesh creep.' Thus we find him portraying painful idiosyncracies of temperament, monomania and madness; and not finding horrors enough in his mundane surroundings, and in the region of real sin and suffering, he invented a world of his own—a world so weird, so strange—"without any order and where the light is as darkness"; and to match it he evolved new crimes with novel and terrible penalties.

The limits of this short paper prevent our doing even scant justice to his most fascinating tales. Among those possessing in a marked degree the weird and magical spirit are to be found several masterpieces, such as 'The fall of the house of Usher,' 'The Assniation,' and 'The Red Death.' In exquisite finish three tales 'Leiga,' 'Bernerice,' and 'Morella' excel. They uniformly refer to one person, the ever to be remembered Leiga, whom he "loved with a love that was more than love." There is such a ring of truth about these, that there is little doubt that they were founded on his own life-experience. In them, there is no plot, no attempt at analysis, no endeavor to be horrible. They simply voice the feelings of his heart, or as some one has neatly expressed it, they are the soliloquies of a heart.

Poe was never humorous. To wit he had no pretensions, and when he attempted to crack a joke there is a certain ghastliness about it that chills. There is no laugh and little sunshine. In the