

upon nature ; not a single breath of air crept through the frost-laden atmosphere ; the silent stars, God's lamps being out by night to light the tired traveller on his weary way, shone out one by one, to keep watch over the gloom.

The scene changed. Home gave way to fairy land ; beloved relatives to imagination's elfish children. The bewitched fire became a vast tranquil lake, into whose placid bosom danced the rippling waters of phantom spirits, all joyous as children that scamper on to see who will be the first to kiss their gentle mother. I could not and would not stir, afraid to break the enchantment of the moment laden with a mysterious solitude, that had crept over my soul, freeing it from the things of earth and raising it in silent contemplation to heaven itself. That sad feeling of kinship and yearning which dominated me was rudely broken by the clanging clatter of my door bell and I was brought back to mother earth with a jarring thud. The messenger told me that mother Egan was sick, nigh unto death. Duty called me and I hurried forth to harness my horse as I did not wish to disturb my boy at the mid-night hour.

A light breeze had suddenly sprung up and carried to my ear a horrible groaning as though a banshee were abroad, foretelling the early demise of Mother Egan. I opened the stable door. Horror of horrors ! My very blood ran cold. My teeth chattered ; my knees knocked together ; my heart thumped wildly against my ribs and my hair stood on end at the awful sight before me.

There to the wall was nailed a fearful, hideous, pain-stricken face ; its eyes were two glaring balls of fire, ready to leap from the widely

distended sockets ; its long ragged teeth appeared to be aching to grasp me as their lawful prey. Ten thousand grinning mocking devils laughed a fiendish blood-curdling laugh, as though taunting me to despair and goading on this visitor from the infernal regions to make short work of me. A merciful dizziness came to my relief, and I knew no more until the cold snow had brought me out of my faint. I had bathed in the waters of forgetfulness, and painfully arose, wondering if I had been walking in a nightmare. But, No ! The jibing trunkless spectre was there to prove that this was not a mere case of somnambulism. I showed my supernatural enemy the sight of my heels, and ran for dear life to my office. I awakened my boy, and asked him to help me rig up as I did not feel well. We proceeded on our way to the stable, you may rest assured that my *factotum* went first ; we turned the corner to the stable door. A cold sweat froze my limbs, for that hellish face was even more diabolical than before ; my boy was rooted to the ground. I had just strength enough to push him inside the door, and after numberless stops and starts, we reached the middle of the building.

At last terror gained the mastery over little Alick, and he groaned in terror :—" Oh ! Doctor, that ghost will take me sure, and then what will become of my poor mother." I could stand it no longer, dropping on my knees, I prayed to God. Strengthened, I arose and addressed the vision : In the name of heaven, if you are man, speak ; if you are a demon, depart to your bed of fire. I boldly advanced and found that my ghost was a hole in the curtain of my stable window, through which the brilliant rays of a cloudless moon