

it, which yawned dark and threatening at his feet, might be the home of some venomous reptile. He then describes the fury of the storm, and how at last, overcome by fatigue and hunger, he lies down with his gun beside him and his dog near by to warn him of any hostile approach.

He had only been sleeping a few minutes when he felt something cold pass over his face, something like a hand which glided over his body—he trembled, and a thrill of horror passed through all his limbs, his hair stood upright and he felt as though he were choking, having neither courage to raise himself, nor strength to seize his gun. He then proceeds to say that although he did not believe ghosts he would not dare confess what thoughts passed through his mind at that moment. Was it some spirit from another world which had appeared to frighten him? He did not believe it. Was it a hand in reality, a man's hand that had touched him? That might be. Was it a reptile that had glided over his body? That might also be? Was it the effect of his excited and weakened imagination? Even that might be. In any case, it is certain he says that he never experienced so depressing a sensation in his life. The storm had continued, one flash followed another without interruption, and the woods around him seemed like one vast furnace of fire. His eyes dazzled by the lightning, were suddenly struck by the sight of blood which was splashed upon the walls; he also saw some drops upon the panels of the door. At this the most frightful and incoherent ideas had possession of him. Could a person have been murdered there, in this spot at which he was alone in the middle of the night? Might it even be the assassin whose hand had passed over him a few minutes before in the hope of taking his gun away and thus depriving him of his own defence? But his dog was still there beside him sleeping quietly, and if it had been anyone who had come near him, the dog would certainly have warned him of their approach. While he is thus disturbed by a thousand conjectures, the