

terranean vault, and said, with faltering voice. "There, young man, is the cave: but, if you value your life, don't go into it! Listen, for once, to the words of an old man. Don't go into it!"

After looking cautiously into the cave for a moment or two, I turned to thank my centenarian friend for conducting me hither, but a sudden horror had seized him, and he was beating a hasty retreat.

I walked, gingerly, a little way into the cave: then stood and listened. Nothing was to be heard, nor seen (save a visible darkness), and I concluded that someone had been playing on the credulity of the old landlord. Emboldened by this thought, I ventured in a considerable distance, feeling my way with a cane, for there was a darkness here that might be felt.

But, listen!!! What do I hear? A rattling that sounds like footsteps on a stone pavement. A low, mumbling that comes from the interior of the cave. The sounds grow more distinct. It is a human voice I hear. Some one is approaching. I listen breathlessly. Now I catch tones that sound like the sighing of the wind. Now the tones become articulate, and I hear the words, "Who comes? Who comes? Who comes?" My breath grows quick and short, cold chills run down my spinal column, and my scalp twitches frightfully. And still that dismal, wailing sound — "Who comes? Who comes? Who comes?" — words which thrill me with terror,

"—harrow up my soul: freeze my young blood:

Make my two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres;

My knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand on end,
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine."

Now, a bright light is reflected on a rock before me. It seems to come from a lantern, around a curve. It moves slowly towards me. I am not mistaken; it is rounding a curve. O, horror! there it is in full view and coming straight towards me. What is it? A human skeleton.

strolling slowly up with swaggering stride and holding in its hand a dark-lantern.

"Angels, and ministers of grace, defend us! Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin dam'd, Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell!

Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,
That I will speak with thee."

But, no, I cannot; my tongue cleaves to the roof of my mouth and my feet are glued to the floor. On he comes, his bony feet rattling, frightfully on the stone walk. He turns his light full upon me, and repeats once more his gruesome, guttural growl, "Who come? Who comes?"

Now, he is close up to me. He stretches out his long bony arm and seizes me by the shoulder; while his big eyes glare full upon me. Cold chills course through every fibre of my body. In deep tones, like a death-rattle, he addresses me, punctuating each word with a clack of his jaws: "Hold! I—am—night—patrol—in—these—nocturnal—regions. Say—who—thou—art, — and —whence—thou—dost—come."

I could tell him neither of these things. I had forgotten my name; and the world I so recently had left had already passed into oblivion. I was utterly helpless and trembled like an aspen leaf before him.

But, even demons pity begging saints; and so did this skeleton let fall a tear, and grinned on me with beaming love. In mild tones he explained that he was a guide for strangers visiting the cave, and if I would accept his company, he would show me through. Now, "fear makes devils of cherubims;" and mine had evidently mistaken the real character of this being. But my tumultuous fears having now subsided, I accepted his kind offer.

We were on the point of setting out, when he turned to me, and said: "You will find it a trifle inconvenient travelling, in the flesh; you had better leave your body here till we return."

So saying, he placed his bony fingers on my head, and three times slowly uttered the word—"Mutare." At the third repeti-