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Poetry.

What They Say.

BY SUSAN HARTLEY.

What does the brook say, dashing its feet
Under the lilies' shade, brimming bowls,
Brightening the shades with its tender song,
Cheering all drooping and sorrowful souls?
It says not, "Be merry!" but, deep in the wood,
Rings back, "A little maiden, be good, be good!"
What does the wind say, pushing slow sails
Over the great, troubled path of the sea;
Whirling the mail on the breezy height,
Shaking the fruit from the open hard tree?
It breathes not, "Be happy!" but sings loud and long,
"O bright little maiden, be strong, be strong!"
What says the river, gliding along,
To its home on the ocean's breast;
Fretted by rushes, blundered by bars,
Ever weary, but singing of rest?
It says not, "Be bright!" but in whispering grave
"Little maiden, be patient, be brave!"
What is the stars say, keeping their watch
Over our slumbers, the long, lone night;
Never closing their bonny bright eyes,
Though great storms blind them, and tempests fight?
They say not, "Be splendid!" but write on the blue,
In clear silver letters, "Maiden, be true!"
—St. Nicholas.

Selected Story.

"NO LIVING VOICE."

"How do you account for it?"
"I don't account for it at all. I don't pretend to understand it."
"You think, then, that it was really supernatural?"
"We know so little what Nature comprehends, what are its powers and limits—that we can scarcely speak of anything that happened as beyond it or above it."
"And are you certain that this did happen?"
"Quite certain; of that I have no doubts whatever."

These sentences passed between two gentlemen, in a drawing room of a country house, where a small family party was assembled after dinner; and in consequence of a lull in the conversation occurring at the moment, they were distinctly heard by nearly everybody present. Curiosity was excited, and inquiries were eagerly pressed as to the nature or supernature of the event under discussion.

"A ghost story!" cried one; "oh, delight! we must and will hear it!"
"Oh, please, no," said another; "I should not sleep all night—and yet I am dying with curiosity."

Others seemed inclined to treat the question rather from a rational or psychological point of view, and would have started a discussion upon ghosts in general, each giving his own experience; but these were brought back by the voice of the hostess, crying:

"Question, question!" and the first speakers were warmly urged to explain what particular event had formed the subject of their conversation.

"It was you, Mr. Browne, who said you could not account for it; and you are such a matter-of-fact person, that we feel doubly anxious to hear what wonderful occurrence could have made you so grave and earnest."

"Thank you," said Mr. Browne. "I am a matter-of-fact person, I confess; and I was speaking of a fact; though I must beg to be excused saying any more about it. It is an old story, but I never even think of it without a feeling of distress, and I should not like to stir up such keen and burning memories, merely for the sake of gratifying curiosity. I was relating to Mr. Smith, in a few words, an adventure which befell me in Italy many years ago; giving him the naked facts of the case, in refutation of a theory which he had been propounding."

"Now we don't want theories, and we won't have naked facts; they are hardly proper at any time, and at this period of the year, with snow upon the ground, they would be most unseasonable; but we must have that story, fully and feelingly related to us; and we promise to give it a respectful hearing, implicit belief, and unbounded sympathy. So draw around the fire, all of you, and let Mr. Browne begin."

Poor Mr. Browne turned pale and red, his lips quivered, his entreaties to be excused became quite plaintive; but his good nature, and perhaps also the consciousness that he could really interest his hearers, led him to overcome his reluctance; and after exacting a solemn promise that there should be no jesting or levity in regard to what he had to tell, he cleared his throat twice or thrice, and in a hesitating, nervous tone, began as follows:

It was in the Spring of 18—, I had been at Rome during the holy week, and had taken a place in the diligence of Naples. There were two routes, one by the way of Terracina, and the other by the Via Latina, more inland. The diligence, which made a journey only twice a week, followed these routes alternately, so that each road was traversed only once in seven days. I chose the inland route; and after a long day's journey arrived at Capri, where we halted for the night. The next morning we started again very early; and it was scarcely yet daylight when we reached the Neapolitan frontier, a short distance from the town. There, our passports were examined, and to my great dismay, I was informed that mine was not on file. It was covered, indeed, with stamps and signatures, not one of

which had been procured without some cost and trouble; but one 'visa' was yet wanting, and that the all-important one, without which none could enter the kingdom of Naples. I was obliged, therefore, to alight, and to send my wretched passport back to Rome, my wretched self being doomed to remain under police surveillance at Capri, until the diligence should bring it back to me on that day week, at the soonest.

"I took up my abode at the hotel where I had passed the previous night, and there I presently received a visit from the Capro di Polizia, who told me, very civilly, that I must present myself, every morning and evening, at his bureau; but that I might have liberty to 'circulate' in the neighborhood during the day. I grew so weary of this dull place, that after I had explored the immediate vicinity of the town, I began to extend my walks to a greater distance; and as I always reported myself to the police before night, I met with no objection on their part.

"One day, however, when I had been as far as Alatri, and was returning on foot, night overtook me. I had lost my way, and could not tell how far I might be from my destination. I was very tired, and had a heavy knapsack on my shoulders, packed with stones and relics from the ruins of the old Pelagie fortress, which I had been exploring, besides a number of old coins, and a lamp or two which I had purchased there. I could discern no signs of any human habitation; and the hills covered with wood, seemed to shut me in on every side. I was beginning to think seriously of looking out for some sheltered spot under a thicket in which to pass the night, when the welcome sound of a footstep behind me fell upon my ears. Presently a man dressed in the usual long, shaggy coat of a shepherd, overtook me, and bearing of my difficulty offered to conduct me to a house at a short distance from the road, where I might obtain a lodging. Before we reached the spot, he told me that the house in question was an inn, and that he was the landlord of it. He had not much custom, he said, so he employed himself in shepherding during the day; but he could make me comfortable and give me a good supper, also; better than I should expect, to look at him; but he had been in different circumstances once, and had lived in service in good families, and knew how things ought to be, and what a signore like myself was used to.

"The house to which he took me, seemed, like its owner, to have seen better days. It was a large, rambling place, and much dilapidated, but it was tolerably comfortable within; and my landlord, after he had thrown off his sheepskin coat, prepared me a good and savory meal, and sat down to look at and converse with me while I ate it. I did not much like the look of the fellow; but he seemed anxious to be sociable, and told me a great deal about his former life, when he was in service, expecting to receive similar confidences from me. I did not gratify him much, but one must talk of something; and he seemed to think it only proper to express an interest in his guests, and to learn so much of their concerns as they would tell him.

"I went to bed early, intending to resume my journey as soon as it should be light. My landlord took up my knapsack and carried it to my room, observing as he did so, that it was a great weight for me to travel with. I answered jokingly that it contained great treasures, referring to my coins and relics. Of course he did not understand me, and before I could explain, he wished me a most happy good night and left me.

"The room in which I found myself was situated at the end of a long passage. There were two rooms on the right side of this passage, and a window on the left, which looked upon a yard or garden. Having taken a survey of the house while smoking my cigar, after dinner, when the moon was up, I understood exactly the position of my chamber—the end room of a long, narrow wing, projecting at right angles from the main building, with which it was connected only by the passage and the two side rooms already mentioned. Please to bear this description carefully in mind while I proceed.

"Before getting into bed, I drove into the door, close to the door, a small gimlet, which formed a part of a complicated pocket-knife which I always carried with me; so that it would be impossible for any one to enter the room without my knowledge. There was a lock to the door, but the key would not turn it; there was also a bolt but it would not enter the hole intended for it, the door having sunk, apparently from its proper level. I satisfied myself, however, that the door was securely fastened by my gimlet, and soon fell asleep.

"How can I describe the strange and horrible sensation which oppressed me, as I woke out of my slumber? I had been sleeping soundly, and before I quite recovered consciousness, I had instinctively risen from my pillow, and was crouching forward, my knees drawn up, my hands clasped before my face, and my whole frame quivering with horror. I saw nothing, felt nothing; but a sound was ringing in my ears that seemed to have supposed it possible that any mere sound, whatever might be its nature, could have produced such a revulsion of feeling or inspired such intense horror as I then experienced. It was not a cry of

terror that I heard; that would have roused me to action; nor the moan of one in pain; that would have distressed me, and called forth sympathy, rather than aversion. True, it was like the groaning of one in anguish and despair, but not like any mortal voice. It seemed too dreadful, too intense for human utterance. The sound had begun while I was fast asleep, close to the head of my bed, close to my very pillow; it continued after I was wide awake—a long, low, hollow, protracted groan, making the midnight air reverberate, and then dying gradually away, until it ceased entirely. It was some minutes before I could at all recover from the terrible impression which seemed to stop my breath and paralyzed my limbs. At length I began to look about me, for the night was not entirely dark, and I could discern the outlines of the room and the several pieces of furniture in it. I then got out of bed, and called aloud, 'Who is there?' Is any one ill? I repeated these inquiries in Italian and in French; but there was no answer. Fortunately I had some matches in my pocket, and was able to light my candle. I then examined every part of the room carefully, and especially the wall at the head of my bed, sounding it with my knuckles. It was as firm and solid there as in all other places. I unfastened my door and explored the passage and the two adjoining rooms, which were unoccupied, and almost destitute of furniture. They had evidently not been used for some time. Search as I would, I could gain no clue to the mystery. Returning to my room, I sat down upon the bed in great perplexity, and began to turn over in my mind whether it was possible I could have been deceived—whether the sound that caused me such distress might be the offspring of some dream or nightmare. But to that conclusion I could not bring myself at all, much as I wished it; for the groaning had continued ringing in my ears long after I was wide awake and conscious. While I was thus reflecting, having neglected to close the door, which was opposite to the side of my bed where I was sitting, I heard a soft footstep at a distance, and presently a light appeared at the farther end of the passage. Then I saw the shadow of a man cast on the opposite wall. It moved very slowly, and presently stopped. I saw the hand raised, as if making a sign to some one; and I knew from the fact of the shadow being thrown in advance, that there must be a second person in the rear, by whom the light was carried. After a short pause they seemed to retrace their steps without my having had a glimpse of them, but only of the shadow which had come before, and which followed them as they withdrew. It was then a little after one o'clock, and I concluded they were retiring late to rest, and anxious to avoid disturbing me. I have since thought it was the light from my room which caused their retreat. I felt half inclined to call to them, but I shrank, without knowing why, from making known what had disturbed me; but while I hesitated they were gone. So I fastened my door again, and resolved to sit up and watch a little longer by myself. But now my candle was beginning to burn low, and I found myself in this dilemma; I must either extinguish it at once, or I should be left without the means of procuring a light in case I should again be disturbed. I regretted that I had not called for another candle while there were people yet moving in the house; but I could not do so now without asking explanations, so I grasped my box of matches, put out my light, and lay down, not without a shudder, in the bed.

"For an hour or more I lay awake, thinking over what had occurred; and by that time I had almost persuaded myself that I had nothing but my own morbid imagination to thank for the alarm I had suffered." "It is an outer wall," I said to myself: "they are all outer walls, and the house is built of stone, it is impossible that any sound could be heard through such a thickness. Besides, it seemed to be in my room, close to my ear. What an idiot I must be to be excited and alarmed about it!" So I turned on my side with a smile (rather a forced one) at my own foolishness, and composed myself to sleep.

"At that moment I heard with more distinctness than I had ever heard any other sound in my life, a gasp, a voiceless gasp, as if some one were in agony for breath, biting at the air, or trying with desperate efforts to cry out or speak; it was repeated a second and third time; then there was a pause; then again that horrible gasping; and then a long drawn breath, an audible drawing up of the air into the throat, such as one would make in leaving a deep sigh. Such sounds as these could not possibly have been heard unless they had been close to my ear. They seemed to have come from the wall at my head, or to rise up out of my pillow. That fearful gasping, and that drawing in of the breath, in the darkness and silence of the night, seemed to make every nerve in my body thrill with dreadful expectation. Unconsciously I shrank away from it, crouching down as before with my face upon my knees. It ceased, and immediately a moaning sound began, which lengthened out into an awful protracted groan, waxing louder and louder, as if under an increasing agony, and then dying away, slowly and gradually, into silence; yet painful and distinctly audible, even to the last.

"As soon as I could rouse myself from the freezing horror which seemed to penetrate even to my joints and marrow, I crept away from the bed to the farthest corner of the room, lighted with shaking hands my candle, looked anxiously about me as I did so, expecting some dreadful revelation as the light flashed up. Yet, if you will believe me, I did not feel alarmed or frightened, but rather oppressed and penetrated with an unnatural, overpowering sentiment of awe. I seemed to be in the presence of some great and horrible mystery, some bottomless depth of woe, or misery, or crime. I shrank from it with a sensation of intolerable loathing and suspense. It was a feeling akin to this that prevented me from calling to my landlord. I could not bring myself to speak to him of what had passed, not knowing how nearly he might be involved in the mystery. I was only anxious to escape as quietly as possible from the room and from the house. The candle was now beginning to flicker in its socket; but the stars were shining outside, and there was space and air to breathe there, which seemed to be wanting in my room. So I hastily opened my window, tied the bed clothes together for a rope, and lowered myself silently and safely to the ground.

"There was a light still burning in the lower part of the house; but I crept noiselessly along, feeling my way carefully among the trees, and in due time came upon a beaten track which led me to a road, the same which I had been traveling on the previous night. I walked on scarcely knowing whither, anxious only to increase my distance from the accursed house, until the day began to break, when almost the first object I could see distinctly was a small body of men approaching me. It was with no small pleasure that I recognized at their head my friend, the Capro di Polizia—'Ah!' he cried, 'unfortunate Inglesse, what trouble you have given me! Where have you been? God be praised that I see you safe and sound! But how! What is the matter with you? You look like one possessed?'

"I told him I had lost my way, and where I had lodged.
"And what happened to you there?" he cried, with a look of anxiety.
"I was disturbed in the night. I could not sleep. I made my escape, and here I am. I cannot tell you more."
"But you must tell me everything, dear sir; forgive me; you must tell me every thing. I must know all that passed in that house. We have had it under our surveillance for a long time; and when I heard in what direction you had gone yesterday, and had not returned, I feared you had got into some mischief there, and we were even now upon our way to look for you."

"I could not enter into particulars, but I told him I had heard strange sounds, and at his request I went back with him to the spot. He told me, by the way, that the house was known to be the resort of banditti; that the landlord harbored them receiving their ill-gotten goods, and helped them to dispose of their booty.
"Arrived at the spot, he placed his men about the premises, and instituted strict search; the landlord and the man who was found in the house, being compelled to accompany him. The room in which I slept, was carefully examined; the floor was of plaster or cement, so that no sound could have passed through it; the walls were sound and solid, and there was nothing to be seen that could in any way account for the strange disturbance I had experienced. The room on the ground floor underneath my bedroom was next inspected; it contained a quantity of straw, hay, fire-wood and lumber. It was paved with brick, and on turning over the straw, which was heaped together in a corner, it was observed that the bricks were uneven, as if they had been recently disturbed.
"Dig here," said the officer; "we shall find something hidden here, I imagine."
"The landlord was evidently much disturbed. 'Stop!' he cried. 'I will tell you who lies there; come away out of doors and you shall know all about it.'
"Dig, I say. We will find out for ourselves."
"Let the dead rest," cried the landlord, with a trembling voice. 'For the love of heaven come away, and hear what I shall tell you.'
"Go on with your work," said the sergeant to his men, who were now plying pickaxes and spades.
"I can't stay here and see it," exclaimed the landlord once more. 'Hear then! It is the body of my son, my only son; let him rest, if rest he can. He was wounded in a quarrel, and brought home here to die. I thought he would recover, but there was neither doctor nor priest at hand, and in spite of all we could do for him he died. Let him alone now or let a priest first be sent for; he died unconfessed, but it was not my fault; it may not yet be too late to make peace for him.'
"But why is he buried in this place?"
"We did not wish to make a stir about it. Nobody knew of his death, and we laid him down quietly; one place, I thought, was as good as another, when once the life was out of him. We are poor folk, and could not pay for ceremonies."
The truth at length came out. Father and son were both members of a band of thieves; under this floor they concealed their plunder; and there, too, lay more than one mouldering corpse, victims who had occupied the same room in which I

slept, and had there met their death—the son was, indeed buried in that spot. He had been mortally wounded in a skirmish with travelers, and had lived long enough to repent of his deeds, and to beg for that priestly absolution, which, according to his creed, was necessary to secure his pardon. In vain he had entreated him to break off from the murderous band with which he was allied, and to live honestly in the future. All his prayers were disregarded, and his dying admonitions were of no avail. But for the strange mysterious warning which had roused me from my sleep and driven me out of the house, another crime would have been added to the old man's tale of guilt. That gasping attempt to speak and that awful groaning—woe did they proceed? It was no living voice. Beyond that I will express no opinion on the subject. I will only say it was the means of saving my life, and at the same time of putting an end to the series of bloody deeds which had been committed in that house.

"I received my passport that evening by the diligence from Rome, and started the next morning on my way to Naples. As we were crossing the frontier, a tall figure approached, wearing the long, rough cappotta of the mendicant friar, with a hood over the face, and holes for the eyes to look through. He carried a tin money-box in his hands, which he held out to the passengers, jingling a few coins in it, and crying in a monotonous voice, *Aneme in Purgatorio! Aneme in Purgatorio!* I do not believe in purgatory, nor in supplications for the dead, but I dropped a piece of silver into the box, nevertheless."

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"Go on with your work," said the sergeant to his men, who were now plying pickaxes and spades.
"I can't stay here and see it," exclaimed the landlord once more. 'Hear then! It is the body of my son, my only son; let him rest, if rest he can. He was wounded in a quarrel, and brought home here to die. I thought he would recover, but there was neither doctor nor priest at hand, and in spite of all we could do for him he died. Let him alone now or let a priest first be sent for; he died unconfessed, but it was not my fault; it may not yet be too late to make peace for him.'
"But why is he buried in this place?"
"We did not wish to make a stir about it. Nobody knew of his death, and we laid him down quietly; one place, I thought, was as good as another, when once the life was out of him. We are poor folk, and could not pay for ceremonies."
The truth at length came out. Father and son were both members of a band of thieves; under this floor they concealed their plunder; and there, too, lay more than one mouldering corpse, victims who had occupied the same room in which I

slept, and had there met their death—the son was, indeed buried in that spot. He had been mortally wounded in a skirmish with travelers, and had lived long enough to repent of his deeds, and to beg for that priestly absolution, which, according to his creed, was necessary to secure his pardon. In vain he had entreated him to break off from the murderous band with which he was allied, and to live honestly in the future. All his prayers were disregarded, and his dying admonitions were of no avail. But for the strange mysterious warning which had roused me from my sleep and driven me out of the house, another crime would have been added to the old man's tale of guilt. That gasping attempt to speak and that awful groaning—woe did they proceed? It was no living voice. Beyond that I will express no opinion on the subject. I will only say it was the means of saving my life, and at the same time of putting an end to the series of bloody deeds which had been committed in that house.

"I received my passport that evening by the diligence from Rome, and started the next morning on my way to Naples. As we were crossing the frontier, a tall figure approached, wearing the long, rough cappotta of the mendicant friar, with a hood over the face, and holes for the eyes to look through. He carried a tin money-box in his hands, which he held out to the passengers, jingling a few coins in it, and crying in a monotonous voice, *Aneme in Purgatorio! Aneme in Purgatorio!* I do not believe in purgatory, nor in supplications for the dead, but I dropped a piece of silver into the box, nevertheless."

"I told him I had lost my way, and where I had lodged.
"And what happened to you there?" he cried, with a look of anxiety.
"I was disturbed in the night. I could not sleep. I made my escape, and here I am. I cannot tell you more."
"But you must tell me everything, dear sir; forgive me; you must tell me every thing. I must know all that passed in that house. We have had it under our surveillance for a long time; and when I heard in what direction you had gone yesterday, and had not returned, I feared you had got into some mischief there, and we were even now upon our way to look for you."

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"I could not enter into particulars, but I told him I had heard strange sounds, and at his request I went back with him to the spot. He told me, by the way, that the house was known to be the resort of banditti; that the landlord harbored them receiving their ill-gotten goods, and helped them to dispose of their booty.
"Arrived at the spot, he placed his men about the premises, and instituted strict search; the landlord and the man who was found in the house, being compelled to accompany him. The room in which I slept, was carefully examined; the floor was of plaster or cement, so that no sound could have passed through it; the walls were sound and solid, and there was nothing to be seen that could in any way account for the strange disturbance I had experienced. The room on the ground floor underneath my bedroom was next inspected; it contained a quantity of straw, hay, fire-wood and lumber. It was paved with brick, and on turning over the straw, which was heaped together in a corner, it was observed that the bricks were uneven, as if they had been recently disturbed.
"Dig here," said the officer; "we shall find something hidden here, I imagine."
"The landlord was evidently much disturbed. 'Stop!' he cried. 'I will tell you who lies there; come away out of doors and you shall know all about it.'
"Dig, I say. We will find out for ourselves."
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to weak Lungs, to go to GEO. E. WILSON
Paris; J. H. RAWSON Paris Hill; G. E. WILSON
Bethel, and get this Medicine, or inquire about it.
Regular size, 75 cents; sample bottle, 50 cents.
Two doses will relieve any case. Don't neglect

