

THE DRAMA OF THE STARS

Part I.

THE PICTURE ON THE SKY

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A lonely campfire in the western wilds
And never sound of insect, beast, or bird,
To break the stillness of the wilderness,
Chain upon chain of hills lay all around
From base to summit clothed with mighty pines,
That made a twilight of the brightest day,
While at my feet lay spread a tiny lake
Whose waveless waters like a magic glass
Reflected back the glories of the woods,
So evening closed and sunset passed to night.

I flung myself upon a fragrant couch
Of scented boughs, hewn from a neighbouring pine
And thoughts untrammelled roved back to the past,
Was I a coward to have left the fight?
Was I a coward to have fled for peace?
To these fair woods, when thousands fell and died
Along the wayside in the race of life,
A race for wealth? nay often but for bread,
Was life a blessing or a bitter curse
To countless poor who toiled in city dens?
Long years of weariness and cruel pain
And then the darkness of eternal night,
So gazing at the star strewn vault above
I pictured how, in myriad ages past
The fiery mist was kneaded into worlds;
And to what end, to make more breeding grounds
For bitter misery, for burning pain?