

My soul stirred and grew hot within me. I sprang from my bed of feathery boughs,—then, once more my gaze was held by the star bespangled heavens so deep, so calm, so far-reaching,—that passionately I recalled those lines of Arnold's:

“Ah, once more,” I cried, “ye stars, ye waters,
On my heart your mighty charm renew;
Still, still let me, as I gaze upon you,
Feel my soul becoming vast like you.”

‘From the intense, clear, star-sown vault of heaven,
O'er the lit sea's unquiet way,
In the rustling night air came the answer
“Would thou be as these are? Live as they.”

“Bounded by themselves, and unregardful
In what state God's other works may be,
In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
These attain the mighty life you see.”’

Ah! It was not given to me to question God's justice. To understand it is beyond man's powers,—and He has said. “Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without your Father.”

The gentle night air trembled round me. The moon's soft radiance quivered on the lake. A pine cone fell at my feet. I stooped and took it in my hand. Oh the perfectness of the details in nature's insignificant things! It was wonderful—this attention to detail. What did it mean? Surely a love for the work. Otherwise there might not be detail, still less beauty in it. How perfect that slender branch above my head, all laced against the sky. Gradually, yet with a strange power, the love of God enveloped me. This nameless, indefinable Something that stamps itself on Nature's night, and cannot be known except through the delicate perception of the soul, is it not the Fatherhood of the Creator?

Again the soft wind caressed my cheek and breathed against my forehead. Gently the great pines swayed and bent protecting arms above me; I sank back on my piny couch; the sweet odors of the forest lulled my senses. A little wood-mouse squeaked, an owl gave forth a long drawn note, my eyes closed, and on the soft sad music of the forest night, sleep bore me far from earth.

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