

THE RIVER OF MIST

Stretching away to westward the great river lies quiet beneath me. So still it lies, that it seems as if it had not yet awakened from the delicious sleep brought on by the silence of night. A little distance from the shore a boat is moored on its glassy surface,—perfect to every detail the reflection glimmers below it. All is still and sombre and wonderful, as dawn gives way to daylight and night to morning.

As I stand leaning over the rail of the old wooden bridge that spans it, I give full play to my imagination, and gaze ahead into the morning fog that rests above its polished surface. And as I gaze, gaze into the deep white mist, my thoughts turn from earth to heaven, from mankind to my God. Far away, beyond the limits of that stream that fades into the atmosphere, I can see a great celestial river and a great celestial land. Ah! How my fancy pictures it,—how vivid and how real it seems! How plainly I can see the inestimable future! And how I doubly worship the Great Power that has created all this. How wonderful and how marvellous it all is! How sweet is this unconscious dreaming of the soul!

A slight sound from the waking city brings me back to ugly reality. I turn my head backward. In an instant, all the beauteous castles of the future which my imagination so vividly builded, vanish from my mind. All is gone! Gone in a moment! And nothing is left me but this world as I turn away from the wonderful river of mist.