

whatever thwarts and opposes them; and can it be supposed that so wise a law should regulate the instincts of only inferior creatures? No, my friend; it is surely a law of our nature also."

"And have you not something else to infer?" said the poet.

"Yes," I replied; "that you are occupied differently from what the scope and constitution of your mind demand, — differently both in your hours of enjoyment and of relaxation. But do take heart; you will yet find your proper place, and all shall be well."

"Alas! no, my friend," said he, rising from the sward. "I could once entertain such a hope, but I cannot now. My mind is no longer what it was to me in my happier days, a sort of *terra incognita* without bounds or limits. I can see over and beyond it, and have fallen from all my hopes regarding it. It is not so much the gloom of present circumstances that disheartens me as a depressing knowledge of myself, — an abiding conviction that I am a weak dreamer, unfitted for every occupation of life, and not less so for the greater employments of literature than for any of the others. I feel that I am a little man and a little poet, with barely vigor enough to make one half-effort at a time, but wholly devoid of the sustaining will — that highest faculty of the highest order of minds — which can direct a thousand vigorous efforts to the accomplishment of one important object. Would that I could exchange my half-celebrity — and it can never be other than a half-celebrity — for a temper as equable and a fortitude as unshrinking as yours! But I weary you with my complaints: I am a very coward; and you will deem me as selfish as I am weak."