

seek the society of our fellow-men. With a creature so much the sport of impulse as I am, it is of these hours of weakness that conscience takes most note. God help me! I have been told that life is short; but it stretches on and on and on before me; and I know not how it is to be passed through."

My spirits had so sunk during this singular conversation that I had no heart to reply.

"You are silent, Mr. Lindsay," said the poet; "I have made you as melancholy as myself; but look around you, and say if ever you have seen a lovelier spot. See how richly the yellow sunshine slants along the green sides of Arthur's Seat; and how the thin blue smoke, that has come floating from the town, fills the bottom of yonder grassy dell as if it were a little lake! Mark, too, how boldly the cliffs stand out along its sides, each with its little patch of shadow. And here, beside us, is St. Anthony's Well, so famous in song, coming gushing out to the sunshine, and then gliding away through the grass like a snake. Had the Deity purposed that man should be miserable, he would surely never have placed him in so fair a world. Perhaps much of our unhappiness originates in our mistaking our proper scope, and thus setting out from the first with a false aim."

"Unquestionably," I replied. "There is no man who has not some part to perform; and if it be a great and uncommon part, and the powers which fit him for it proportionably great and uncommon, nature would be in error could he slight it with impunity. See! there is a wild bee bending the flower beside you. Even that little creature has a capacity of happiness and misery: it derives its sense of pleasure from whatever runs in the line of its instincts, its experience of unhappiness from