

## III. FOX AND HOUND

I stood on a high hill or ridge one autumn day and saw a hound run a fox through the fields far beneath me. What odours that fox must have shaken out of himself, I thought, to be traced thus easily, and how great their specific gravity not to have been<sup>5</sup> blown away like smoke by the breeze! The fox ran a long distance down the hill, keeping within a few feet of a stone wall; then turned a right angle and led off for the mountain, across a ploughed field and a succession of pasture lands. In about fifteen minutes<sup>10</sup> the hound came in full blast with her nose in the air, and never once did she put it to the ground while in my sight. When she came to the stone wall she took the other side from that taken by the fox, and kept about the same distance from it, being thus separated<sup>15</sup> several yards from his track, with the fence between her and it. At the point where the fox turned sharply to the left, the hound overshot a few yards, then wheeled, and feeling the air a moment with her nose, took up the scent again and was off on his trail<sup>20</sup> as unerringly as fate. It seemed as if the fox must have sowed himself broadcast as he went along, and that his scent was so rank and heavy that it settled in the hollows and clung tenaciously to the bushes and crevices in the fence. I thought I ought to have<sup>25</sup> caught a remnant of it as I passed that way some minutes later, but I did not. But I suppose it was not that the light-footed fox so impressed himself upon the ground he ran over, but that the sense of the hound was so keen. To her sensitive nose these<sup>30</sup> tracks steamed like hot cakes, and they would not have cooled off so as to be undistinguishable for several hours. For the time being she had but one sense: her whole soul was concentrated in her nose.