

PREFACE.

I CAN hardly say better what I wish to say in presenting to the public the revised edition of this book, than to repeat the words of the original preface, written just twenty years ago :—

“ The quick and cordial reception which greeted the author's ‘ Letters to the Young,’ and his more recent series of essays entitled ‘ Gold Foil,’ and the constant and substantial friendship which has been maintained by the public toward those productions, must stand as his apology for this third venture in a kindred field of effort. It should be—and probably is—unnecessary for the author to say that in this book, as in its predecessors, he has aimed to be neither brilliant nor profound. He has endeavored, simply, to treat, in a familiar and attractive way, a few of