

### INTRODUCTORY LETTER.

familiar things, that susceptibility to Nature which keeps the nerve gently thrilled in her homeliest nooks and by her commonest sounds, is worth a thousand fortunes of money, or its equivalents.

Every book which interprets the secret lore of fields and gardens, every essay that brings men nearer to the understanding of the mysteries which every tree whispers, every brook murmurs, every weed, even, hints, is a contribution to the wealth and the happiness of our kind. And if the lines of the writer shall be traced in quaint characters, and be filled with a grave humor, or break out at times into merriment, all this will be no presumption against their wisdom or his goodness. Is the oak less strong and tough because the mosses and weather-stains stick in all manner of grotesque sketches along its bark? Now, truly, one may not learn from this little book either divinity or horticulture; but if he gets a pure happiness, and a tendency to repeat the happiness from the simple stores of Nature, he will gain from our friend's garden what Adam lost in his, and what neither philosophy nor divinity has always been able to restore.

Wherefore, thanking you for listening to a former letter, which begged you to consider whether these curious and ingenious papers, that go winding about like a half-trodden path between the garden and the field, might not be given in book-form to your million readers, I remain, yours to command in every thing but the writing of an Introduction,

HENRY WARD BEECHER.