

goes as a bubble bursts. And yet somewhere work must come in,—real, well-considered work.

Inness (the best American painter of Nature in her moods of real human feeling) once said, "No man can do any thing in art, unless he has *intuitions*; but, between whiles, one must work hard in collecting the materials out of which intuitions are made." The truth could not be hit off better. Knowledge is the soil, and intuitions are the flowers which grow up out of it. The soil must be well enriched and worked.

It is very plain, or will be to those who read these papers, now gathered up into this book, as into a chariot for a race, that the author has long employed his eyes, his ears, and his understanding, in observing and considering the facts of Nature, and in weaving curious analogies. Being an editor of one of the oldest daily newspapers in New England, and obliged to fill its columns day after day (as the village mill is obliged to render every day so many sacks of flour or of meal to its hungry customers), it naturally occurred to him, "Why not write something which I myself, as well as my readers, shall enjoy? The market gives them facts enough; politics, lies enough; art, affections enough; criminal news, horrors enough; fashion, more than enough of vanity upon vanity, and vexation of purse. Why should they not have some of those wandering and joyous fancies which solace my hours?"

The suggestion ripened into execution. Men and women read, and wanted more. These garden letters began to blossom every week; and many hands were glad to gather pleasure from them. A sign it was of wisdom. In our feverish days, it is a sign of health or of convalescence that men love gentle pleasure, and enjoyments that do not rush or roar, but distil as the dew.

The love of rural life, the habit of finding enjoyment in