

## EXPLANATORY.

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IT has been said that "he is no common benefactor who shrewdly gathers from the world's manifold literature its words of finest wit and maturest wisdom for our entertainment, instruction, and inspiration." But it is not well at all times to partake of the richest dishes or to drink the rarest wines. The finest wit and the maturest wisdom may be read too oft. There come hours to every lover of poetry when he wishes for "some simple and heart-felt lay," something that shall speak from out a mind feeling the every-day cares of life amid the multitude, and not from the heights to which the masters "proudly stooped." It was this feeling that, some fifteen years ago, led me, a prose-thinker, to begin collecting from newspapers and the ephemeral literature of the day such verses as suited my mood, or which seemed the utterance of a soul that had put its thoughts into song. Upon the fly-leaf of my first scrap-book, surrounded by some now faded natural leaves of oak, maple, bilberry, and Virginia creeper, and two withered sprays of trailing arbutus, I find the misquotation from *Love's Labor's Lost*, "As though he had been at a feast of languages and stolen the scraps." The succeeding pages show that it was not from a feast of languages, but from the daily board of wayfaring humanity, that such scraps were gleaned. In the course of years, and during successive changes of residence from the extreme East to San Francisco and back, the collection grew until it contained over a thousand poems. A friend suggested the collocation of the most valuable into some permanent