

## PREFACE.

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IN preparing *Laonics*, it is of paramount importance to make them truthful. Even latent errors mar their beauty, and detract from their strength. A very luminous and pungent apothegm must needs be a truism. The next thing is to be profound. To make deep and lasting impressions requires sublime and comprehensive thoughts. The best materials for these, lie in the leading facts of natural and revealed religion. In this comparatively unexplored field, will yet be found the intellectual pearls and diamonds, which will enrapture the world. Then comes "the dress of thought." There is a fitness in things, and intellectual beauties should not be clad in bearskin, but in the finest beaver. Says the great master of apothegms, "A word fitly spoken, is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Euphonic and harmonious expressions, forcible and just expressions, descriptive, elevated, and beautiful expressions, profound and comprehensive expressions, and especially apt and witty expressions, each have their specific influence upon different minds, and their common influence upon all minds. Nor is it easy to measure the power of striking thoughts, clothed in suitable expressions, either in prose or verse, oft repeated or sung, upon the juvenile and popular mind. It is therefore high time our most valuable aphorisms and paragraphs were put in order for frequent perusal, and for handy reference, as the circumstances of life call up subjects. Not every memory is a capacious and well-arranged storehouse. The letter writer, the orator, the sermonizer, the teacher, indeed all professional men, and especially all young persons, need a well-arranged manual of this choice furniture, from whence to derive suggestive thoughts, and obtain tropes, and figures, and imagery, and comparisons. I marvel that this has been so long neglected. We have not a single volume of aphorisms, and sententious paragraphs, in alphabetical

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