

# BOOK NUMBER

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### THE OPEN DOOR

**R**EADING is the chief instrument of culture in reach of the many. Extended or culture-giving travel is not possible for the majorities, but must remain in possession of the minorities. Nor is contact with the makers of history the opportunity of many.

But by books we come to be the intimates of the great spirits of the world. We know through books persons we have not met, nor seen, nor heard, as we do not know our neighbors and friends. The doings of statesmen and diplomats are the property of the world, and their careers are photographed before our eyes. "A good book," to use the old but deathless phrase of Milton, "is the precious life-blood of a master spirit." In other words, the author has pressed from his veins the express wine of his life. All the vigor which made him the man he was, he poured out as a libation at our feet, or emptied into our cup.

Reading, then, is the open door into the great life of the world. Through it we know the history of forgotten centuries, and become the intimates of immortal spirits. It is the pre-eminent instrument of culture, and because of this unique pre-eminence and worth, is an important subject of consideration. Bacon has told us that "Reading makes a full man." It cultivates, gives stores of knowledge, supplies background to figure, puts a man with his back against the centuries and his face fronting all the future."—*Dr. William A. Quayle.*