Books are by far the most lasting products of the human efforts. Temples crumble into ruin, pictures and statues decay, but books survive. Time is of no account with great thoughts which are as fresh today as when they first passed through their author's mind ages ago. What was then thought and said still speaks to us as vividly as ever from the printed page. The only effect of time has been to shift and winnow out the bad products; for nothing in literature can long survive but what is really good. Books introduce us into the best society; they bring us into the presence of the greatest minds that have lived. We hear what they said; we see them as if they were really alive; we sympathies with them enjoy with them, grieve with them; their experience becomes ours; and we feel as if we were actors with them in the scenes which they describe.

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