

**THE BOOK-LOVER:  
A GUIDE TO THE  
BEST READING**

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The Book-Lover: A Guide to the Best Reading by James Baldwin

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**JAMES BALDWIN**

**THE BOOK-LOVER:  
A GUIDE TO THE  
BEST READING**



# THE BOOK-LOVER

*A Guide to the Best Reading*

BY

JAMES BALDWIN

Whosoever acknowledges himself to be a zealous follower of truth, of happiness, of wisdom, of science, or even of the faith, must of necessity make himself a Lover of Books.

RICHARD DE BURY

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## A Fore Word.

THE titlepage of this book explains its plan and purpose. The Courses of Reading and the Schemes for Practical Study, herein indicated, are the outgrowth of the Author's long experience as a lover of books and director of reading. They have been tested and found to be all that is claimed for them. As to the large number of quotations in the first part of the book, they are given in the belief that "in a multitude of counsels there is wisdom." And the Author finds consolation and encouragement in the following words of Emerson: "We are as much informed of a writer's genius by what he selects, as by what he originates. We read the quotation with his eyes, and find a new and fervent sense." As the value of the most useful inventions depends upon the

ingenious placing of their parts, so the originality of this work may be found to lie chiefly in its arrangement. Yet the writer confidently believes that his readers will enjoy that which he has borrowed, and possibly find aid and encouragement in that which he claims as his own; and therefore this book is sent out with the hope that book-lovers will find in it a safe Guide to the Best Reading.







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## PRELUDE.

### In Praise of Books.

**L**ET us consider how great a commodity of doctrine exists in Books ; how easily, how secretly, how safely they expose the nakedness of human ignorance without putting it to shame. These are the masters who instruct us without rods and ferules, without hard words and anger, without clothes or money. If you approach them, they are not asleep ; if investigating you interrogate them, they conceal nothing ; if you mistake them, they never grumble ; if you are ignorant, they cannot laugh at you.

You only, O Books, are liberal and independent. You give to all who ask, and enfranchise all who serve you assiduously. Truly, you are the ears filled with most palatable grains. You are golden urns in which