

amount of this kind of literature. There is, of course, a vast amount of what is called fiction that is not worth the paper that it is printed on for the preacher or any other serious-minded man. But there is a saving remnant that is worth a great deal. All the great novelists of this century have been serious students and keen observers of human life, and while their works are styled fiction, there is a larger sense in which they are real servants of truth, for if they did not shadow forth the great principles that underlie human life, they could find no hearing at all. It is true that a preacher cannot read even all the good fiction that is written, but for most of us it is desirable to keep up our acquaintance with the older writers, such as Scott and Thackeray and George Eliot and Charlotte Brontë, and at the same time to read each year a few of those books whose sales are large and whose tone is good. For there must be some reason why a book reaches a wide audience, and it will help a public speaker greatly to discover what is the secret of that success. There is also a lightness of touch that we gain by reading such books that will tend to counteract the effects of the severer labours of the minister's study.

We have also much to gain from the judicious use of newspapers and magazines, although the greatest care should be taken here lest we fall into a sinful waste of time. It is said that a certain distinguished statesman of to-day never reads the newspapers. But he can afford to pursue this course, because he lives in the atmosphere where newspapers thrive, and so he absorbs directly what they have to say. But the minister of the Gospel can hardly afford to neglect the newspapers, because he needs to know something about the public questions of the day, and the easiest way for him to hear about them is through the press. It is assumed that we all take our own denominational paper, and so we need say nothing about that. In addition to this, it is helpful to take some paper that is published in another country. There are denominational papers published in various parts of the United States that usually yield something to those of our pastors who take them. Many of our pastors are diligent readers of *The British Weekly*, and there are few papers that have so much for ministers. For my own