

Great—*e. g.*, in its bearing on the prophecies of Daniel—or the gradual spread of the Greek language and literature, as a preparation for the spread of Christianity, and you will rote and remember what you read without an effort. Even in the preparation for one's ordinary sermons, how much reading may be brought to bear! We may choose a connected set of subjects, and read with a view to the writing of the sermons. Take the Creed, and prepare a sermon on the *Descensus ad inferos*, and how easy will it be to read (with a view to the sermon,) and to master all that we can find in our books on the subject! Sermons so prepared for, and written from a mind full after such reading, will be listened to by our people with no dull or listless ears. Events, also, are continually occurring in the contemporaneous history of the Church which give a peculiar zest and interest to certain classes of subjects. Would it not be well to take advantage of those seasons, and read up the subjects under discussion? As, for example, the literature of the Inspiration of Holy Scripture, and of the doctrines of the Atonement and of Eternal Punishment, how comparatively easy is it to go into these questions thoroughly, and master them now! At such seasons, too, we may, not only without impropriety, but generally with great benefit to our people, bring those subjects before them, and thus make our knowledge of them accurate and exact. Nearly all my study of Theology, Church History, Controversy and Holy Scripture, has been with a view to immediate reproduction in Sermons, Lectures or Bible Classes. This sort of study—when you study, I mean, with a view to reproduction in writing—has the double advantage of making you both a *full* man and an *exact* man. Ordinary reading, simply with a view to knowing a subject, gives a man a sort of fulness of knowledge, but it is an unhealthy fulness—a fulness without exactness or order—for no man knows a subject that he cannot reproduce in writing. I commend this mode of reading to the consideration of my brethren, with the utmost confidence of its many solid advantages, and of the certainty of its success.

In concluding, let me express the hope that I shall not be misunderstood, as if I made the whole of our ministry to consist in reading. No: however important, it is not the whole. There is even a danger—though among us I think it is slight—of our being