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 Is a ready prepared food that supplies the right elements for proper nourishment and vigor.

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 We have the following varieties:  
 2,000,000 Sweet Potatoes  
 2,000,000 Purple Heart Yams  
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 1,000,000 Purple Heart Yams  
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 More than 500 orders were placed by 15 March 1st. There are orders for 100,000 more Sweet Potato Plants. 50c per 100 and \$2.00 per 1,000.  
**H. LIGHTFOOT, Ennis, Lake Co., Fla.**

### REV. W. T. BELVIN ARRAYS THE FICTION OF MODERN TIMES

Interesting and Forceful Paper Read Monday Before Ministerial Union of Anderson—Books Made to Sell

Paper prepared by Rev. W. T. Belvin and read before the Ministerial Association of Anderson, S. C. March 9, 1914.

Gentlemen and Brethren of this association: Since the topic is so large and the audience so learned and far reaching, and the writer so small, as well as the company so learned, I feel like a bantam hen on a nest of geese in the middle of an ostrich farm. However, realizing the peculiar effect of the modern fiction on our people of today, I will do the best I can. There was a time when the term "fiction" meant the great classics, such as Shakespeare, Dickens, Homer or those great writers who wrote for the purpose of making the world better; instead of simply to enable the great rolls of greenbacks or to enable a mercenary writer to tickle his ears with the jingle of good-American coin. Just as the great motive that should and does invariably prompt every truly great surgeon, is first of all "The great benefit to humanity," even so should the one impelling motive prompting every person aspiring to write the literature of the day, be the enlarging of the human mind and the improvement of his or her moral status.

Sad to say, this is not always the case. Our country is flooded with stuff like the fishman's "razors; just made to sell." There is little or no thought given to the possible good, or harm they may or may not do. And just as a Pat replied to the complaint that the razors would not even clip a hair unless you took the trouble to bring both ends of it at the same time, "Sir, it was never intended that that razor should be used for shaving." And when the customer, in exasperation, asked "Well what were they made for?" replied laconically, "To sell."

So these writers and sellers of the worst majority of modern fiction, when asked to explain why the influence of their books fail to exert an uplifting force on society, reply, "They were never made for the purpose at all." No sane man ever made such a claim what were they made for? We receive for them. Then when we get through gasping for breath, and ask "For that same laconic reply 'To sell!'" While we love a free press and a free people, we must acknowledge that this is a day of progress along almost every line. Men act on common sense principles instead of standing on precedent that has outlived its usefulness. Laws and customs have changed and are still changing. We have changed our viewpoint in regard to most other things. Why not curb the press when it sends out bitter water from a supposedly sweet fountain. We no longer travel long distances on horseback or by the slow and antiquated stage-coach. We go on the great express trains, or even better than this we send our words on the lightning. Stocks and bonds are bought and sold by wire. Some times by wireless.

You can order any of the domestic luxuries from a dear wife to a worthless pet dog by telegraph. We are getting our gold by the circulating process which enables our cities to produce a dollar at half its former cost. Our nation is becoming noted for its great highways. Thus we are daily being more closely woven together into a homogeneous mass. Our ships sail on every sea and we are fast becoming one of the greatest "world" powers. Our national pure food laws, based on the assertion that if a lion eats a lamb, it all becomes lion too; but if the lamb was spoiled the combination will be a sick lion, are so very strict that it is well nigh impossible to defile the physical man by the food that he eats.

It does not matter how hard the good farmer has labored to raise that 200-pounder, nor how anxious the customer is to taste of him or gravy, if the meat is found to be so diseased in any way that it will not permanently increase the strength of the consumer it is dumped into the soap factory or some other convenient place where refuse is cared for. This nation is waking up to the fact that our men simply must be kept strong. The tasks are so great that none save the strong ones can run the schedule. Hence these strict and proper laws for the protection of the physical man. All of these are as they should be. Perhaps they should be more strict. They should never be more lax.

But there is a greater menace to the method and the womanhood of today than either of the evils enumerated above.

This evil walks right in the face of both preacher and people. It even tries to effect a wounded pride when one of God's holy men refers to it as a curse.

The evil to which I refer is the modification that is coming into our homes as "the newest things out" and the many other attractive terms.

Just as a person is made weak or strong, other things being equal in proportion to the quality as well as the quantity of food that is taken into his body, even so is the mind made weak or strong by the quality as well as the quantity of the food it absorbs.

There is, however, a divergence between the quality of the food as compared to that of the mind by the food they respectively utilize.

When the body is poisoned, it comes starved and resort to the one antibiotic or even the calling of a physician. Now watch him take his medicine like a man. Still after the poison has done its deadly work so thoroughly that no dose can reach the patient and revive him, no skill has the chance of living forever with God in heaven above.

An I heard a man say a few days ago "Death is coming some day and in some way, so it matters little where or when. But when a person's mind becomes poisoned by anything, he never becomes alarmed at all. You never

sees the baser passions always dominant. He sees virtues trampled under foot and learns to smile at vice and call license liberty.

He sees, success from a worldly standpoint, obtained at the cost of honor as well as Godliness.

It would send cold chills down your, your back to even suspicion your Susie of willfully keeping company with a person whose character is not above reproach. Yet she is allowed, in the modern love story, to spend weeks with crooks and fiends incarnate.

People live weeks in a single day in a book, i. e., they have the companionship of weeks in a single day's reading. These weeks are often spent with girls who allow sweethearts to hold their pretty hands and kiss their cherry lips. Many of these heroines faint under the strain of proposal of marriage and fall into the arms of lucky suitors. Then after all of this, they are happily married and life becomes one long sweet song.

When in reality if your girl acted in that style with her beaux they would all turn their backs on her. You would soon have a heart-broken child; and it would not be out of the ordinary if you had another relative, younger and not quite so closely related, that would be seriously embarrassed when questioned too closely about the paternal ancestor, or might embarrass you to find a suitable place for him on the family tree.

Our ideals are formed from our environments. A girl used in Utah under the old regime would unblushingly accept the position of fifth wife while the other four were sound and well. One raised under the Georgia law would accept a husband whose wife lives but is divorced. While a true daughter of the Palmetto state must be sure that her suitor has no living wife in the wide world. Each of the girls would feel wounded and sorely shocked if one should intimate that she were not true blue.

Just so does a girl absorb her ideas from the heroines with whom she associates in books.

The very atmosphere tends towards that kind of growth. A good book is ennobling just as good food is strengthening; but as I said above, "let every parent beware of the worm in the cabbage" and examine the books her children are reading.

I have absolutely no respect for the modern dance with all its distastefully intimate relations between the opposite sexes; but had I to choose between it and the average book of fiction, I would say, "give me the dance for mine," because it does limber up the muscles and make a certain grade of movement which comes from the physical exercise. While the man and woman love novel of today doesn't even do that, and I am quite sure that the moral effect is fully as bad if not worse.

Then there is another reason which even condemns the harmless kind. I not only ask if the proffered food will not make me ill, before eating it, I must also expect it to make me strong. If my only diet is to be filled without regard to nutritive value, I find water and sawdust both convenient and cheap. Thus we see it is our duty to ask not only is there any harm, but is there any good, in the food on which our minds feast. We should go still further and ask is there anything in question in the best that can be had, even the reasonably valuable should be discarded.

Circumstances alter cases always, any harmless book is better than no reading at all. My hearers well remember the story of Greely and his men on their polar expedition. When all more desirable food had given out, they ate their raw hide boots. One of their number was accused for eating more than his share of the delicacy and thus threatening the whole party with death by starvation.

But when these men returned to civilization, they straightway went out of the raw hide business. Now, with the great variety of good literature at hand very cheap too, there is no excuse for much of the raw hide brain food. There seems to be a tremendous demand for what is called "light literature."

I like soup, I am very fond of good soup too. It will never injure me either, unless I undertake to live on that alone. Then it will promptly starve me to death.

I never did fancy the idea of drinking a whole gallon of water in order to get a cup of soup either.

Reading the popular "light literature" for help, mental growth, or the facts that may be gleaned therefrom is like trying to live on the thin soup diet. Such is only fit for invalids, physical or mental as the case may be.

Our time is given us by the great Creator of the universe, for the purpose of improving ourselves for future usefulness or of making the world better by our present usefulness. It is a crime before our God to waste one moment.

Every hour is a golden jewel set with sixty diamond minutes. The poor, as well as the rich have this priceless wealth at their disposal. Shall we trifle this valuable asset away, or use it to help us climb the ladder of success if not of fame? We have thousands of bright, young men today who are "killing time" as they call it, by reading this trashy stuff, when they read at all, and meditating on its disgusting suggestions when they have a few moments rest to themselves.

Two hours each day spent in reading and studying the art of textile work will in five years, or less, change a feather boy of nineteen summers into a foreman or a mill superintendent. The same time spent on trashy stuff will leave him a sorry weaver or more likely, a vagabond, without a job.

One effect of the great majority of these novels is to lead young men to treat in blind luck or simple chance and thus it tends not only to develop baser passions, but to make the reader careless. The average novel reader sits idly by and waits for some thing to turn up, while the reader of biography, history, and other facts

gets down with pick and shovel and digs something up.

Modern fiction tends to lead our sweet sixteen to think lightly of sitting in cosy corners and allowing John or Bill to hold her pretty hand in his, if not to let his strong arm encircle her delicate waist, while she little dreams of the awful price she must pay. She little dreams that it means loss of virtue, friends, home, and sometimes her very soul.

She may justly ask in astonishment, "Did not those girls of whom I have so often read, do the very same things as I did and still reach the pinnacle of society? Alas, young people, it is easy to write of stream flowing up hill, but it never does so in every day life.

My advice to every one is "read that which will help you; store your mind with facts that are worth remembering; know the world historically, geographically, morally and socially."

Know the plan of salvation so as to live the life that Christ would have you live. If you do all these things and make a living, as the best mass of humanity must do, your time will be pretty well taken up. If you still have time to spare, you might try re-leving the town in which you live of the curse of trashy reading. A life thus spent will be rewarded in heaven, while the wasted life will be regarded in a remote corner somewhere, in a place that I have no desire to see.

Respectfully submitted,  
 W. T. BELVIN, Pastor,  
 Orrville M. E. Church,  
 Anderson, S. C.

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Know the plan of salvation so as to live the life that Christ would have you live. If you do all these things and make a living, as the best mass of humanity must do, your time will be pretty well taken up. If you still have time to spare, you might try re-leving the town in which you live of the curse of trashy reading. A life thus spent will be rewarded in heaven, while the wasted life will be regarded in a remote corner somewhere, in a place that I have no desire to see.



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