

forbidden ground. If it be hard to convince a man against his will, it is harder still to do it against his interests.

THE APETITE HAS BEEN CREATED

for, and long supplied with, this kind of mental food, and will not readily cease its clamor for fresh supplies. Again, we have the names of great men who have spoken in favor of light reading to a limited extent. Dr. Adam Clarke says he would have been an arrant coward, had it not been for works of fiction read when he was a child. His list included "Jack the Giant Killer," "Sinbad the Sailor," "The Arabian Nights Entertainment," and several books on magic. But there is no evidence that, had he obtained suitable books of other kinds, the same result might not have been reached; and further, though in themselves there may be redeeming features in many works of fiction, it by no means follows that they are therefore suitable for Sabbath-school libraries. I presume that none of us would go so far as to place on our catalogues the books already named. Mr. Wesley has been cited, because he re-published the "Fool of Quality," and spoke in favor of some articles of fiction. He once recommended the reading of two novels to a young lady of his acquaintance, "*but not more*," said he, "since there is danger to the young of forming a taste for light reading."

That taste exists to-day and needs restraining. One of the strongest articles I have seen on the subject in opposition to the stand we have taken is from a minister in the United States, who said, "I care not whether the book be a story or a fact, so long as the truths taught are sound and the lessons valuable." "I would not," he adds, "take gold in exchange for the benefit my own children have derived from fiction, obtained at the Sabbath-school." And yet the same man in his address goes on to say, "You must not let them read fiction without measure—one of my little girls became so enamoured of it that I directed her to read no more for some length of time, and she then found other works to read." He says,

"THESE BOOKS ARE LIKE CONDIMENTS,

and the grocer is not to be blamed, for selling them; but the parent is wrong to feed his child a whole meal on condiments instead of substantial bread." Surely every man ought to see the fallacy here. Grocers do not sell sauces and pickles wrapped up in packages bearing the label, "infant's food;" if so they certainly would be blamed. This is precisely what I am contending for, that no work of imagination, however excellent, shall go into the school without giving the reader at the outset, in some way, the information that the book is merely a work of the imagination. And as to condiments it is simply true that those children who have never known their names are nothing worse for that ignorance; the best physicians tell us that their use in many instances has injured the digestive organs for life. So of these story books. In many cases the mental powers of the children become so enfeebled by constantly reading them that they never care to exercise their minds in the pursuit of