grandmother. "Girls, wrote Hannah More, "should be led to distrust their own judgment; but if they have the conversion of their grandparents on their hands, how can they be distrustful?"

"There is no more charming writer for the young," she says truly, "than Flora Shaw; yet Hester and Phyllis Browne, and even that group of merry Irish children in Castle Blair, are all convinced that it is their duty to do some difficult or dangerous work in the interests of humanity, and all are afflicted with a premature consciousness of social evils.

"The time is out of joint; oh, cursed spite! That ever I was born to set it right," cries Hamlet, wearily; but it is at thirty, and not thirteen, that he makes this unpleasant discovery."

Of course there is another side; but there is too much truth in this bright and entertaining paper, and it is a serious question what is the true remedy. When good English books could be contained in a spacious closet, Mary Lamb might be left to "browse at will upon the fair and wholesome pasture," but how stands the case since the field of even wholesome literature has become wider than a Western prairie? Young people must have discipline and guidance. English literature must be taught, but it is very questionable whether the right method has yet been discovered. The only way to keep girls from Rhoda Broughton, and boys from wasting time on the Peter Parleys and Oliver Optics of the day, is somehow to give them a taste for other reading A taste, I say; but a taste is not given by the present system. The teaching of the English language be mixed up as it is now, in the hodge-podge of manuals. But why should the study of the language be mixed up as it is now, in the hodge-podge of annotated text-books with the pleasurable reading of English books in the same slight way that nine-teen people out of twenty read them. The results are not valueless at the time, but I think it may be doubted whether this sort of study attracts boys to literature, and does not rather repel them. A study that is begun too soon is rarely loved. It is spoilt as a pleasure; and if literature is not a pleasure, it is not read. If 'Marmion' or 'Ivanhoe' is set, even, as a holiday task, Scott is ipso facto reduced to a school-book; or, in other words, he becomes not a book at all. I doubt whether the present generation who have passed through our schools during the last fifteen years, care at all more for literature than we of thirty years ago cared. Indeed, my belief is that they care less, and that we should have cared less, if we had had masters prescribing to us what to read, and interfering with our growing tastes. Very bad some of these tastes doubtless were,—I remember swearing by Alexander Smith as a poet,—but then they were our own, and the correction came when we were ripe for it."

The present writer's experience corroborates that of Mr. Wilson, that it is not among boys who have been crammed with "annotated" texts that we are to look to find lovers of good reading, but quite the contrary. When they are found, which at present is not very often, they are either those who have a taste implanted in them by nature, or else those who have been brought up among persons of real culture. But these objections lie not so much against the teaching of literature as against bad methods of teaching. The time is perhaps coming when a distinction will be drawn even among school-studies, between the disciplinary and the pleasurable, and it will no longer be considered a mark of bad teaching for a school-boy to enjoy a certain number of his school exercises; when, indeed, the amount of his enjoyment will, in some cases, be considered the measure of the teacher's success. The teaching of the English language, for instance, may well be made a strictly disciplinary study when once we have the right sort of manuals. But why should the study of the language be mixed up as it is now, in the hodge-podge of annotated text-books with the pleasurable reading of the literature? Is Paradise Lost good for nothing but to be parsed, or the text of Shakspeare to serve only as a peg to hang variorum notes on? Cowley in his window-seat, and Mary Lamb in her closet of old books, studied literature to much better purpose. The venerable Dr. Hedge, of Cambridge, has a good paper in the December number of the Forum,