

those who have studied the subject, that the position assumed when writing a "*sloping* or *slanting*" hand is largely the cause. The following directions support this claim: Turn your left side to the desk, Press the left arm close to the side, Place your left hand on the copy book, Press your right elbow to your side, Point your pen towards your right ear, Grasp the pen firmly and write." A better position could not be devised to distort the muscles of the body, the spinal column and the eye. "*Vertical writing*" with the spinal column in its natural position, and the muscles of the body and eye unrestrained, is the common sense remedy. None but a medical man can give a safe opinion as to the quality of vaccination, incipient disease of the eye, or upon the contagious character of an ailment. Another trouble connected with the Hygiene of school life may be named, St. Vitus' Dance, a disease frequently caused by mental strain, advancing insidiously, preceded by restlessness, irritability of temper &c., which is too often attributed to carelessness, for which the child is punished, with the result of aggravating the disease. Here the knowledge of the Expert will apply.

Doubtless there are few in this room who have not at some period of their lives, suffered from the pangs of toothache, to them I appeal for sympathy for school children: but *one in ten* of whom are declared to possess normal or perfect dentures. It is claimed that a child cannot study while hungry, may it not be asked can he study when suffering from a jumping toothache? Sir J. Crichton Browne informs us that out of 5249 school children under 12 years of age examined; but 485 were found with normal or sound dentures, that only 26 per cent of the teeth of infants at 5 years of age were found free from caries, and that in older mouths 10,000,000 of artificial teeth were annually used in

England. The conditions in both countries being nearly similar we may reasonably conclude that a proportional amount of that disease exists in this country, with its disastrous consequences, pain, imperfect mastication, indigestion &c., &c. I shall not stop to discuss the causation or remedy for this trouble, but dealing with the fact, let me earnestly suggest that this Society give an expression of opinion, recommending the authorities to institute a system of compulsory investigation of the teeth of school children and State-aided rectification of defects in them. In support of my contention let me quote Sir J. C. Brown, who says:

"I contemplate that the dentists employed in this public service would be adequately remunerated for their labours; but the money would be well spent, and would yield a splendid return in the increased comfort, contentment, health and vigor of our people. Rather than it should not be spent in so laudable and desirable an undertaking, and truly our school rates are already high. I would willingly see some curtailment of the curriculum which our Boards now offer. Nutrition, I have often said comes before education. It is wasteful and even cruel to force education on half-starved children, and teeth I would now assert come before talents. It is preposterous to confer shreds of showy accomplishments upon children who cannot chew their food and sure I am that it would be for the ultimate welfare of the country, (if so be that adequate tooth culture cannot be otherwise secured) even that the grand piano in some of our London Board Schools should give place for the time to the dentists' chair."

There is another subject upon which I wish to say a few words, I approach it with hesitation, knowing it to be a contentious one, and one which has