

any one who believes in the omnipotent power of moral suasion in school government, be placed in some of the public schools of this city, and his principles would not long stand the test of experience.

All teachers, as far as I have heard, very much regretted to hear some high in our State councils recently say that, in their opinion, the time had come for the abolition of corporal punishment in our schools, and that its use was injurious to both teacher and pupil. This is "one of those seeming truths that the cunning times put on to entrap the wisest," born of the feelings rather than the judgment; of the wish, not the experience. Oh! if they could abolish the necessity for its use, they would have the heartfelt thanks of all the teachers of the country. Could we kneel to any but the Almighty, we would thank them on our knees, with the profoundest gratitude, if they would abolish the necessity for its use; but they cannot. To abolish punishment, however, while the necessity for it exists, would be like abolishing the fire department during an incipient conflagration.

Is its use injurious to the teacher? If it be, then some of us who have taught so long, and been obliged occasionally to resort to it, must be by this time considerably demoralized. Hundreds of teachers, if they believed that punishment inflicted by them on rebellious pupils was demoralizing to their own natures, would immediately resign. It has always seemed to me that a disagreeable duty, conscientiously discharged, was elevating in its tendencies upon the moral nature. Teachers can never get riches or fame from their vocation; but they can get wisdom, patience, self-denial, charity, and many of the Christian virtues, that no other profession will so largely give. Physical pain, inflicted by a kind-hearted teacher, is always a self-sacrificing act. Actions performed for the good of others are always ennobling in their tendencies. Experience and observation have also shown that punishment, administered wisely and in the right spirit, is not injurious, but, on the contrary, beneficial, in its effects upon the character of children. Care must be taken not to confound the abuse of a thing with its proper use.

Our legislators, I apprehend, will not do so unwise an act as to abolish the use of force in our schools. Let them, if they can, institute the right kind of a home government in every family in the State, and the evil complained of will die a natural death.

Our representatives pass laws and appoint officers to force children to attend school. Will they pass a law that no force shall be used to retain them there? We take culprits to the lock-up, and criminals to the State Prison; if we pass laws that no force shall be used to retain them there, those that escape will soon be the only ones to applaud the wisdom of such legislation.

Can our legislators consistently abolish compulsory obedience in schools, sitting as they do under the very shadow of our State escutcheon, upon which is engraved the device of the raised arm and drawn sword, the scroll containing the inscription, "*Ense petit placidam sub libertate quietem?*" Ay! the enlightened State of Massachusetts seeks for quiet peace under liberty with the sword.

"The sword, extreme of dread!
Yet, when upon the freeman's thigh 'tis bound,
While for his altar and his hearth,
While for the land that gave him birth,
The war drum rolls, the trumpets sound,
How sacred is it then!"

Yes: the element of force in the government of nation, state, or school—if guided by a clear intellect and sound moral and religious principle—is always sacred.

Every State in the Union recognizes this axiom. So does the United States of America. The national gibbet in times of peace claims its victims, irrespective of sex. The gallows in

our own State is yet a recognized power. Would it not be well for government officials to ask themselves this question. Should we advocate a stricter home and school discipline, might not these terrible extreme penalties be dispensed with in state and nation?

When we are asked by those high in authority to give up the use of physical force in the government of our schools, we feel like saying in reply, United States of America, disband your armies, demolish your forts, sink your monitors! State of Massachusetts, destroy your coat of arms, abolish your prisons and constabulary force! City of Boston, pull down your jails and dismiss your police; when you, Nation, State, and City, can govern full-grown, reasoning men, without force, then shall we, school-teachers of America, promise to govern wayward, impulsive, unreasoning children, without force.

It is difficult to enumerate all the methods by which a school should be disciplined. Methods must vary in different schools, and in different teachers. Ask a man how he would play a game of chess, or a general how he would fight a battle! No two battles are fought exactly alike; no two games of chess are identical. Your methods must vary with the varying elements, and the ever varying movements of your opponents. Discipline exists in the man. He must be equal to all emergencies. He must have brains to comprehend all issues, and energies to meet them. School discipline, as well as war, is a science. Civilians did not succeed upon the battle-field as generals, neither could many who criticise teachers so severely, succeed in the school-room.

A teacher can seize upon the most trivial incident to aid him in discipline. A ray of sunlight, darting across the room, can be directed by the skilful teacher, so that it shall throw its cheering rays into the children's hearts. Teachers may refer to cloudy weather outside, to induce scholars to have pleasant weather within doors. Ever varying methods must be used to touch their hearts and stimulate their mental activities. Government must be fresh, spontaneous, out-gushing; always, however, under the control of a sound judgment; it must fit the man, the pupils, the hour, the occasion, all the existing circumstances. No rules or methods, studied and memorized, will ever make a good disciplinarian. Each teacher must study for himself the daily problems that arise. He will find—at least, in some schools—that the formula, Moral suasion equals success, will not solve all the disciplinary problems that arise. He will learn that he must have as many equations as there are unknown quantities.

While I believe in compulsory obedience, let me say, that we should never forget that physical chastisement is only a temporary expedient; it should never be regarded as an end. It is only a means to an end. The child is never really reformed by physical punishment, *per se*. It only puts him in such a condition that intellectual and moral forces can be made operative. This condition can never be secured in some natures, until they have been physically subdued. To subdue rebels, on the battle-field, is one thing; to reconstruct them, quite another: but the one must precede the other. So with some rebellious spirits in the school-room,—they must be subdued by force, ere they can be reconstructed. Some pupils consider their teachers' forbearance towards them as an evidence of their timidity. Hundreds of such children attend our schools to-day; and their number is rapidly increasing, under the stimulus of unwise parental influences and the seemingly growing distrust of the public in their teachers.

Why cannot parents and the community understand that, if they weaken the power of the teacher, and fill their children's minds with a disrespect for him and his authority, they thereby create the necessity for more punishment and severer discipline? If parents would save their children, they must sustain their teachers. When a great work is to be done, men must have power; they must be sustained by public sentiment. In the