



Conducted by "ISOBEL"

Doctors in the Public School

Readin', 'ritin', 'rithmetic and "the rod" were the great features of school life a couple of decades ago and still in isolated districts they prevail to a large extent. Later the more genteel remedies of "staying in after four"—"missing all recesses for three weeks"—"doing the work over ten, twenty or fifty times"—"standing on the floor for an hour or two," etc., according to the caprice of the presiding genius were substituted for the drastic "rod." That the physical injury resulting from the rod was greater than those resulting from the other forms of punishment is improbable, as in cases where no bones or muscles were damaged the hurt would entirely pass away in time, even that sustained by the mental sense; whereas in the many cases where standing on the floor for an hour or two, was the punishment selected, often a grave injury was inflicted upon the child's whole nervous system through overstrain; an injury that repetitions of this form of punishment might easily make permanent. The detention form of punishment is equally hurtful. To keep a growing child sitting for hours as he must if denied recess, without changing his slouching position at his desk, and using another set of muscles, is decidedly hurtful to him, quite apart from the serious consideration of missing the fresh air and physical exercise which an outdoor recess gives him and which are so necessary to his well being. Especially is this true of the ill-ventilated classroom in the winter school term.

How far was the pupil responsible for the failures that those various punishments were intended to correct? This is a question that does not seem to have been considered. A few precocious, robust pupils in a classroom generally set the pace for the class. The duller or backward pupil must keep the pace, no matter what handicap he works under. Many a backward pupil works much harder than the forward one; indeed this is the rule in schools. But why is the pupil backward? Here is where the doctor should step in.

In many of the large cities of the continent a medical inspector is as necessary in the school as the teacher. The doctor makes his rounds of examination and reports all cases to the respective parents. In cases where the parents cannot be roused to activity and interest, the children's hospitals or some other authority comes to the child's aid.

In Winnipeg Schools

In the City of Winnipeg two doctors, a man and a woman, have charge of this work. After an official visit to twenty city schools, with an attendance of 7674 pupils it was found that only fifty per cent or half of them measured up to the normal standard, in all respects. Ten per cent, had defective eye-sight, which causes backwardness and actual ill-health. It is not generally understood that where the eyesight is defective the general nerve supply of the body is drawn upon to furnish more than the normal allowance for the particular function of the eye and this lessens the nerve supply for the rest of the body. Defective eyesight cannot be considered as affecting merely the eye. It affects the whole body to an alarming extent, for the eye is always busy. Another seven per cent had enlarged tonsils. Eight per cent, are anemic (impoverished blood). Some have spinal curvature. Some have adenoids or growths in the nose, ear or throat. Some have defective breathing. Some weak heart action, and here the teacher must be particularly cautious in the exercises and punishments.

In these reports will be found the cause of so many failures among the pupils, for which treatment and not punishment is due, for what is true of the city is also true of the country school.

It is not "the rod" nor other form of punishment that the children need but medical supervision to correct the physical defects from which the children suffer. Every municipality has its health officer—a medical doctor. Why cannot he be enjoined to inspect the schools in connection with his other duties? This should be the mothers' business. You should see to it that medical examiners are appointed at once that your children may have the advice and care they are suffering for.

If necessary a band of women may wait upon the municipal council when it sits and make known your wish in the case.

The cost should not be very great—no greater indeed than a call to any outlying district. But whether the cost be great or small the only question should be, will such medical inspection be in the interest of the pupils? Will it help to brighten the school life and make learning



The first meeting of the first Women's Institute in Alberta held at Lea Park, Feb. 3rd, 1909
Twenty Miles from a Railway

a pleasure and not a pain to the helpless child? In short, shall you be true to the trust given you by a kind Providence, when He sent little children to you to cheer and comfort your expanding years and to inherit your possessions and your virtues when you no longer need them?

ODORS ON THE NERVES

The French physiologist Professor Ferri has been making experiments on the effect which odors, whether pleasing or disagreeable, have upon the nerves of persons subjected to them. He maintains that systematic odors in factories may produce in the end a permanent derangement of the nervous system—neurasthenia. With true scientific care he has been making use of a machine called the ergograph or power recorder. With this he has tested the effect on a given muscle in the body of such influence and thus gained an index of the energy of the whole body. His apparatus consists of a flat disc, to which the forearm of the patient is fastened, and having a leather pocket attached in which the finger is enclosed. To the finger a cord is attached playing over a pulley and to the end of the cord suspended a weight is attached. The finger of the patient is then 'set to work lifting the weight until the nervous power of the finger muscle is exhausted. Adding up the various lifts made by the finger gives the experimenter the power lost by the nerve and muscle. Using this apparatus, a patient was subjected to inhaling a specific odor to the nose and comparing the effect with that of normal inhalation. This was repeated with different odors.

The amount of work was found in some cases to be one-third of the normal. Indeed, Professor Ferri has proved by further investigation that all sorts of sensory stimulations, whether of sight, sound, taste, touch or smell, produce certain stimulative effects with the same depleting effect as shown by the ergograph.

SCIENTIST.

SILENCE

You could tell they were friends by their silence;

For an hour no voice had been heard.
But their souls spoke in accents the stronger,
Because of no need of a word.

When soul speaks to soul profoundest,
Then language must ever fail;

'Tis music alone can interpret!
No! Silence will best tell the tale.

Women's Institutes

The article on the above topic in "Around the Fireside" in THE GUIDE of November 16th, while very interesting, timely and instructive, contains a misstatement which you will allow me to correct. You say, "So far, in the West only one has been formed, and that one in the town of Morris, Man." This is not correct, the enclosed photo though not very distinct will give you the first meeting of the first Women's Institute in Alberta, February 3, 1909, and so far as I can learn it is the first in the West.

After sending a description of this institute and its work to THE GUIDE

EQUALITY

By Margaret Ogden Bigelow

Mated to stand together,
Proudly, and side by side,
In flesh, in mind, in spirit,
Is the bridegroom more than the bride!

Is the father more than the mother?
Never since time began,
And the tale of life-gift opened,
Was the woman less than the man.

Born to an equal glory,
Out of an old delight,
Urged by a paean mighty
Into an equal fight.

They shall go on together,
Proudly, and hand in hand,
Victors upon the hilltops,
Strong for a God's command!

tion. Recently, however, we do not get much encouragement to look for outside help; and if Alberta women, generally, wish Women's Institutes they must follow the example of the town of Morris and this country district twenty miles from a railway.

"Be up and doing, with a heart for any Fate;

Still achieving, still pursuing, learn to labor and to wait."

Wait should be spelled in large capitals, for we are told there are no funds available. The agricultural societies when asking for speakers are also told there are no funds for this purpose. Our government have had so much money to offer to outside adventurers that the women of our province, to say nothing of our farmers, cannot now get the services of even one expert speaker. Alberta is a country of wonderful resources. Its women are also full of resources. We sometimes think it may be necessary to send our women to Edmonton. Could we have made a bigger batch of affairs than has been made there? If anyone again says, "Women are incapable of voting or becoming members of parliament," ask them "Could any body of women have made a worse deal than these professionally trained members of the Rutherford government?"

To return to Lea Park Women's Institute, we had last year some forty members of whom three were men and quite a number girls under sixteen. Our topics were mostly along the line of practical housekeeping, and considerable time has been spent in social events. We have raised considerable money for outside work; not having very heavy expenses our nominal membership fee has sufficed most needs. We contributed thirteen dollars towards the delegate to Ottawa fund of the Tring U. F. A. There is still much we should do, among others, start a household science library and get our girls and older members more deeply interested in the underlying principles of domestic science. It is a very great help to have the program and speakers announced for six months or a year and the topic should be, not any old thing to have an excuse for a meeting, but of so vital and timely an interest that we feel we must be present or lose something important, something that calls for a discussion.

Unless in the very busiest seasons when we cannot get a horse, we will attend every meeting if the subjects interest us. If we do not know what the topic is nor who the speaker is, we are less apt to go excepting for the outing which is in itself important.

(MRS.) M. E. GRAHAM.

Kitseoty, Alta.

Note.—I am glad to receive this valuable report from Mrs. Graham of the work done in her institute in Lea Park, and glad too to find that it was organized before the one at Morris. In so far as the British Columbia institutes are concerned we do not generally include that province in the area of Western Grain Growers.

I am afraid only disappointment will be the portion of the institute workers in expecting to obtain high-priced speakers at the government's expense until we have a goodly number of institutes that would then, perhaps to them, justify the expenditure. You see these costly speakers will not trouble to address small audiences.

Why could not some quite as capable private individual qualify and do this