

writing is placed before them by this means than can be furnished by headlines.

This system of teaching writing in three grades gives a stimulus to the pupils to qualify themselves for the use of copy-books.

6. What are the prominent causes leading to bad writing?

Bad position.

Uncorrected errors.

Allowing children to scribble slate exercises.

Insufficient practice in art of writing, etc., *ad infin.*

7. About what age should pupils begin penmanship, properly so called, as distinguished from the drawing of letters?

About eight years of age I think is early enough. If a child start the art of penmanship with the third grade and second reader he is likely to make more rapid progress than if he commence it earlier. It is a great mistake to expect a child to acquire the knowledge of the formation of print and script concurrently.

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### Corporal Punishment.

#### THE TEACHER'S AUTHORITY TO INFLICT IT AND ITS LIMITS.

[The following article, copied from the *Atlantic Weekly*, is from the pen of Principal Miller of the Dartmouth, N. S., public schools.]

There is, perhaps, no topic connected with practical education, concerning which there exists such diverse and conflicting opinions, and there is certainly not one in regard to which there exists so much ignorance among both teachers and parents. It is important that all the information possible should be given regarding this much vexed question, for two reasons:—

1st. That teachers may be careful not to over-step the limit of their authority in the government of their pupils:—2nd. That they may not always accept as final the decisions of petty courts whose presiding magistrates possess very little if any more information on the question at issue than those on whom they presume to sit in judgment.

My object in writing the present article is to give briefly the principal arguments for and against "Corporal Punishment" as a means of "School Government." . . . Without order no work of any importance has ever been accomplished. It is the problem which faces every teacher as he or she steps across the threshold of the schoolroom. To find a satisfactory solution to this problem has furrowed more brows and silvered more heads than the search for the "Philosopher's stone," or the "Elixir of Life." The failure to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion has driven many a teacher from the profession, who in all other respects possessed the elements of success.

Who cannot call to mind such a one, educated, loving, zealous, but lacking that firmness, that decision, that will power which controls not only ourselves but others, surrounded by a horde of little imps who have discovered her weakness and are imposing upon it, disobeying every order, disregarding threats, entreaties, tears. These dear children of ours are terribly pitiless to any weakness of those in authority.

Corporal punishment as an educational factor has the sanction of the highest authority (the Bible) and the testimony of many of the great names of antiquity.

Solomon evidently believed firmly in it. "He that spareth the rod, hateth his son." "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from

him." "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." "The rod and reproof bring wisdom, but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame."

But perhaps Solomon's reputation for wisdom would not have ranked so high had he lived in the 19th century.

Dr. Johnson says:—"My master whipped me very well; without that, sir, I should have done nothing."

Goldsmith says:—"Though tenderness is a requisite quality in an instructor, yet there is often the truest tenderness in well timed corrections."

Coleridge says:—"I had one just flogging." He had told his preceptor that he "hated the thought of being a clergyman," because he was an infidel. "For this," says he, "Bowyer flogged me—wisely I think,—soundly, as I know." "Any whining and sermonizing would have gratified my vanity, and confirmed me in my absurdity."

Mrs. Williard, Principal of Troy Seminary, says:—"I believe that corporal punishment should be resorted to as soon as other means of discipline fail."

Page after twenty years' experience says: "I do not hesitate to teach that corporal punishment is one of the justifiable means of establishing order in the school room."

Horace Mann, an enthusiastic advocate of moral suasion, says, "It should never be inflicted except in cases of extreme necessity."

Children are gathered into the schoolrooms from thousands of homes, in which there are operating a thousand influences differing from each other as widely as possible,—from the open depravity of unrestrained animal passions to the deceit and hypocrisy resulting from a too rigorous deprivation of amusement and boyish fun. All these diversities of mind and temper are to obey the same regulations, pursue the same course of study, and aim at the same results. To affirm that these ends may be accomplished without resorting to corporal punishment is to affirm two things:—

1st. That this great mass of children taken from all varieties of homes, of all ages and conditions, can be prevented from doing wrong and persuaded to do right—without punishment.

2nd. That the teachers (the majority of whom are young and inexperienced girls) are able to accomplish so grand a result. Neither of these assertions can be sustained for a moment.

It is nonsense to say that *this, that or the other* can be done, and done immediately without pointing out the means by which it *can be done*.

On the other side, it is indisputable that this means of punishment has in the past been terribly and cruelly abused both by parents and teachers. When the brutal and cowardly atrocities perpetrated upon helpless and innocent children are considered, when the cruel instruments used in the infliction of them, and the debasing and shameful methods resorted to are remembered, it is little wonder that this means of government appears to many to be revolting and unjustifiable. It is a fact that in whatever countries the rod has been used, it has degenerated into an instrument of torture.

It is necessary in examining the arguments put forth against corporal punishment as a means of school government, to distinguish carefully between a judicious and moderate use of it in exceptional cases, and an indiscriminate daily abuse of it by cruel and in many cases ignorant schoolmasters.

The race of schoolmasters of the "Squeers" type is extinct. The world would no more tolerate such a monster to-