

of his mental digestion, and dwarfing his intellectual development. Does it injure the most delicate child to test his strength? Does he not daily and voluntarily make such tests and delight in them, and increase his strength thereby? Does it necessarily injure a pupil to test his powers and measure his acquisition of useful knowledge by telling orally or by written exercises what he knows, and exhibiting what he can do in the way of thinking?

But the competing for excellence excites him *and* his teacher. Do away with it all. Give him a lesson in the dead languages to *learn* and *say*, and let there be an end of it. A frowning terrible dominie in front of him, a dunce block to the right, the fool's cap to the left, and the taws behind him, will make a man of him.

Again, it is said all the pupils of the schools should not read the same books—that it reduces them all to the same dead level; and a variety of school diet instead is prescribed. How is this variety theory to be applied? Must every pupil repeatedly change his text books? Or is every pupil to use a different series of books? And granting this variety theory, who shall choose the books—pupil, parent, teacher, trustee, or bookseller? If this principle be carried to the extreme limit of permitting each pupil to use his own particular series of text-books, how many pupils will be assigned each teacher? Or shall the variety principle be violated and one series chosen for the entire school, and the doctrine of uniformity applied thus far at least? In either case should not the Government be requested to divest itself of all responsibility respecting the school, and leave it to regulate and maintain itself as private and independent schools do?

Admitting such a policy of self-regulation as applicable to a school established and presided over by a rector, to whom would be referred the choice of text-books and all other regulations, and whose patrons preferred an education for their children directed solely by him, and at their own expense, is it applicable to our Public and High Schools?

But why *reduced* to the same level, why not *raised* to the same level? The level is not objectionable if it is high enough, and its height depends on the character of the text-books, not on their uniformity, and certainly if the level be satisfactory the fact that all or even a fair proportion of the pupils reach it cannot be a cause of complaint.

Oral teaching is one of the glories of modern school work, and a good text-book is the mainstay of the teacher in supplying him, while taxed with the discharge of a multiplicity of duties, with mental diet for his pupils. Oral teaching properly directed is devoted to the elucidation of the subject treated of in the text-book. The text-book is for pupil and teacher. For the one to study, for the other to study and expound. It is the well-stored board to which the pupil is led by the teacher, at which they sit down together and hold fellowship, the older serving the younger.

The course of instruction in a text-book is arranged and developed