

the most common deformity of school life. The desk, also, is set at such an angle, and brought back to such a distance over the seat as would seem to be most suitable for writing in a correct position (see photograph 1).

These seats and desks are being supplied, I understand, to all the higher classes in the city, and it is proposed to supply them, as finances permit, to the lower classes, which will take several years. This method is the reverse of that which should be adopted: it is in early life that children are most liable to deformity.

Dr. Ketch, of New York, *New York Medical Journal*, April 24, 1886, summarizes 229 cases of curvature. In 52 per cent., the disease began before the 12th year.

Eulenberg, of Germany, in 1,000 cases, noted 78 between birth and the 6th year; 216 between the 6th and 7th years; 564 between the 7th and 10th years; 107 between the 10th and 14th years; 35 above the 14th year.

It is thus seen that before the 10th year the liability is much the greatest. Therefore, in providing improved seats, the change should be begun at the youngest classes.

In regard to the remainder of the seats in both schools, they are constructed in such a way as to specially favor deformity where there is any tendency towards it. The seats are on a plane with the floor, the backs slope back rapidly, in many cases the children's feet cannot touch the floor. In one large class almost every child had its feet hanging in the air, and the desks are placed much too far forward for a correct position to be easily assumed.

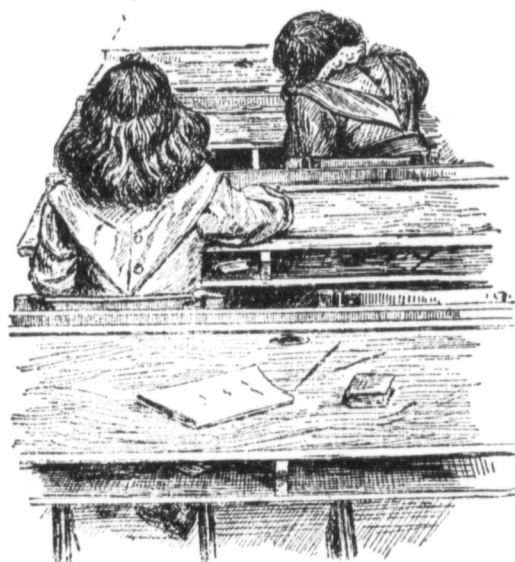


Photo No. 2.

Photograph 2 shows a child sitting in the usual position which such seats induce, the spine curved like the letter S, the right shoulder twisted forward, and the back bent. These remarks, unfortunately, apply with equal force to all the country schools that I have seen.

The deformities caused by these faulty appliances are chiefly three:

1. Rotary lateral curvature of the spine.
2. Round shoulders, or a bowing backward of the upper part of the spine.
3. Lordosis or a bowing forward of the lower part of the spine causing projection of the abdomen.

These deformities do not always occur singly, and, in fact, some