

The pain attendant on the scheme
That makes it justified."

So John steps forth, with sun-burnt face,
And hair all in a tumble,
His laughing eyes a contrast to
His drooping mouth so humble.

"Now, Mary, you must tell me all—
I see that John will not,
And if he's been unkind or rude,
I'll whip him on the spot."

"W—we were p—playin' p—pris'ner's b—base,
An' he—he is s—such a t—tease,
An' w—when I w—wasn't l—lookin', m—ma'am,
H—he k—kissed me—if you please!"
Upon the teacher's face the smiles
Have triumphed o'er the frown,
A pleasant thought runs through her mind,
The stick comes harmless down.

But outraged law must be avenged !
Begone, ye smiles, begone !
Away, ye little dreams of love,
Come on, ye frowns, come on !
"I think I'll have to whip you, John,
Such conduct breaks the rule ;
No boy, except a naughty one,
Would kiss a girl—at school."

Again the teacher's rod is raised,
A Nemesis she stands—
A premium were put on sin,
If punished by such hands !
As when the bee explores the rose
We see the petals tremble,
So trembled Mary's rosebud lips—
Her heart would not dissemble.

"I wouldn't whip him *very* hard!"—
The stick stops in its fall—
"It wasn't right to do it, but—
It didn't hurt at all!"
"What made you cry, then, Mary Ann ?
The school noise made a pause,
And out upon the listening air,
From Mary comes—"Because!"

—W. F. McSparran.