

generally known, and is intended to prevent a certain form of weakness of sight. But weakness of sight is not the only danger to be guarded against; there is, especially with girls, curvature of the spine. The proportion of girls who suffer from weak spine is much larger than is generally known. It is on this account that the old-fashioned seats without support for the back, and with no attention to proper posture, are so dangerous to all but the strongest. And it is the fault of the seats alone that so many girls have to spend a part of every day lying supine when they ought to be running about and playing.

The old methods of bench and desk were admirably calculated to encourage obedience to Nature's grand law—the survival of the fittest. The boys who passed through the rough-and-ready treatment of a public school, where the light was contrived to fall “full upon the face,” where the air was carefully excluded from school-room and dormitory alike, where the rooms were badly warmed, where the benches were without backs, where there were no appliances for bathing and very few for washing, came out of it strong, owing to their good constitution. But how about those who were weakly at the beginning? And who can tell what seeds of consumption, decline, and disease were sown in those school-days? We are far from being advocates of Government inspection in our schools; but we should receive without any regret the intelligence that a medical board of inspection was appointed to see that in every school throughout the kingdom, whether public or private, the rooms were ventilated, lit, warmed, and furnished in accordance with the requirements of physiology. There are many other points, indeed, in which an intelligent medical man might bring his knowledge usefully to bear upon educational matters. In those schools where the bills amount to as much as an undergraduate's expenses at Oxford or Cambridge, would not a medical man insist, for instance, on having a swimming bath provided for the whole year round, cold in summer, tepid in winter? Would he not insist on a gymnasium, with a master in gymnastics? Would he not suggest that the charges left margin enough to provide riding lessons? Would he not ask for workshops, so that each boy, like a Jew of old, should learn a trade? To sit upon a backless bench against a flat desk is only one of the many abuses which linger where they first arose, among our public schools. It is an abuse which is typical of a stupid conservatism, a spirit which not only refuses change, but is unable to understand the necessity or utility of Change.—*Educational Times, London.*

School Discipline.

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Good government lies at the base of all true excellence in the school-room. Unless a proper discipline is enforced there, it will be impossible to succeed. Order is heaven's first law. The school where good order is not enforced, is a failure; it is the plain of Shinar at the confusion of tongues; there may be movement there, but not progress. The first care of the teacher should be given to securing good order.

Not many rules, but good ones, and these well adhered to, should be the maxim in organizing a school. There should be no looseness in framing rules for the government of a school, and above all things there should be no looseness in the enforcement of these rules when

they are once enacted. So long as a regulation remains as one of the rules of the school, it must be carefully observed; if it is an improper rule it should be repealed promptly, and the pupils should be informed that it has been so repealed, that they may not imagine that the teacher is winking at a violation of the school regulations, when he no longer corrects them for disregarding it.

Children are very quick to notice any dereliction or neglect of duty on the part of the teacher. That individual should have well-settled principles to govern his own conduct both in the school-room and out of it. A vacillating spirit that shifts about like the sands of the desert before every breath of wind, is contemptible even in the eyes of children. Besides, if the teacher is thus vigorous in the treatment of self, he may consistently be firm in his demands upon others. Many teachers overlook this. They require certain things of their pupils which they themselves are not willing to perform. They forbid certain privileges to their pupils, which they themselves indulge in. It certainly looks a little unseemly in a teacher to pronounce his *ukase* against the use of tobacco in school in a breath that is itself tainted with the narcotic; or to dwell upon the bad effects of reading works of fiction, when at the same time may be found under the lid of his own desk some of the most silly and pernicious specimens of this kind of literature. So, too, on the streets and in society, teachers sometimes forget the propriety that should mark their deportment, and perhaps in one unlucky hour more than undo all the work of days.

The teacher should not allow the slightest infraction of law to pass unnoticed. These small offences, if allowed to pass without remark, will only open the way to greater. They are the little breaks in the dyke, which a man might at first close with his hand, but through which will ultimately rush a flood of waters that may drown a city. Many a school has been ruined by not guarding against these least appearances of evil. Not that a teacher should be tyrannical in the administration of his duties. But to be unyielding in the enforcement of reasonable and just laws is not tyranny. The laws of nature are inflexible. There can be no infraction of them, not even the least, that is not followed by the due penalty; yet he is a foolish man who will charge God with tyranny and injustice.

The penalty for violating a law should be in proportion to the heinousness of the offence. There should be degrees of punishment in the school room as there are in nature and in civil governments. All violations of the natural or of the statute law are not followed by the same degree of punishment as what they may, these distinctions should be observed. A degree of punishment disproportioned to the crime committed, exerts an evil instead of a salutary influence. A century ago the death penalty was inflicted for comparatively slight infractions of the law. The forging of a man's name, or the stealing of a few shilling's worth was visited with capital punishment. In those days gibbets stood at nearly every cross-road in England, and bodies swinging in chains were every day sights; yet the severity of punishment, instead of making crime less frequent, seemed only to foster it, and the more people were hanged, the more those who remained seemed to deserve hanging.

School discipline, as every other discipline, should be enforced not by administering punishments alone, but by properly rewarding the meritorious. Whether or not the hope of reward is a proper incentive to study, it, as well as the fear of punishment, may be properly held out as a stimulus to good conduct. This