

FAULTY SCHOOL APPLIANCES AND THE DEFORMITIES THEY CAUSE.

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When we consider that there are 40,000 school children in Toronto and 595,000 in this province, the importance of anything bearing on their physical well-being will not be disputed.

The two appliances of which I shall speak are the seats and the desks used in our Public Schools.

Through the kindness of Mr. Doan and Mr. Groves I was enabled to carefully inspect the fittings of the Dufferin and Church Streets Schools, which, I believe, are good representatives of the best city schools, and I have, at different times, observed some of the country schools. At the Dufferin and Church Streets Schools the seats and desks are very much alike, and one description will answer for both.



Photo No. 1.

In the Junior Fifth, in both schools, a new combined seat and desk has been introduced (see photograph 1), which is almost as good as could be made. A description of this seat and of its chief features will show what a good seat ought to be. In the first place, the seat itself is set at right angles to the back, and the seat is raised about ten degrees more in front than at the back, and the back is high enough to reach to the bottom of the child's shoulders, that is, to the bottom or middle of the shoulder-bone. The advantages of this arrangement are very great. By referring to photograph 1, it will be seen how comfortably the child sits in this chair. The backward slope of the seat keeps the base of the spine in opposition to the back of the chair, and the base of the spine being thus held it becomes really a matter of effort to curve the upper portion. The back of the chair also carries a portion of the weight of the body when the child sits back in the intervals of rest or of reading, and when the back is kept straight and partially rested it is almost impossible for rotation to occur, which is one of the worst features of rotary lateral curvature,