

means of ventilation, necessarily obliges the teacher to open the windows, which, whatever may be the state of the exterior atmosphere, but more especially in bad weather, must cause too sudden a change in the heat of the room, and which though perhaps unfelt by those who have been accustomed, by exercise, to all degrees of heat and cold, must prove detrimental, if not fatal, to children of feeble health and constitution.

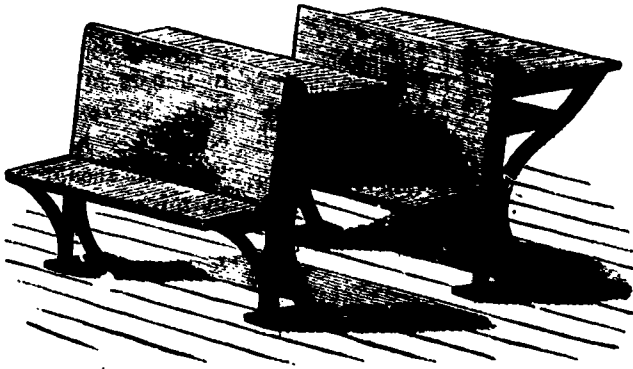


Fig. 1.

It is evident that the cause of this evil arises from the defective distribution and interior arrangements of the classes in the schools. The first thing remarked by a

stranger in visiting, not only the common schools, but also some of the colleges and academies, in Lower Canada, is the defective construction of the seats and forms, which, having no backs, prove a continual source of inconvenience and even pain to the pupils.

The teacher sits in his chair, or perhaps in a comfortable arm chair, but let him only attempt to sit for any length of time on a form without a back, during the whole time of his teaching the class, and he will soon find out whether the uncomfortableness of his position, and the weariness consequent upon it, will not affect both his body and mind, and unfit him for the task he has to perform. The teacher should not therefore be astonished, or give way to anger, when he sees a poor child nailed as it were to a form, bound to remain in such a forced position, begin to swing his body backward and forward, and attempt by every possible means to seek relief, sometimes with his hands behind his back, sometimes kicking about with his feet, thus, withdrawing the attention of his schoolfellows from their lessons, and frequently bringing punishment on himself.

The bench or form without any back to it, is sometimes placed in the middle of the floor, and at times without either table or desk. In the latter instance, the children frequently draw their benches near the wall or partition

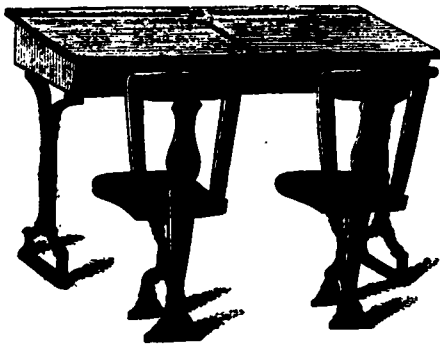


Fig. 2.



Fig. 4.

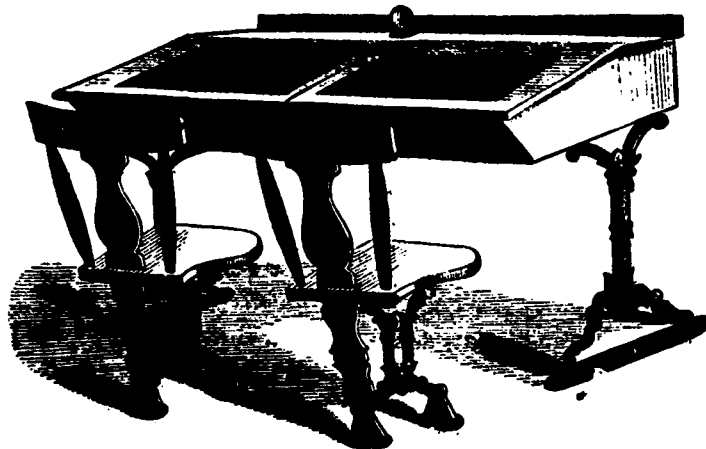


Fig. 3.

for the purpose of obtaining a more easy position; this of itself proves the necessity of having backs to forms and all other kinds of seats. It were needless to mention how very uncomfortable and even painful must be the position

of a child sitting on a bench in the middle of a school room: The wall or partition being necessarily perpendicular, can scarcely be considered as a back, and can give but very insufficient support to the spine. The pupil must naturally