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TORONTO, MAY, 1879.

PUNISHMENT IN SCHOOL.

During the past few weeks two cases of injudicious punishment by teachers have been reported in Ontario. One of them resulted fatally. A teacher in a moment of anger slaps a child on the head with his open hand, and the child dies. We fear that too many unfortunate children both at home and at school are punished in a similar manner. Angry people usually punish children in a cruel way. Passion deadens the sensibilities of the soul, and the teacher or parent for the time being ceases to realize the amount of suffering he is inflicting. Punishment should not be given by a teacher when angry. The other case was of a different nature. The teacher had not the plea of anger to justify his cruelty. He made a circle on the black-board, and caused a pupil to stand with his nose touching the board in the centre of the circle. The only excuse that can be offered for such a course is, that the teacher was totally ignorant of the very serious injury it would do the eyes of the pupil to stand as directed.

Corporal punishment is resorted to by inexperienced or indolent teachers too frequently. We do not urge its prohibition. It has a place as a reformatory influence. Its effects in decreasing juvenile criminals has been proved to be better than confinement in prison. If whipping was only used in schools as an aid in reforming serious offenders, there would be little of it done.

While some parents severely criticise the use of the cane in school, there are many who mourn the fact that it is not used so thoroughly and so frequently as when they went to school. It is a common occurrence for a teacher who is trying to avoid the use of corporal punishment in his school, to hear parents born in the old world refer in terms of the highest commendation to the schools they attended when children; not because they learned anything at them, but because they were "well punished by their masters." They make unkind comparisons between the English and Canadian schools in this respect, often in order to avoid doing the punishment which properly devolves upon themselves.

It would be very unfair to the English public schools to imagine that many of them are of the "Dotheboys Hall" kind. Whipping, it is true, had a long and lively reign in English schools. Whipping is even yet in a few schools the

universal remedy for every school disease. We are glad to be able to inform those parents who seem to have been more impressed by the whipping they received at school than by the lessons they learned, and those teachers who attempt to justify their cruelty by saying "flogging is practised universally in England," that English schools have changed since they were boys.

The following condensed report of a part of the proceedings of a meeting of the London School Board may startle some. We insert it for that purpose. It is taken from the New England Journal, whose editor, Hon. Mr. Bicknell, was present at the meeting.

A series of public meetings had been held to discuss the question of corporal punishment, and a deputation had been appointed to wait upon the Board in reference to the matter.

Mr. Soutter, the leader of the deputation, said that three public meetings, attended by from 400 to 900 persons, had been held in Southwark on the subject of the abolition of corporal punishment in school. They had resolved that the time had come for the discontinuance of the practice of corporal punishment—a relic of a barbarous age. It had been abolished in the army, and it was a sign of great backwardness on the part of the Board to seek to perpetuate it as a means of maintaining discipline among children. One strong objection to the use of the cane in schools was, that it prevented the Board obtaining the services of the best teachers, for the best teachers did not inflict the punishment.

Several members of the Board then questioned the deputation. The following is a portion of the dialogue that ensued:

Mr. Mark Wilks—Were the public meetings to which you refer informed that this Board has unanimously declared its wish for the abolition of corporal punishment?

Mr. S.—No; we are not aware of that.

Mr. W.—Are you aware that there was no member of this Board in the recent debate on the subject, who advocated corporal punishment as a permanent institution.

Mr. S.—We were not aware of that.

Prof. Gladstone—The memorialists are in error on one point. It was stated that they believed that the Board sought to "perpetuate corporal punishment." It has also been hinted that the teachers who do not agree with the administering of corporal punishment would not be likely to come under the Board. Now the Board does not force the teachers to inflict the punishment; they rather discourage it.

Mrs. Miller—Was the Board regulation with reference to corporal punishment explained at the Southwark meetings?

Mr. S.—It was understood and stated that the punishment could only be inflicted by head-teachers, and that the time and occasion of every flogging should be recorded.

Mrs. Miller—Do the deputation imagine that the Board compels their teachers to administer corporal punishment?

Mr. S.—What I intended to say was, that so long as the system is in force in schools, it will be an encouragement to lazy and indolent teachers to stay, and it will be a hindrance to the Board obtaining the best possible teachers.

EDUCATIONAL NOTES ON THE TARIFF.

Although carefully avoiding the discussion of all political topics in this publication, yet occasions sometimes arise when it is necessary to say a word or two on questions of a semi-political aspect. Such a one is the new tariff and its educational effects; and yet our remarks have not the slightest political animus or design in them.

Looking at the tariff as it will affect the education and enlightenment of the people, we are painfully impressed with the