

is only an entirely right and commendable activity, wrongly directed. The difference between the studious and earnest pupil and the mischievous and turbulent one is only the difference of two streams, the one, of which flows in its proper channel musically, helpfully; the other thrown from its course, bursting its banks, boils through the meadows recklessly, wastefully. It is a part of the teacher's work, failure in which is failure in duty, to provide opportunity, through the work of the school-room, for full and free exercise of the child's faculties.

We do not accept the doctrine of total depravity, nor do we believe, if two equally attractive methods of gratifying the demand for exercise be open to the child, he will deliberately choose the wrong one. The fact is that fly-traps, and slate notes, and tit-tat-to are vastly more interesting than geography and grammar, and the child turns to them as a matter of course. Where, then shall rest the blame of this misconduct—on the child, immature, ignorant, and plastic, or on the teacher, who should possess the power to direct and shape this easily-bent morsel of humanity to the shape of true manhood? But if, when all has been done that lies within the power of the teacher, offences must needs be, how shall the woe be brought to the child by whom the offence cometh?

1. The child, at different stages of mental development, requires different treatment; and

2. Penalties may be natural or artificial.

First, an infant, when all the power of the mind is exerted in the perception of external objects, can only become conscious of external impressions. If punishment is needed for a child at this period, corporal punishment may rationally be used.

But the development of the child soon gives him a claim to the title of a *thinking* being, and though, mayhap, he reasons vaguely, yet there is a dim appreciation of the relation of causes to results. Punishment of such a person is *defensible only* when it is regarded as the natural consequence of some conscious act of that person. Nature suggests the law, which we must be wise

indeed to improve. If I violate a natural law by placing my hand upon a heated iron, the penalty follows instantly in the pain of the burn, proportioned exactly to the degree of the offence. If I repeat the transgression, I experience the penalty a second time; and should I repeat the act a hundred times, I am conscious that a hundred times the penalty would follow. Recognizing this connection between transgression and its consequences, the least child exercises great care in conforming to nature's laws in so far as they are apparent to him. For every wrong action our pupils are liable to commit, there is a natural reaction, and if the teacher were but careful to make manifest the necessary connection, and to see that the penalty followed the transgression inexorably, the child would soon acquire, for the laws of the school-room, that respect which he now feels for the laws of nature.

For the pain that attends an infringement of nature's laws, one may become angry and embittered, but his resentment can be directed only against himself, the transgressor. Likewise, if the teacher act only as the agent in causing the natural reaction to follow the offence, in this case also anger, if felt, can be directed only against the transgressor, and a mutual dislike, which is so often engendered by an artificial punishment and which is the prolific cause of further trouble, may be avoided.

It rests with teachers alone to make this matter practical, by searching out the natural penalties for school-room offences. If this be earnestly and thoughtfully studied, punishment in every case avoided, unless there be a manifest connection between it and the fault that preceded it, and care taken that no offence escape its natural consequence, the time will soon be known among us when this question will have ceased to trouble, and the rod that now hangs, a badge of disgrace, from so many school-room walls, will occupy its only legitimate place, in the hands of those beings to whom the Creator has not given souls.—Prof. E. W. Thompson, in *Michigan Teacher*.